

October 2006



ALABAMA—MISSISSIPPI SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

# A-MSA Fall Newsletter

## Join Us in Montgomery

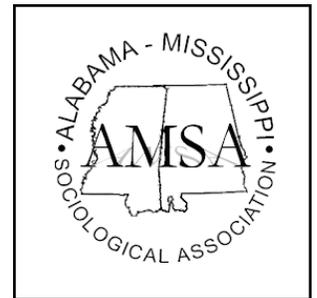
The 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association will be held on February 22-23, 2007 on the Auburn University Montgomery campus. Plans are well under way to make this a memorable and enlightening event and on behalf of all of us at AUM, I cordially invite you to join us in Montgomery. If your last visit to Montgomery was more than a few

years ago, you will be amazed at how much the area around AUM has grown. With the addition of the East Chase shopping area, the east side of Montgomery continues to grow at a rapid pace.

As announced last Spring, the theme for the 2007 meeting will be "Sociology: Unique and Universal." This theme was derived from discussions with my students in our capstone

course, Advanced Seminar. The first question I ask them to reflect on in the course is "Why do you like sociology?" Consistent in their responses is that sociology is applicable to all areas of life and the discipline provides a way to criti-

*(Continued on page 2)*



## Recap of the 2006 Meeting in Oxford

The weather was early-spring perfect as the 2006 meeting kicked off in Oxford at the E. F. Yerby Conference Center. Former Presi-

dent Gary Long and Program Chair Elise Lake created an informative program that covered a diverse range of sociological topics. Particularly

enjoyable was the wide array of student papers presented at the meeting and entered in the competition. President

*(Continued on page 2)*

## You're Invited!! (cont. from p.1)

cally assess any topic of interest. In other words, they liked it because it gave them the tools to study their interests. Therefore, we hope to explore the broad appeal of sociology to students and the public alike. Our guest speakers for both plenary and banquet offer us an opportunity to do just that. Look for information on these outstanding persons later in the newsletter. As I am sure some of you know, the sociology department at AUM combines the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, social work, and geography. We hope to celebrate the universal social scientific perspective that our disciplines share and to highlight the unique

contributions of each to the issues facing society today.

We are counting on your participation to help make this a truly enlightening meeting. Sugges-



tions and offers of assistance are welcome and should be submitted to our Program Chair, An-nice Yarber by email at [ayar-](mailto:ayar-)

[ber@mail.aum.edu](mailto:ber@mail.aum.edu) or by phone at 334.244.3687, or to me, Kim Brackett, Phone: 334.244.3943, Email: [kbracket@mail.aum.edu](mailto:kbracket@mail.aum.edu) Our mailing address is: Department of Sociology, Auburn University Montgomery, PO Box 244023, Montgomery, AL 36124-4023.

We are excited about your participation and look forward to a productive meeting. See page 6 for details about the meeting.

—Kim Brackett

*"Why do you like  
Sociology?"*

A-MSA

## 37th Annual Meeting (cont. from p.1)

Long's session on Social Inequality was very informative and positive comments abounded for Kirk Johnson's workshop on the images of Black Americans in the news media. Given the experiences of our colleagues during hurricane Katrina and its aftermath, it was only fitting that a session be devoted to research on the effects of the storm. The spirit of giving infused the organization through the Katrina Recovery Raffle which raised

\$300 for the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center.

The banquet proved to be the perfect time to recognize not only seven student paper contest winners, but two outstanding A-MSA members. Ming Tsui was recognized with the Distinguished Service Award, presented by Dennis Peck. Vaughn Grisham was recognized by Gary

Long for many years of service to the A-MSA and to the University of Mississippi.



## A-MSA Committees

---

*Critical committees for the upcoming meeting and their chairpersons are listed below.*

**Awards** — Gary L. Long, University of Mississippi

**Nominations** — Don Bogie, Auburn University Montgomery

**Graduate Student Papers** —

**Undergraduate Student Papers** — Albert Nylander, Delta State University

You may notice that we do not yet have a chair for the Graduate Student Papers committee. This is a critical committee that will be asked to evaluate the graduate papers submitted for the annual competition. If you are interested in serving the organization by chairing this committee, or if you have a colleague that you would like to recommend, please contact the AMSA President or Program Chair as soon as possible. Likewise, if you have suggestions for any of the committee chairs, or would be willing to assist in their tasks, they would be appreciative of your input.

