

SOC | SCRIBBLES

A Digital Newsletter | Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association



Council Hall, Alabama State University: Photo: Ram Alagan

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Scribbles

Welcome to the 2019 Fall Edition of the edition of the **Soc-Scribbles**, a digital newsletter of Alabama Mississippi Sociological Association! The **Soc-Scribbles** features updates and announcements on A-MSA events, achievements, and opportunities towards 2020 conference. The contents of the newsletter s primarily targeted to the 2020 A-MSA conference and more specifically, to current development of the association. We encourage A-MSA members, students, faculty, and supporters to contribute to future issues of the **Soc-Scribbles**. The bulletin will be circulated annually via A-MSA website. Archive copies will also be available at the A-MSA website.



**Social Scientists Journey in Civil Rights Corridor:
“AFTER THE DREAM”**

Call for Abstracts

The Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association is calling for submissions of abstracts for its 51st Annual Conference to be held on the campus of **Alabama State University** on February 27-28, 2020.

Email your abstracts to amsapapers@gmail.com

Send all questions to: Dr. Ram Alagan | President A-MSA

Email: ralagan@alasu.edu

**For Abstract Submissions
Go to www.a-msa.org for more information**



Dear A-MSA members, participants, and presenters

As the 2020 President of this great institution, I am so appreciative of the 2019 Executive Committee members for electing me to lead the 2020 conference at Alabama State University. During the last five years, I have been presenting and participating at A-MSA annual meetings and enjoyed every event. Over the previous two years, I was acting as a member at large for the State of Alabama. I have also taken heavy responsibility as one of the leading conference committee members to organize the annual conference on two occasions at Alabama State University (2016 and 2018). All these years of participation have provided me in-depth connection and awareness about this great association.

**Ram Alagan, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor of Geography
Alabama State University

We are living one of the utmost challenging periods around the world and, most importantly in the United States, in social, political, environmental, and cultural misunderstanding. This is one of the greatest moments for social scientists to engage in research activities for bridging social, environmental, cultural, political, and STEM education for possible answers. Otherwise, we will be on the wrong side of history.

I have one of the best executive committees at A-MSA, and I am so proud of their contributions. Let me pen-down a few appreciations. First and foremost, I thank Dr. Kyle Knight, (President-Elect) who has agreed to lead the institution in 2021 in Huntsville, AL. Kyle has been one of the utmost supportive members to me in the current issues that we face in A-MSA. As always, Dr. Thomas Kersen provided me profound advice and encouragement whenever I gravely needed it. Our newly elected communication director, Dr. Mark Dugo, is an extraordinary leader with a vision for moving this great institution forward. Mark is working with me meticulously in countless issues, and I thank you for that commitment.

To be short, the following executive members of such as Treasurer Laura-Jean Kerr, Secretary Dr. Kim Brackett, Past Presidents Dr. Brenda Gill, and Dr. Art Cosby are contributing vital support, and I thank each and every one of them. I will also be grateful for all our state representatives for their continuous support for this institution. I thank you for Dr. Robert White, Member At Large, for the State of Alabama. Robert is my most exceptional mentor and friend in this process. We met several state legislators, representatives, senators, county government commissioners, members, and local leaders to discuss A-MSA and searching for financial supports for the 2020 conference. Robert and I are continuously on the move for seeking support to upgrade our financial situation in this difficult time.

Recent Updates:

Relocating A-MSA Website into a new server is one of the most critical discussions we had in past weeks. Several executive members, including myself, have participated to discuss the A-MSA website and its future. NSPARC at Mississippi State University has freely hosted the site, and I thank NSPARC's technical support and hosting of the website. Currently, we are in the process of developing a new website sever to move A-MSA data.

A-MSA Website:

Mark and I are working concurrently and taking care of the website updates. Currently, there are several new updates that have been uploaded and reorganized. Please visit the A-MSA website and take a closer look and send your comments to us; your feedback will enhance the future development of the website. I am proud to say that currently, we have the technical experts within A-MSA to take care of the site.

2020 Conference:

The Alabama State University conference organizing committee (staff and students) are diligently working and preparing all conference-related issues in and out of the university premises. I am very excited to engage in the 2020 conference organization as I have the sophisticated TEAM A-MSA2020 at ASU. The 2020 conference theme is "Social Scientists Journey in Civil Rights Corridor: AFTER THE DREAM." As I outlined, we are living in a very turbulent global era, and it is Social Scientists' responsibility to engage and find solutions to the social, political, environmental, and cultural misinterpretations. TEAM A-MSA2020 is planning to have motivating speakers during the keynote speaker sessions, panels, oral presentations, poster presentations, reception, and students essay competitions to capture the conference theme. I hope you will be enjoying the conference events.

