

ALABAMA-MISSISSIPPI SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Fall 2003

Starkville, Mississippi

35th Meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association

This year's Annual Meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association will be held Thursday and Friday, February 26th and 27th, at Mississippi State University in Starkville, Mississippi. The meetings will be held at the university's new Hunter Henry Center, conveniently located on campus and close to lodging. The theme of this year's meeting is "Community: Past, Present, and Future." Meeting registration will begin at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday the 26th. The keynote address will be given that afternoon beginning at 1:00 p.m. in the Hunter Henry Center auditorium. Two breakout sessions are scheduled for Thursday from 2:00-3:15 and from 3:30-4:45. Thursday's banquet will also be held at Hunter Henry.

Friday's agenda begins at 8:30 a.m. with two breakout sessions. The first will be from 8:30-9:40 and the second from 9:50-11:00. The capstone address is scheduled from 11:10-11:40, followed by the general business meeting from 11:45-12:30.

The A-MSA is committed to the principle of inclusion and has a long and proud history of members from community colleges, large universities, historically black colleges and universities, and private liberal arts schools. Please communicate these points to your colleagues and fellow students and encourage them to participate in this year's meeting. The annual meeting provides an excellent opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to present their papers.

Community: Past, Present, and Future

The theme for this year's meeting is "Community: Past, Present, and Future." Our keynote speaker on Thursday afternoon at 1:00 is Dr. Steve Kroll-Smith. The title of his address is: "Liquid Communities or Individuals and Gemeinschaft by Seduction." Thursday night's banquet speaker is Dr. Arthur G. Cosby who will discuss the future of community research. Dr. Kroll-Smith will also deliver the capstone message at 11:10 a.m. on Friday – "Community as Rhetorical: Tradition, Harbinger, and Invention."

2004 Speaker Bios

(Continued on Page 2)



Dr. Steve Kroll-

Smith will kick off our annual meeting by presenting the keynote address the afternoon of Thursday, February 26th. Dr. Kroll-Smith graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1982 with a Ph.D. in Sociology. He taught at Penn State University for ten years before moving to the University of New Orleans (UNO) where he was a member of the sociology department and Director of the Environmental Social Science Research Institute. In 1998 he was appointed a Research Professor at UNO. In 2001 Dr. Kroll-Smith moved to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro where he is Head of the Department of Sociology.

Speaker Bios (Continued from Page 1)

Dr. Kroll-Smith's first book with Steve Couch, *The Real Disaster Is Above Ground: A Mine Fire and Social Conflict* (University Press of Kentucky), was the Choice Social Science Book of the Year for 1990. His second book, *Bodies in Protest: Environmental Illness and the Struggle Over Medical Knowledge* (New York University Press) was nominated for the C.W. Mills Award in 1998. Dr. Kroll-Smith has also coedited three books. The most recent, *Illness and the Environment, A Reader in Contested Medicine* (New York University Press) appeared shortly before accepting his current position at UNCG two years ago. *Perilous Conflicts: Environments, Communities, and Hostilities* (with Valerie Gunter) is under contract with Sage Press.

Last year Dr. Kroll-Smith gave two invited lectures: the 2003 College 8 Lecture on Sociology and the Environment at the University of California at Santa Cruz and the Cardiff University Lecture on Uncertainty and the Social Sciences at Cardiff, Wales.



Dr. Arthur G. Cosby, Director of the Social Science Research Center at Mississippi State University, will be our Thursday evening banquet speaker. Dr. Cosby has served as Director the SSRC since 1985. During his term as director, the SSRC has grown into a research enterprise with over 43 research fellows, over 65 sponsored research projects and an annual budget of \$4 to \$6 million. Within the SSRC, he has provided administrative support in establishing a state-of-the-art computer assisted telephone interview facility (Survey Research Unit or SRU), the Decision Support Laboratory (DSL), the Societal Monitor Laboratory (SML), a remote data facility (Delta Data Center) and the Secure Data Laboratory (SDL).

Prior to his SSRC appointment, he was the head of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work at MSU and Bailey Professor of Sociology. He has also served as MSU's Director of University Centers and Institutes. He has held professorial positions at Louisiana State University and Texas A&M University.

Dr. Cosby has served as principal investigator or co-principal investigator on such research projects as the Southern Youth Study, the Career Decisions and Development of Rural Youth, the Delta Project, the Mississippi Adult Literacy Assessment, the Family Preservation and Support Services Project, the 1996 National Survey of Gaming and Gambling, the Commercial Geo-Spatial Electronic Journal and the Overall Evaluation of the Mississippi Pilot Tobacco Control Project.

Dr. Cosby has served as associate editor of *Rural Sociology* and on the editorial board of *Sociological Spectrum*. A member of numerous professional organizations, he is past-president of the Mid-South Sociological Association. His research is published in *Sociology Spectrum*, *Rural Sociology*, *Sociology and Social Research*, *Deviant Behavior*, *Sex Roles*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *Sociology of Work and Occupations*, *Youth and Society*, *Integrated Education*, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *Adolescence*, *Human Mosaic*, *Journal of College and University Personnel* and in a number of applied publications. Dr. Cosby is the executive director of the Rural Health, Safety and Security Institute.