## News from Around the A-MSA

---

### Alabama

*The Handbook of 21st Century Sociology*, a two-volume 106 chapter library reference resource, was published by Sage in November 2006. Co-edited by Dr. Dennis L. Peck of The University of Alabama and Dr. Clifton D. Bryant of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, there are a number of southern sociologists who are counted among the distinguished group of international contributors.

### Alabama - Birmingham

There is much news to report concerning the Department of Sociology at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. Three new faculty members have joined the Department in the last

2 years—Drs. Erika Austin, Shelia Cotten, and Harry Hamilton. Dr. Austin just finished a post doc at UCLA. She will teach courses for us in statistics and methods at the undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as substantive courses in human sexuality and in health inequalities. Erika is currently doing research on adolescent sexual identity as well as homelessness. Dr. Cotten was an Associate Professor at the University of Maryland before joining us last year. Dr. Cotten teaches courses in mental health, survey research, and information technology. Her current funded research and writing deals with internet technology's impact on personal well-being. Dr. Hamilton is the former director of the St. Andrew's Foundation, and is a Teaching

Assistant Professor in the Department, teaching a wide range of undergraduate courses for us.

Ferris Ritchey stepped down as Chair of the Department after 6 years of service. Mark LaGory assumed the role as of August 1. Patricia Drentea will be the new Graduate Director and Becky Trigg the new Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Bill Cockerham was named Distinguished University Professor, one of less than 15 in the entire university. The title acknowledges his distinguished and highly productive career in Medical Sociology. Bill has authored 7 major books. His *Medical Sociology* text, published by Prentice Hall, is in its 10<sup>th</sup> Edition. It has been translated into

*(Continued on page 4)*

## News (cont. from p.3)

Spanish, Lithuanian, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese, and has been included in the International Sociological Association's list of "Books of the Century".

Dr. Sean Hwang has completed his NCHD funded project in China on the involuntary migration of residents from the Three Rivers Gorges area. The project has produced interesting results that have applications to many diaspora populations such as those in the United States affected by Hurricane Katrina.

We have a new web site ([www.sbs.uab.edu](http://www.sbs.uab.edu)) and we invite you to find out more about our faculty, and our undergraduate and graduate programs. We've added a feature that shows some of our recent PhDs in Medical Sociology and where they have gone. Prospective students can download an application to the graduate program from the site.

If you have any questions about our programs or are interested in the Medical Sociology PhD program, feel free to contact the Chair at [mlogory@uab.edu](mailto:mlogory@uab.edu).

### **Auburn - Montgomery**

The AUM Department is ten sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, and social workers who are actively involved in teaching, research, administration, and community service. In addition to instructing introductory service courses, they teach advanced courses for the Bachelors

degree in Sociology with concentrations in general sociology, marriage and family, and anthro-



pology. AUM graduate faculty are part of the Auburn University-Auburn University Montgomery Interdepartmental Master of Sociology degree. Students in the department's successful Pre-Social Work Program spend three years at AUM and then transfer in their fourth year to one of two nearby universities for their Bachelor of Social Work.

AUM faculty members actively engage in all phases of professional social science research, from applying for grants to publishing professional articles and books. The research interests are wide ranging reflecting the multidisciplinary nature of the department. Current interests include published research in divorce, racial and ethnic discrimination on college campuses, loneliness among older people,

single parent families, religion, death and dying, crime and policy, death penalty history and court decisions, adolescent sexual behavior, GIS (geographical information systems) applications for cultural, social, and geographical research, Maya archaeology, cultural ecology, southeastern Indian architecture and settlement patterns, and demography of Alabama. Faculty research often teams with undergraduate students, many of whom have delivered papers at professional meetings and published in professional journals. The department has an archaeology laboratory, GIS facilities, and is associated with the AUM Center for Demographic Research.

Faculty involvement in the university and community reflects their research interests.

Many serve with or advise the Alabama Governor's office, Courtwatch, Equal Justice Initiative, Alabama Historic Commission, Hospice of Montgomery, Funeral Consumers' Alliance, many local and state social and health agencies, and various professional organizations.