2020 A-MSA Newsletter A-MSA newsletter is one of the vital pieces of recaps published for several years. Currently, we are in the process of developing the Midterm newsletter. I hope the newsletter will be published around mid-November on the A-MSA website. Finally, I am very excited to work with a great executive team and TEAM A-MSA2020 conference planning committee. I warmly welcome everyone to visit Alabama State University in February 2020 to witness another great conference.

Ram Alagan, Ph.D.

President, 2020-A-MSA



We are living one of the utmost challenging periods around the world and, most importantly in the United States, in social, environmental, political, and cultural issues. So, social scientists have a lot of work to sort out.....



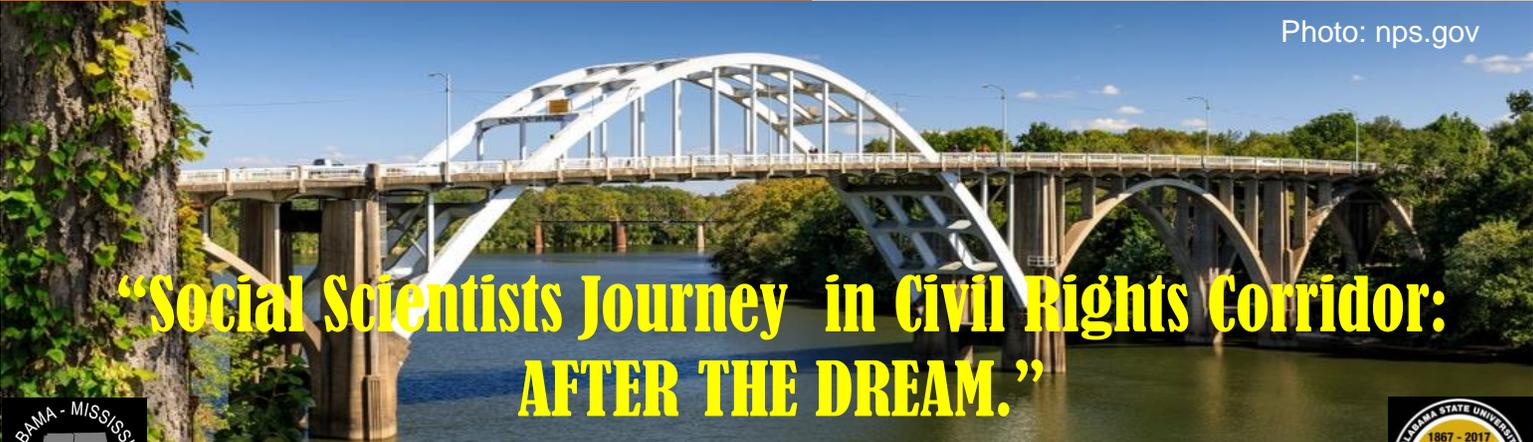
Hank Sanders

Former State Senator, Alabama

Hank Sanders is a civil rights attorney still serving after 48 years. He has been deeply involved in voting rights, civil rights, human rights, and various community struggles since the Selma to Montgomery March in 1965 (and above). He and his wife, Faya Rose Toure, moved to Selma in 1971 to continue that work and have done so without cease for 48 years.

Sanders has worked successfully in the following areas: (1) legal, including helping Black people save their lands, the Black Belt Voter Persecution Cases and both Black and Black Farmers cases which yielded more than \$2 Billion dollars for Black Farmers; (2) community, including building a number of institutions such as National Voting Rights Museum, Bridge Crossing Jubilee, the Ancient Africa and Enslavement Museum and McRae Learning Center, (3) communication, including co-founding the Black Belt Journal Newspaper and the 50,000 Watt Radio Station Z105.3 and writing a column called Sketches for more than 1692 straight weeks;(4) organizationally, including co-founding statewide and national organizations such as Twenty-First Century Youth Leadership Movement, Alabama New South Coalition and SOS (Save Ourselves Coalition for Justice and Democracy) and (5) politics, including serving 35 years in the Alabama State Senate where he chaired the Education Budget Committee for straight 16 years. Sanders graduated from Talladega College and Harvard Law School and is the author of the novel Death of a Fat Man and Take A Walk in My Shoes as well as numerous other writings.