Invitation to Students

Let us take this opportunity to extend a special invitation to graduate and undergraduate students to participate in the upcoming meeting. Awards of \$50 each will be presented for the best undergraduate paper and the outstanding graduate paper. The deadline for student paper submissions is February 2nd. Submit papers to Dr. Duane Gill, SSRC, P.O. Box 5287, Mississippi State, MS, 39762. Please indicate if you wish your paper to be considered for the graduate and undergraduate competitions.

A-MSA E-Journal Update

At last year's A-MSA meeting at Auburn University, incoming A-MSA President Duane Gill appointed a five member committee (Chuck Faupel, John Green, Craig Robertson, Joe Molnar, and Larry Hall) to examine the feasibility of establishing a web-based journal for the A-MSA. The recommendation of the ad hoc committee is that the A-MSA begin publication of a web-based journal along guidelines listed below.

Names for the e-journal could be solicited from the A-MSA membership. As outlined below, this web-based journal would be published on a two-year trial basis. At the end of the two-year period, a rigorous evaluation would be conducted to see if the e-journal is meeting needs and established goals.

What Would the A-MSA E-Journal Publish?

The major purpose of an A-MSA sponsored electronic journal would be to promote student, undergraduate and graduate, scholarship and publication. There already exist a number of journals for faculty publication. There are few places for students to publish at this time. It was our opinion, however, that few undergraduate students are able by themselves to create publishable articles. Therefore, undergraduate students could submit papers that faculty had helped them with and list the faculty members as co-authors. We see this as a part of the process of socializing students to the discipline.

Graduate students are capable of writing publishable articles so the A-MSA E-Journal would also accept graduate student papers. Again, we see this as an important part of socializing graduate students into scholarship and the discipline of Sociology. Graduate student and faculty collaboration and co-authorship would also be allowed.

And finally, faculty and others scholars could submit manuscripts to the journal. Publication preference would be given to articles related to the Mid-South and Southeastern parts of the

U.S. and especially issues related to Alabama and Mississippi. Importantly, however, while priority will be given to good regionally-focused papers, other good papers of general sociological relevance will also be accepted.

Where Will Our Student Papers Likely Come From?

If they meet standards, the winning papers from the A-MSA Undergraduate and Graduate Paper Competitions will be published in the E-Journal. Others students can submit papers as well. It was the committee's opinion that we might also receive some papers from the MSSA student paper competitions as well as those from other state and regional associations. We can place information on the A-MSA website and send out e-mail information to Sociology Department Chairs as well as Departmental Graduate and Undergraduate Directors mentioning our interest in student papers.

Who Will Edit the A-MSA E-Journal?

We will seek nominations and applications from A-MSA members for this position. Obviously, the A-MSA E-Journal editor should be someone who has published in refereed journals. Applicants would need to submit a vita and fill out a short form showing some limited institutional support (computer capable of handling necessary files, possible release time, CD writer capability, secretarial support, file space (cabinet) and perhaps a \$ 300 budget for mailing, long distance phone calls, etc.).

What About an Editorial Board?

We would need an Editorial Board of 12-15 A-MSA members who have published in refereed journals. These Editorial Board Members would be relied on fairly heavily as manuscript reviewers during the first year or two of publication. Editorial Board members could be nominated or volunteer. The committee went through an informal list of A-MSA members and decided that we have enough qualified board members if they will agree to serve.

How Often Would the Journal Publish?

We propose two issues during the journal's first year of publication, 2005. Hopefully, the first issue would be "published" in January or February of 2005 and the second issue in June or July of 2005. In subsequent years, the A-MSA E-Journal would publish four regular issues.

Submission of Articles

Manuscripts for review would be submitted electronically in either Microsoft Word or WordPerfect formats.

Evaluation of the A-MSA E-Journal

The committee recommends that the A-MSA should publish this journal for two years. Statistics should be kept on manuscripts submitted, manuscripts rejected, manuscripts revised, and manuscripts published. Web counters should be placed on the E-Journal part of the website to count "hits" on the site. After two years of publication, the A-MSA membership should be polled or surveyed to see if they think the journal serves a valuable purpose. Questions should be asked about readership (Do you read the journal? Are the articles worth reading? Do you find the e-journal helpful in motivating your students or in providing models for their research and papers?. Would you recommend that the A-MSA continue publication of this e-journal?). All of the above factors (papers submitted, web hits, readership, value to A-MSA faculty members and their students) should be evaluated after two years and a decision made on whether or not to continue publishing the A-MSSA e-journal.

Comments regarding the proposed A-MSA E-Journal will be welcomed at the business session of the upcoming meeting. If you will be unable to attend, please submit comments via e-mail to Larry Hall at hall@shc.edu.

Leukemia Claims Former A-MSA President



Dr. Joe Portera, A-MSA President in 1977 and retired director of the Mississippi School of Math and Science in Columbus, Mississippi died January 7, 2004 after losing a lengthy battle with leukemia. He was 61.