If you are interested in talking with any of the AUM faculty or students about their research or activities, please contact Mrs. Nancy Shaw, Administrative Associate at 334-244-3378 ([nshaw@mail.aum.edu](mailto:nshaw@mail.aum.edu))

*(Continued on page 5)*

### Itawamba

Itawamba Community College (ICC) added a third full time sociology instructor this fall. Jennifer M. Estis-Sumerel teaches sociology and criminal justice classes on the Tupelo Campus and is responsible for coordinating the on-line sociology classes.

ICC added 4 new on-line sections for Sociology this fall, which means that 20 sections are currently being offered. The number of on-lines students enrolled in on-line classes in-

creased from 258 in the spring of 2006 to 479 this fall.

Jennifer is a Ph.D. candidate at Mississippi State University. She received her B.S. degree from the University of North Alabama and her masters from Mississippi State University.

### Mississippi

Ross Haenfler recently published *Straight Edge: Hardcore Punk, Clean-Living Youth, and Social Change*, Rutgers Univer-

sity Press 2006.

### Spring Hill College

There is a new faculty member in sociology at Spring Hill College. Her name is Michelle Petrie, a relatively recent Ph.D. graduate of the University of Georgia.

---

## Professional Opportunities

The Louisiana State University Department of Sociology anticipates two tenure-track Assistant or Associate Professor positions beginning in August, 2007. One position (Ref:#006483) will be full-time in sociology; the other (Ref: #008350) will be a joint appointment with either African and African-American Studies or Women and Gender Studies. While areas of specialization are open, the department seeks to build on its existing strengths in the areas of criminology, social capital, and social inequality.

Required qualifications: Ph.D. degree in sociology or related discipline is required by the time of the appointment; an established record of publication and grants. Salary and rank will be commensurate with qualifications. Review of applications will begin November 1, 2006, and continue until the positions are filled. Send letter of application, vita (including e-mail address), and have three letters of recommendation sent to:

Search Committee, Department of Sociology, 126 Stubbs Hall, Louisiana State University, Ref: #008350 or #006483, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-5411

LSU IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/  
EQUAL ACCESS EMPLOYER

---

The University of South Alabama, Department of Sociology, Anthropology and So-

cial Work invites applications for a tenure-track Assistant Professor in Sociology to begin August 15, 2007. The applicant should display research and teaching interest in demography in conjunction with medical sociology, race/ethnicity, applied sociology, or economic sociology. Other areas of interest are open. Priority will be given to applicants who have a Ph.D. completed by the time of employment, strong teaching skills, and high potential for success in research, publications, and obtaining extramural funding.

The department offers Master's and undergraduate degrees in sociology. The University of South Alabama is a diverse and vibrant public university, located on the beautiful Gulf Coast in Mobile. The city offers quality of life that includes affordable housing, a rich history and endless recreational opportunities of nearby parks and beaches.

Interested persons should send a letter, curriculum vitae, and three letters of reference under separate cover to Roma Stovall Hanks, Chair, Search Committee, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work, HUMB 34, University of South Alabama, 307 N. University Blvd., Mobile, AL 36688-0002. Women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply. Review of applications will begin November 1, 2006 and will continue until the position is filled. If selected for an interview, the candidate must arrange for the Search Com-

mittee to receive 1) three original (non-electronic) letters of recommendation with signatures sent directly from the respective referees to the Chair of the Search Committee, 2) official transcripts sent directly from all of the candidate's universities, and 3) a University of South Alabama Biographical Data form completed and signed by the candidate. AA/EEO/M/F/D

---

### Authors Needed

Dr. Kim Brackett (Auburn University Montgomery) is editing an encyclopedia for Greenwood Press entitled *Battleground: Families*. There are many interesting topics still in need of authors. The entries receive a by-line and authors are eligible for honoraria. If you are interested in writing a short entry (3000 words) on a current controversy in family, or finding out more about the project, please contact the editor at [kbracket@mail.aum.edu](mailto:kbracket@mail.aum.edu) or (334) 244-3943. This would be a great opportunity for graduate students (or even advanced undergraduates) to get their feet wet in the world of publishing.