Photo: nps.gov



**“Social Scientists Journey in Civil Rights Corridor:
AFTER THE DREAM.”**



Doris F. Youngblood, daughter of the late James and Jewel Faulk, sister to Minnie Jewel, Ollie, and Jesse Faulk, is a native Alabamian, a Yellow Jacket, a Hornet, and an Owl, respectively. In that order, she is a graduate of Booker T. Washington High School and the Alabama State University in Montgomery, Alabama, and Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. As a Yellow Jacket, she competed and attended classes with Jerome Harris, Johnny Knight, Hilton "Tracy" Larkin, Walter Harris, the Shirleys, Knox, Lewis, and Scott, Marsha Broadnax, Gilbert Baldwin, and Mary Ann Howard. She was an active participant in academic and athletic activities. Notable teachers were former teachers: Mrs. Helen Green, Mrs. Josie Lawrence, Ms. E. M. Reasor, and her sophomore English teacher, the sports announcer for all home football game, and the inspirer for her enrolling at the Alabama State University after graduating with honors from Booker T. Washington High School and pursuing a degree in English. At ASU, she was a leader in the classroom, in campus activities, and in community events. She participated in the Selma to Montgomery March from the campus to the state capitol where she saw Dr. King, Ralph Bunche, and Harry Belafonte. She was a reporter for the Hornet Tribune under the supervision of Dr. R. Player and corresponding secretary for Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, under the supervision of Mrs. Johnnie Royster and Mrs. Doris Sanders. In the classroom, notably the English, English Literature, and history classes, she was an attention getter and competitor with others, especially Greeks, in retaining the scholarship cup for her sorority. English, English Literature, and history were taught by Dr. Bryson and Professors Musgrave and Glass, her geography professor, civil rights pioneer, and a member of the Women's Political Council. They gave the best and sought the best from us and always insisted and encouraged us to do better. Doris spent many hours in the old library, now G.W. Trenholm Hall and the Tullibody Fine Arts

Building which was once a frame structure. G.W. Trenholm Hall now has an auditorium, Thelma Glass, named for Professor Glass. Scott Johnson said, "Civil Rights Pioneer Glass Dies." Montgomery Advertiser, July 25, 2012, wrote, John Knight, executive vice president, chief operating officer at Alabama State University, and one of Glass's students said, "She had such a pleasing personality, you felt welcome. You felt a sense of warmth. And she always challenged you academically to be the very best." AAG, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION of GEOGRAPHERS, wrote, "She was the last surviving member of the Women's Political Council, which helped organize the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955-56, a key event in the civil rights movement." ASU at the height of the Civil Rights Movement played a vital role in publishing and disseminating literature for the success of the boycott. Professor Glass and she graduated from Alabama State Teachers College and The Alabama State University, respectively, with honors. Both were subjected to colored restrooms, water fountains, and segregate dining, living, and educational facilities.

Ms. Doris F. Youngblood
**“Women's Role in the
 Civil Rights Movement”**

Your executive committee has been hard at work planning the 2020 conference. Not only have they worked on interesting and informative speakers and sessions, but they have also been busy managing the business of the association. Through email communication and a conference call, they have discussed the current state of the organization and plans for future success. This mid-year report summarizes the key issues and information for the membership.

President Alagan has shared the plans for the upcoming meeting with the executive committee. We are pleased to announce that one of the Keynote Speakers will be Former State Senator Hank Sanders of Selma, AL. Serving in the legislature for nearly 40 years, he was a fixture around Alabama's state house. The planning for the 2020 conference is proceeding on schedule and with a great deal of enthusiasm; however, there are a few concerns that have arisen. While the 2019 event at Mississippi State University was a lovely and fitting 50th anniversary tribute, the cost of the conference has left A-MSA in a difficult position for conducting the 2020 meeting. Therefore, the executive committee has been looking for ways to increase revenue and/or economize the cost of the annual meeting.

Specifically we need to find ways to increase the resources available to host the conference in the event the host institution cannot provide financial underwriting. The goal is to leave the organization on positive financial grounds for those lean years and when campuses cannot subsidize the expenses. Some suggestions considered so far include 1) soliciting donations from member departments (currently underway), 2) increasing dues and registration fees, 3) selling advertisements in the conference program or on the website, 4) asking textbook publishers for subsidies, 5) establishing a scholarship fund that members can donate to, 6) reducing the food served at the conference or charging more for it. Two additional considerations have to do with timing of the conference. One suggestion is to join with another regional meeting, such as Mid-South, to increase the value of attending. A second suggestion is to hold the conference every other year rather than every year. All of these suggestions have arisen from a desire to put the organization on a stronger financial footing and preserve its role into the future



Kim Brackett, Ph.D.

Associate Dean
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
Professor of Sociology
Auburn University at Montgomery

It will be important for members to be present at the 2020 meeting to vote on changes that the executive committee will propose to safeguard the organization. One of the initiatives we are excited about is a new budget plan that will help control costs. A specific itemized budget model received unanimous support from the executive committee during our recent conference call. We will also be bringing a new fee structure to the membership for consideration. We believe that the last cost adjustments to the membership fee occurred in the early to mid-2000s. The goal with any increase will be to maintain affordability for our student attendees and still provide sufficient resources to host a high-quality conference. Given that our executive committee includes 3 former A-MSA presidents, we have a great deal of affection for A-MSA and are mindful of our need to steward the organization toward continued value in the two states.

A third item we will bring to the membership for consideration is a revision of the requirements to hold office in the organization. We will propose that eligibility to hold key leadership positions (president, president elect, and treasurer) will be limited to faculty members. The other officer positions, such as at-large members for the two states, will remain open to candidates from all membership categories of the association.