Portera's death came just one week after his retirement from MSMS, an institution for the state's gifted students he helped create in the late 1980s.

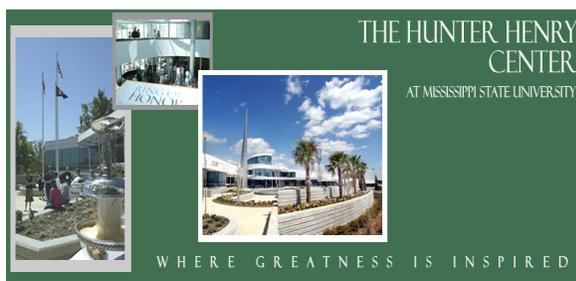
Henry Johnson, state superintendent of education, said Portera was an outstanding educator. "He, in large measure, is the reason why MSMS is so successful," Johnson said.

Portera was born in Columbus and grew up in West Point. He attended Mississippi State University, receiving a doctorate in sociology. He taught at Memphis State University and Mississippi University for Women. Besides his wife, survivors include two daughters and two grandchildren.

A-MSA wishes to extend condolences to Dr. Portera's family and friends.

Spring 2004 Meeting Facilities

Mississippi State University is pleased to host this year's annual meeting at the Hunter Henry Center. Nestled between downtown Starkville and the Mississippi State University campus, the uniquely designed meeting center is a premium location for special events in the Golden Triangle area. The building's spectacular, towering 80-foot spire and modern design will undoubtedly leave a lasting impression on visitors. Lushly landscaped gardens featuring several attractive water features and an amphitheater create a memorable setting for this year's gathering of the A-MSA. For an MSU campus map and location of the Hunter Henry Center, please refer to the website at <http://www.hunterhenrycenter.msstate.edu>.



2004 Meeting Accommodations

We have reserved blocks of rooms at several nearby locations. The closest lodging is the Comfort Suites, located within short walking distance to the meeting site at the Hunter Henry Center. The group rate there is \$79.00/night. All of the Comfort Suites rooms have full amenities including two telephones with high speed data ports and message center; coffee makers, hair dryers, and irons with ironing boards; microwave and refrigerators; complimentary USA Today Newspaper, free local calls; and free HBO. The hotel also features a complimentary deluxe continental breakfast, indoor swimming pool, and fitness center. To reserve a room, please call (662) 324-9595 and ask for the MS/AL Sociological Association block. You must reserve with a major credit

card. Rooms that are not reserved by February 6th will be released for sale to the general public.

Additional rooms at special rates for the AL/MS Sociological Association are available at:

- Hampton Inn (less than a five minute drive from Hunter Henry); the Hampton rate is also \$79.00 per night. To reserve there call (662) 324-1333 and refer to the MS/AL Sociological Association block. Rooms that are not reserved by February 6th will be released for sale to the general public.
- Ramada Inn (about a five minute drive from Hunter Henry); the Ramada rate is \$57.00 per night. To reserve there call (662) 323-6161 and refer to the MS/AL Sociological Association block. Rooms that are not reserved by February 3rd will be subject to availability and higher rates.

Other lodging in the area includes:

BEST WESTERN

119 Highway 12 West
Starkville, MS 39759
662.324.5555 or 800.528.1234

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS & SUITES

110 Hwy 12 West
Starkville, MS 39759
662.324.0076 or 800.465.4329

HOTEL CHESTER

101 N. Jackson Street
Starkville, MS 39759
662.323.5005 or Toll Free 866.325.5005

MICROTEL INN & SUITES

1121 Hwy. 82 East
Starkville, MS 39759
662.615.0700

UNIVERSITY INN

703 Spring Street
Starkville, MS 39759
662.323.9550 or 800.475.8648

Driving Directions to Starkville

Coming from ...

Tuscaloosa, AL – Take Highway 82 West through Columbus, Mississippi to Starkville. For most accommodations, take the first exit toward your right to Starkville after the light at the Mississippi Research and Technology Park (the first light in Starkville on Highway 82); this is designated as the exit to Highway 12 and Highway 25. The trip to Starkville from Tuscaloosa is conservatively about 1.5 hours.

Jackson, MS – Take Highway 25 North, following the signs to Mississippi State University. (Highway 25 merges with Highway 12, the main strip in town with most of the hotels and many restaurants.) The trip from Jackson to Starkville is approximately 2.5 hours.

Memphis, TN – There are two ways people generally come to Starkville from Memphis. One is to take Highway 55 South until you reach the Highway 82 turnoff to Starkville and Mississippi State University. Take Highway 82 East, through Starkville. Once you pass through Starkville, take the exit designating Mississippi State University. The trip from Memphis to Starkville is approximately 3 hours. Many prefer to take the route through Tupelo, which is apparently faster. This involves taking Highway 78 East from Memphis (toward Tupelo and Birmingham) and then taking US Alternate 45 South until you get to Highway 82. From 45 South, take Highway 82 West to Starkville.