---

Visit the A-MSA Website at:

[www2.una.edu/almsa/](http://www2.una.edu/almsa/)

February 22 and 23, 2007



ALABAMA - MISSISSIPPI SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

# Annual Meeting Details

## The 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association

It is our hope that the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting will be a unique and memorable experience for you. To help facilitate this unique experience, we have two phenomenal speakers scheduled for our meeting:

### **SOCIOLOGY: UNIQUE AND UNIVERSAL**

**February 22-23, 2007**

**at**

**Auburn University Montgomery**

#### **SPEAKERS**

##### **Plenary session**

Dr. Mark LaGory, Professor, UAB. Dr. LaGory is an urban sociologist

whose research deals with the significance of place and environment for the well-being and health of urban residents. He has special interest in those who, because of poverty or other personal circumstances, have been deprived of place (homelessness). In addition he has recently begun to focus on the role that various forms of social capital (social support, religious ties, voluntary associations) play in mediating the consequences of stress. He has published over 50 refereed journal articles and 5 books.

He is a member of the Episcopal clergy, serving on the staff of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Mountain Brook as Deacon. He is married to Mary Sue, a retired school teacher, the parent of three adult children, and the grandparent of four.

##### **Awards Dinner**

Dr. Ansley Abraham, sociologist, is director of the Southern Regional Education Board State Doctoral Scholars Program in Atlanta, GA. Under Dr.

Abraham's direction, the Board has developed one of the nation's best-documented and successful programs for producing minority Ph.D.s who seek faculty careers. The Scholars Program also is part of a nationwide effort to increase the number of minority scholars who earn the Ph.D.



and seek to become college and university faculty members. The program has served more than 700 scholars at 83 institutions in 29 states, maintained a retention/graduation rate of almost 90 percent, and produced almost 350 graduates—76 percent of whom are employed on campuses as faculty, administrators, or postdoctoral researchers. The Doctoral Scholars Program annually sponsors the Compact for Faculty Diversity Institute on Teaching and Mentoring that brings together almost 1,000 minority Ph.D. scholars and their mentors to provide skills and knowledge for the successful completion of the doctoral degree and transition to an academic career. The Institute is the largest gathering of minority Ph.D. students in America.

---

## SESSIONS

- In addition to phenomenal speakers, we have phenomenal sociological sessions planned as well. A sample of the planned sessions, paper topics, and facilitators are listed below. Please feel free to submit your work under these or other broad topical areas of interest to you.

Demography	Dr. Zongli Tang, AUM
Deviance	Dr. Paul Sharp, AUM
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legal Changes in Capital Punishment</li></ul>
Health	Akilah Dulin, UAB
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Obesity</li></ul>
Religion	Dr. Carolyn Pevey, AUM
Social Capital	Lonnie Hannon, UAB
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• African American Communities and Social Capital</li></ul>
Using GIS to Map Sociological Data	Dr. Terry Winemiller, AUM

---

## AWARDS CEREMONY

Our awards ceremony will consist of a banquet and program, followed by a wine and dessert mixer. The ceremony will be held in beautiful downtown Montgomery at Troy State University's Gold Room, across from the Rosa Parks Library and Museum. The Museum is a major landmark in the revitalization of downtown Montgomery constructed on the site of the old Empire Theatre where Mrs. Parks made her courageous and historic stand in 1955. The interpretive museum occupies the first floor and 7,000 square feet of a three-story, 55,000 square foot building that contains the TROY-Montgomery Campus Library. The Rosa Parks Museum will remain open until 6:00 p.m. to accommodate those who would like to encounter yet another unique experience. The wine and dessert mixer will give us an opportunity to enjoy stimulating conversations with other attendees and our conference speakers.

## HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel accommodations are provided by:

- Country Inn & Suites – Montgomery East (\$79 for single or double room) 334-270-3223  
or [www.countryinns.com/montgomeryal](http://www.countryinns.com/montgomeryal)
- Hampton Inn – Montgomery (\$75.00 for double or king) 334-277-2400

Both hotels offer great amenities, such as continental breakfast, fitness center, and wireless internet connection. Be sure to mention the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association to get these great rates. Directions to both hotels are forthcoming.

There are many hotels on the eastern side of town (not far from AUM). If you are interested in other hotels in the area, go online and enter “hotels + montgomery alabama east” into the search engine.

---

## REGISTRATION

A formal call for submissions will be forthcoming, as well as registration information. In the meantime, suggestions and offers of assistance are welcome and should be submitted to our Program Chair, Annice Yarber by email at [ayarber@mail.aum.edu](mailto:ayarber@mail.aum.edu) or by phone at 334.244.3687. We look forward to seeing you at the 2007 meetings.