I strongly encourage you to visit the updated A-MSA website. There you will see highlights of all the great things to do in Montgomery and the surrounding area. Be sure to include a little extra time for sightseeing when you plan your visit to Montgomery. You will be glad you did. On the business front, you can also learn more about the organization's current leadership by visiting the website. Details about Montgomery and biographies for all of the officers are available at www.a-msa.org.

Please feel free to contact me if you need any additional details on the above items.

Sincerely,
Kim Brackett
(A-MSA Secretary)





Kyle Knight, Ph.D.

Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Sociology
University of Alabama in Huntsville



I am excited and honored to have the opportunity to serve A-MSA as President-Elect (2019-2020) and President (2020-2021). While I am a relatively new member of the organization and only recently started attending A-MSA conferences, I feel strongly that this is an organization with an important role and honorable legacy in our two states, and one in which it's worth investing time and energy in order to help ensure its continued success. I thoroughly enjoyed the welcoming, collegial and intellectually vibrant atmosphere of the 2019 annual meeting at Mississippi State University and am eagerly awaiting the upcoming meeting at Alabama State University in 2020. I am also looking forward to hosting the 2021 meeting at the University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH). UAH is a rapidly growing research university, with a student body of over 10,000, and a strong Department of Sociology housed in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. This will be the first time that UAH has hosted the conference, so I see it as a wonderful opportunity for attendees to experience our campus and enjoy all that the growing city of Huntsville, with its burgeoning restaurant, craft beer, and entertainment scene, has to offer. I can't wait to see y'all there!

2021 A-MSA @ University of Alabama in Huntsville



Photo: collegeconsensus.com



I am honored to offer my thoughts about what I see as challenges and opportunities for Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association. Much of what I write below originated from an informal discussion we had at a past A-MSA conference. We discussed a number of issues relating to the organization, institutions, and the discipline itself. One of the main topics was trying to figure out what we offer as an organization that sociologists, students, and the public might not get from other organizations. Namely, what is our niche? One member noted that there were lots of organizations, many with a specialty focus such as Rural Sociological Society. Members pointed out that A-MSA could do a number of things such as focusing on “best practices” in terms of promotion and tenure, community engagement, and other topics. Furthermore, A-MSA could provide a place for department chairs and directors to come together and share insights.

Members thought there was the need to have morning and afternoon sessions for students to see other students present their research. We should have workshops to build on student professionalization. One member argued that students would come if they gained valuable skills such as GIS. More hands-on training opportunities might also encourage high school sociology/social science and community college instructors and their students to attend our meetings.

These turbulent, politicized times require our talents, but we need to work with other at-risk organizations. I think liberal arts scholars and practitioners, both inside and outside the academy should form coalitions wherever possible. For example, humanities councils and like institutions are continually at risk.



Photo: Ram Alagan

Tom Kersen, Ph.D

Associate Professor of Sociology and
A-MSA Archivist
Jackson State University

Sociology,
Challenges,
and
Opportunities



Often these organizations offer money for projects which few sociologists seek. We need to collaborate more with such organizations. One of our members, working outside of academia, observed that there was a need to recognize that there were "consumers of sociological products" outside of academia. We should engage people and institutions in those arenas whenever possible.

We should be the go-to source for understanding social reality. Too often, we cede this space to blowhards and pseudo-scholars on the web. In an article I wrote a few years ago, I offered a counternarrative to Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant's fallacious assertion that so many unarmed African American men are injured or killed by law enforcement personnel because the young men did not follow the orders of officers. We need to be in the public discourse to direct people to real data and information rather than alternative facts such as those produced by Bryant and others. It is us as sociologists that can introduce to the public how social problems are tied to personal issues. Or, how structural forces compel people to act in different ways.

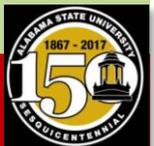
A sociologist from Louisiana offered his experience at his institution as a case study in the devaluing of sociology. He said that originally there were seven people in a successful sociology department but that other departments gained more power and winnowed the field eventually down to him. Everyone fought against everyone else during that time. Ten years later, the department is gone, and he is slotted as professor in non-sociology discipline. He also mentioned the bias some parents have against sociology--"...trying to convert students..." etc. Sadly, his story is not uncommon.

We can offer our fellow members a refuge and maybe even an opportunity to help each other, our departments, and even our school.

A-MSA is an excellent organization for students to become leaders. We should think about a graduate student council. Maybe just making sure that we have students on committees and in leadership positions. However, I do think the key leadership roles need to be filled with members who are established in their careers.

Communication continues to be a problem within our organization. Having an up-to-date and appealing website is a must. A listserv for the organization is a must. Such a service will tighten connections within the organization and build community. It would also be an ideal place to send news to members. Along those lines, students look for groups within social networking sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and other SNS. Moreover, if members contribute news and other items to our newsletter Scribbles, maybe we can newer issues.

Another financial issue that influences whether a person choose to attend an A-MSA meeting or that of another organization is student funding. One member noted that if she had a number of students who wanted to present, then she attended. I think this is the case for a number of our faculty members. Executive committee should act to make a committee (it can be ad hoc too) that focuses on student scholarships to attend. Many of the bigger institutions funded their faculty and students.



Smaller universities and colleges have fewer resources. One long-term member noted that this is one of the reasons why A-MSA is a 501 3c organization. Donations are tax deductible and can be directed toward greater participation of members. We should also explore coupling conference themes and sessions to available grants.

A-MSA experienced a lot of turnover from the "old guard" who were heavily involved in running the organization and mentoring newer members. A-MSA has lost a lot of its institutional memory and there are fewer people with deep investments in the organization. Lots of newer faces and new challenges. How does A-MSA bring back members in a sustained way such as what existed in the past is a key question to be answered. Many sociologist and allied people in the two-state region perceive attending A-MSA as having less "bang-for-the buck" than is the case if they attend Mid-South, Southern, etc. Maybe we should explore the idea of co-conferencing with Mid-South. I think such collaborations might benefit both groups by pooling expenses and talent.

Based on the "Rap Session" discussion, these points need to be addressed in the coming years:

- Find A-MSA's niche. (see Insights from the Past on next page).
- Create a listserv.
- Improve A-MSA email, website, SNS, and other ways of communication.
- Institutional network building both within academia and outside in allied organizations.
- Continue to engage in public sociology and demonstrate the utility of our perspective.
- Involve students more in planning and decision making.
- Create a committee that focuses on student conference scholarships.
- Seek ways to make attending A-MSA conference more attractive to faculty such as hotel rates, etc. Maybe co-conferencing with another organization.
- Actively work on rebuilding A-MSA mentors and leaders.



Photo: JSU.edu





Mark A. Dugo Ph.D.

A-MSA Communications Director
Assistant Prof. of Environmental Health
Mississippi Valley State University

It is a pleasure to serve A-MSA as Communications Director for 2019-2020. Indeed, with the current and upcoming changes to the A-MSA website, this is an important time to consider ways and means of communication within A-MSA. These times are also critically important, socially and academically. Like several other officers within this organization, I am not a bonafide sociologist by training.

If I must label myself according to a classical discipline of academic study, I am a biologist. The bulk of my training and experience is in the ecological sciences, with emphasis on biodiversity and conservation. However, both academically and pragmatically speaking, we are in a time when it is critical that we engage outside of our traditional silos. As the human population continues to grow, the earth becomes seemingly smaller and our interdependence on each other becomes increasingly more apparent. With intersection in mind, I earned my Ph.D. in environmental science and I currently work as assistant professor of Environmental Health at Mississippi Valley State University. When asked what Environmental Health is, I very generically respond that everything has to do with Environmental Health, because this discipline is interested in how the natural and built environments impact human health. However, in part due to my background in the ecological sciences, my primary interests are in drawing attention to the dependence human society has on ecological integrity as well as the impact society has on the environment. Towards positive movement in terms of the sustainability of human settlement, it is imperative that these interrelationships are communicated within a myriad of professional disciplines and among the public. A-MSA provides a strong interdisciplinary platform to engage in these necessary conversations





Brenda Gill Ph.D.

Former President (2018 – A-MSA)
 Prof. of Sociology
 Alabama State University

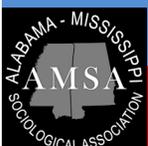
The Alabama Mississippi Sociological Association (A-MSA) differs from other organizations because we can take a sociological view on what is happening. As a past President of A-MSA I have witnessed first-hand some of the controversies, challenges, changes, and accomplishments of the Association. While as president and now as a past president I continue to spend a lot of time thinking about the role of the regional association in American sociology.

Taking the lead from other past presidents of sociological associations (For example, Keith, 2004 & Howard, 2007) I offer a very brief overview of the role of A-MSA as a regional association. First, research suggests that one of the main reasons for the emergence of regional conferences

as early as the 1930 was to provide sociologists access to professional conferences. This was necessary as the cost to travel to national conferences was preventing such conference attendance. The regional conference was perceived as a practical tactic whereby sociologists would be able to present their work and learn the latest research findings. Despite the changes in travel, and the affluence of some institutions in providing financial support to attend national or even international conferences, in several instances, some professors are still unable to find the required funds to attend such conferences. The role of regional conferences remain the same today. Additionally, being able to afford to take students along also presents challenges for most. To this end, therefore, A-MSA continues to serve as a vehicle that allows affordable and ready access to a regional conference where the opportunity to present research, engage in scholarly exchange, and learn the latest research findings occur.

Nonetheless, while the pivotal role of A-MSA is noted, previous annual meetings have recognized that A-MSA's role is not all encompassing. While A-MSA links Alabama and Mississippi and allows for the flow between the two states, the membership of A-MSA has recognized that we need to do a better job of tapping into the resources of the two states as well as those surrounding states (Louisiana, Georgia, and Florida). At previous meetings we have been able to discuss the creation of a list of all colleges and Universities with sociology departments. The aim was to reach out to these departments to generate a larger pool of attendees.

In addition to trying to get more buy-in from Sociologists, one of the aspirations of A-MSA as discussed at the most recent Annual Meeting is to extend A-MSA so that it open its arms to encompass other disciplines.



To date this has begun to happen such that we see a strong presence in the field of Geography. It is the hope that this direction continues, and more disciplines join the association so that collaborations can be easier established.

Further, another goal is to attract more members across two and four-year private as well as public institutions. To this end, there has been discussions about extending the focus of A-MSA to include all types of universities. Added to this, is the wish to see more buy-in and participation from other community agencies. The aim is to set up partnerships so that A-MSA members can practice sociology more. There is an emphasis on moving A-MSA in the direction of applied sociology. About three years ago there was in depth discussion about forming a community partnership in which A-MSA identified a focal area and then worked with specific agencies to see this come to fruition.

Previous authorities suggest that one of the important roles of regional associations is to encourage the professional development of sociologists. A-MSA role in doing this obviously includes the opportunities afforded attendees in teaching, learning, and research. While the focus of conferences is often narrowly confined to research, it must be noted that attendance at A-MSA also helps

to improve the teaching and learning skills of both professors who attend as well as students.

Commendably, A-MSA has moved forward within the last three to four years with more sessions directed specifically towards undergraduate and graduate students. In some of these sessions, students were allowed to make either paper or poster presentations. In other instances, meet-and-greet sessions were planned to allow students to interact and network with other students, professors, book publishers and others from the wider community. It is envisioned that this student-focused commitment will continue.

As we anticipate another annual meeting for 2020, the questions to ask are: What can A-MSA extend to sociologists, other professors, and students besides a shorter distance to travel to the meetings and maybe a cheaper cost for attendance? What can A-MSA proffer to sociologists, professors from other disciplines, and students' who attend the annual meeting that will positively enhance their achievements at various stages of their careers? As discussed at the association's 50-year celebration, A-MSA must establish greater collaborations with the community members. We must forge interactions that allow others to see the role of the association in addressing some of society's problems. While noting this, as past president,

“I also note that such changes can only become a successful reality if members want this done and they are willing to work to see these become reality.”



Further, since this is a voluntary organization, I implore all members to volunteer, bring forth your ideas, engage community members, encourage students, professors from all disciplines and anyone who is interested to attend and become an active member of A-MSA. We must give everyone a real tangible reason for wanting to participate in A-MSA. We must let everyone see that membership in and participation with A-MSA can assist in improving teaching and research effectiveness. Our students must see the enthusiasm with which we approach membership, the fun and positive interactions we enjoy at the annual meetings. This may be the most effective way for A-MSA to persist and flourish.

*As past president
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2018 A-MSA: Photo: Ram Alagan

References:

1. Howard, J.R. (2007). North Central Sociological Association Presidential Address: Teaching and Learning and the Culture of the Regional Association in American Sociology. *Sociological Focus* 40, 250-264.
2. Keith, B. (2004). Disciplinary Culture and Organizational Dissonance: The Regional Association in American Sociology. *Sociological Focus* 37: 83-105.

Social sciences are an essential part of today's academic training and touch on all fields of social, environmental, political, developmental, historical, and Civil Rights issues. Social scientists have employed their experiences in a variety of ways to interpret the complex social problems for examining how minds work and how societies as a whole function. Although we have attained tremendous success in our academic culture currently, there is much more work to be done. Without any further delay, it is our time to take a closer look at these significant matters and engage in finding appropriate solutions. From 1969 onwards, the Alabama -Mississippi Sociological Association (A-MSA) has been committed to this journey. However, it is profoundly critical at present for social scientists to develop a public relations campaign that identifies more of their investigations, reflections, and research conclusions to tackle the social issues as they exist.

The 2020 A-MSA annual conference is scheduled at Alabama State University (ASU). ASU is located in the Epi Center of what we call the Civil Rights Corridor in Montgomery, Alabama. Being the capital of Alabama and having the dual or bi-polar distinction of being the Cradle of the Confederacy and Civil Rights, Montgomery is also a historic center.

By. Ram Alagan, Robert White, and Seela Aladuwaka



2019 A-MSA: Photo: Alan Burn,

*Alabama -Mississippi
Sociological Association
Marches
in the
Civil Rights
Corridor.
Montgomery Alabama!*

The Black Belt is known for its gross agricultural profits and its extreme abuse of the enslaved and disenfranchised labor that was used in the region to sustain political and economic power. While being noted by some as a Civil Rights corridor, researchers have identified several historical factors that play into the current condition of the Black Belt. Historically, Montgomery played a pivotal role in events such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Selma-to-Montgomery Voting Rights March, Modern Civil Rights Movement, and the Capital of Confederate States of America. Montgomery is also significantly famous for nationally recognized Civil Rights icons such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Jr, E.D. Nixon, Fred Gray, Clifford Durr, Ralph David Abernathy, and John Lewis. At present, Montgomery is one of the top cities in U. S. for Civil Rights education due to its nationally distinguished monuments: Alabama State Capitol, Civil Rights Memorial Center, The White House of the Confederacy, Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church, Dexter Parsonage Museum, Freedom Rides Museum, Rosa Parks Museum, and The National Memorial for Peace and Justice. Alabama State University is remarkably blessed to have its current location in Montgomery because of its proximity to critical Civil Rights assets. During major Civil Rights events, ASU welcomes the Civil Rights

leaders from these institutions to have presentations and discussions. We are so fortunate to have their wealth of knowledge to educate our students on these national issues. ASU and its alumni have played a pivotal role in the Civil Rights Movement. Since ASU played a key role and natured a deep history in the Civil Rights movements, today at ASU, we have a National Center for the Study of Civil Rights and African American Culture. The Mission of the Civil Rights Center is to serve as a clearinghouse for information concerning Montgomery history and Alabama State University's fundamental role in the shaping and development of the modern Civil Rights movement.

It is profoundly critical for social scientists to develop a public relations campaign that identifies more of their investigations, reflections, and research conclusions to tackle the social issues as they exist.....





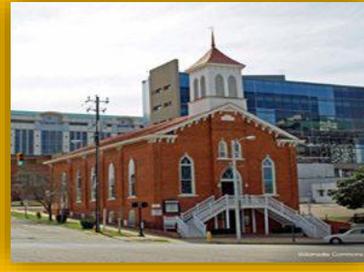
[Civil Rights Memorial](#)



[Slave Auction in Montgomery](#)



[Freedom Rides Museum](#)



[King Memorial Baptist Church](#)



[Memorial for Peace and Justice](#)



[The United States Civil Rights Trail](#)



[Rosa Parks Museum](#)



[The State Archives](#)



[The First White House of the Confederacy](#)



[Alabama State Building](#)

The 2020 A-MSA conference presenters and participants will have a fantastic opportunity to investigate all of the following Civil Rights histories while you are here. Take some free time during your visit and explore the greater Montgomery region and Alabama State University. The conference planning committee will present some historical figures as keynote speakers who have witnessed the Civil Rights Movements, Selma-Montgomery March, and Women's Role in the Civil Rights Movements. Several faculty members and students from both states will present Civil Rights movement-related research, and Black Belt social and environmental related findings. Thanks for this opportunity for us to write a narrative about *“Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association Marches in the Civil Rights Corridor.”* We welcome you to Alabama State University in Montgomery and to be a part of the 2020 Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association Dialogue.



[Center for the Study of Civil Rights and African-American Culture](#)



What A-MSA means to me!

By: Dr. Tom Kerson

Nearly 20 years ago, I attended my first annual meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association (A-MSA) held at Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi. Fellow researcher Bunnak Poch and I represented a research endeavor led by Drs Karen Woodrow-Lafield and Xiaohe Xu. Our research focused on understanding the migration and naturalization experiences of migrants to the United States. Little did I know that my family and I would settle down in Clinton several years later.

Four years later in Starkville, I was interviewed to fill a position at University of North Alabama.

Montgomery is always fun to visit, and I think the city has so much potential. Thus, A-MSA conferences allow us to see and appreciate the diversity and complexity of the region.



2019 A-MSA: Photo: Alan Burn

I landed the job, and later 2005 in Tuscaloosa, I was elected to as communication director. I would hold this position for some time. I made sure to put out a newsletter once or twice a year. In all, A-MSA has offered me a network of fellow social science researchers that I count as some of my closest friends.

Over the years, I enjoyed visiting campuses across the two states. All my visits exposed me to beautiful cities, towns, and interesting people. The University of Tuscaloosa in Tuscaloosa and University of Mississippi in Oxford were

I will be forever grateful for that experience. The nature of the A-MSA allowed me to make mistakes and learn from them.

really spectacular. The conference at Delta State University (DSU) stands out in my memory. I loved the all the opportunities offered at DSU to see the surrounding area. Speaking of potential, the organization continually needs people to keep it running. Leadership opportunities abound in one of the oldest social science organizations in the South. A few years ago, I accepted the presidency for two terms. At the time, I worried about institutional support and the burden of putting the conference together. During my tenure, everything worked out, and we were even fortunate to have former Mississippi Governor Ronnie Musgrove speak to our group.



At the conferences, we are afforded the opportunity to brainstorm about the social issues and trends affecting both states as well learn from each other's scholarship and active practice.

What A-MSA means to me!

By: Dr. Jeneve R Brooks

A-MSA Conferences are wonderful in bringing Alabama and Mississippi sociologists and practitioners from various fields together once a year. At the conferences, we are afforded the opportunity to brainstorm about the social issues and trends affecting both states as well learn from each other's scholarship and active practice. I particularly love that A-MSA is also so welcoming to both graduate and undergraduate students. The overall affordability of the conference has made it possible for me to bring many students and they always enjoy presenting their work and as well as entering their work into the graduate or undergraduate paper or poster competitions.



2018 A-MSA: Photo: Ram Alagan



2018 A-MSA: Photo: Ram Alagan



WHAT A-MSA MEANS TO ME!

By: Dr. Ram Alagan

A-MSA provided me fantastic opportunities to present my research, as well as taking part in critical discussions about the status quo of sociology and social sciences education and social scientists' responsibilities to develop vibrant curriculum and promote a discipline. In general, A-MSA meetings have created opportunities for me to meet great scholars from both Alabama and Mississippi. I observed great poster and oral presentations from our students at A-MSA conferences. These opportunities have trained our students to become good presenters and create better openings for them to pursue graduate school education.

A-MSA maybe small, but it is a highly creative and vibrant association where future social scientists are prepared. So, let us march forward to save this great association.



2018 A-MSA: Photo: Ram Alagan



Alabama Mississippi

Sociological Association (A-MSA) is an organization that once I think of it, students first come to mind. Each time I read a call for paper or think of A-MSA I think of a time when students will be allowed to attend an affordable conference where they can present their research. It is an opportunity for them to see first-hand what their professors do when they say, "I will be away next week. I am attending and presenting at a conference." Alabama Mississippi Sociological Association for me, signals a place and time when and where great interaction between faculty and students occurs. It is an association that recognizes the importance of training both undergraduate and graduate students in the art of research, research presentation, and conference attendance.

For me A-MSA connotes an association that allows me an opportunity to take students to a conference. It is usually in a location

where I can easily get to and from easily and at a reasonable cost. A-MSA is an annual meeting to which students are welcome and exposed to interaction with other of similar interests and aspirations. Wholly..



What A-MSA means to me!

By: Dr. Brenda Gill

A-MSA is a wonderful, warm, inviting, academic environment to which practitioners, students, and others can come to interact and gain knowledge and support with their research agendas

2018 A-MSA: Photo: Ram Alagan



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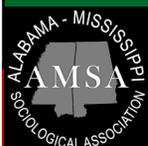
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2020 Conference Theme

*Social Scientists Journey in the
Civil Rights Corridor:*
“AFTER THE DREAM”



ASU FACILITIES

1. Tullibody Fine Arts Center
2. Tullibody Music Hall
3. Business Administration
4. Levi Watkins Learning Center (Library)
5. H. Council Trenholm Hall (Science)
6. Edward McGehee Hall
7. W.H. Council Hall
8. William Burns Paterson Hall
9. George Lockhart Gym
10. George Lockhart Gym Pool
11. John Beverly Hall
12. G.W. Trenholm Hall
13. C. J. Dunn Arena
14. Hornet Stadium
15. Hatch Hall
16. John L. Buskey Health Sciences Center
17. ASU Stadium
18. Life Science Building
19. Ralph D. Abernathy Building
20. Olean Black Underwood Tennis Center

Base map: Google
Designed by Ram Alagan





A-MSA 2020

Soc-Scribbles

We are glad to distribute the 2019 Fall Edition of the A-MSA the digital newsletter, the **“Soc-Scribbles.”** We welcome submissions regarding publications, conference presentations, and creative works, which we include in the 2020 Edition. Please send your information to

Ram Alagan: ralagan@alasu.edu or call: 334-229-8535 OR

Mark Dugo: mark.a.dugo@gmail.com | 662-254-3378

**Tell Us Your
A-MSA STORIES
We will publish it in the
next Soc-Scribbles!**

Thank you!

We are grateful to all who have contributed to the 2019 Fall Edition:

Dr. Ram Alagan
Former Senator Hank Sanders
Dr. Kim Brackett
Dr. Kyle Knight

Dr. Tom Kersen
Dr. Jeneve Brooks
Ms. Doris F. Youngblood
Dr. Mark Dugo

Dr. Robert White
Dr. Seela Aladuwaka
Dr. Brenda Gill

Photos Sources:

Ram Alagan, Alan Burn, Hank Sanders, Kim Brackett, Kyle Knight, Laura Jean Kerr, Brenda Gill, Mark Dugo, Tom Kersen, Art Cosby, David Campbell, Ryan James Parsons, Everhardt, Chambers of Commerce Montgomery AL, nps.gov, and collegeconsensus.com, <http://www.splcenter.org>; <https://alabama200.org>; <https://ahc.alabama.gov>; <https://www.dexterkingmemorial.org>; <https://museumandmemorial.eji.org>; <https://civilrightstrail.com>; <http://www.troy.edu/rosaparks>; <http://archives.state.al.us>; <http://www.firstwhitehouse.org>; <https://ahc.alabama.gov/alabama-state-capitol.aspx>

