

# **83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Rural Sociological Society**



## **Rurality and Crises of Democracy**

**Events  
July 29 – August 1  
2021**





## President's Welcome Message

Dear friends and colleagues,

Welcome to the 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meetings of the Rural Sociological Society. Ordinarily I'd be enthusiastically welcoming you to an actual physical meeting place where we could all look forward to seeing each other and catching up in person. This year's meeting, however, will be unlike any other ever held by the RSS – our first entirely online meeting. It is the unfortunate but necessary consequence of what has been an extraordinarily difficult time.

My excitement about our annual meeting is thus necessarily tempered by the knowledge that this year nearly every one of us has been touched by some form of deeply significant loss. This loss includes a global pandemic that has taken the lives of at least 600,000 in the United States, and

nearly 3.5 million globally, placing the most vulnerable among us at the greatest risk, exposing tremendous social and spatial inequities, and significant weaknesses in our capacity to collectively respond at global, national, regional and community levels. This includes a tremendously painful and ongoing collective reckoning with deeply embedded racial violence, trauma, and institutional injustice that is as historically foundational as it is commonplace within the contemporary America experience. And in the context of similar trends occurring globally, this includes grave and unimagined perils threatening the very fabric of our democracy in the form of rising ethno-nationalism, populist autocracy, a deeply divided electorate, and earlier this year a deadly insurrection at the Capitol Building by Americans attempting to disrupt and nullify the peaceful and democratic transfer of power. To say these have been difficult times is a most grievous understatement. I hope that you and your family have found forbearance, purpose, and resiliency amidst such deep uncertainty.

And yet, when have the insights, tools, and perspectives of our discipline been more in need, relevant, and of the moment? It is in that spirit and resolve that I welcome you, and I look forward to joining you in a set of meetings that, instead of occurring over four days, will take place over the next two months. During June and July we will hold RIG-organized conference sessions via zoom on Tuesdays and Thursdays. These sessions are open and I look forward to seeing you there. We will also have a special programming during our regularly scheduled meeting time, July 29-August 1 with a range of events including a set of sessions devoted to a soon to be published collection of articles on rurality, race and ethnicity, a discussion on translating rural sociological scholarship for broader audiences, graduate student programming, a session on professional ethics, and other sessions.

I am also looking forward to a dynamic and provocative set of plenary speakers. We have a film talkback with Raj Patel, who will make his new documentary available to all RSS members in advance of the meeting to view online. *The Ants and the Grasshopper* addresses climate change, global food security, and spatial, political, economic and gendered social division – and the political agency and reconciliation needed to navigate these unfolding 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges. We will also be joined by Earl Wright II who will draw from his recent book *Jim Crow Sociology* to discuss the historical roots of Black Sociology, challenging not only the common wisdom about how we understand the roots of modern sociology within the United States, but the roots of *rural* sociology. Finally, we will be joined by Ruy Teixeira, a senior fellow at American Progress and co-director of the States of Change: Demographics and Democracy project, to discuss this work and the challenges to democracy posed by rapid demographic change within the United States.

In closing I want to acknowledge the tremendous efforts of the RSS Executive Committee, and members of Council, nearly all of whom agreed last year to extend their terms by a year in order to keep the RSS trains running on time. This was an unanticipated ask, an extra burden, and I am deeply grateful for their collective commitment to our Society. I'd like to acknowledge in particular the incredible efforts, wisdom, and patience of our executive director, Cindy Struthers, who along with myself, Scott Sanders and Elisa Cárdenas Oleas make up this year's Program Committee. And last of all I want to thank the broader RSS membership – you – for your ongoing participation, commitment, and energy as the Society responds to these unprecedented times. I could not have hoped for a finer group of people to work with.

Kai A. Schafft  
RSS President 2019-2021

**July 29 - August 1, 2021 (Registration Required)**

Thursday, July 29		Friday, July 30		Saturday, July 31		Sunday, August 1	
	RSS		RSS		RSS		RSS
<b>12:00 - 1:15 PM</b>	Welcome and President's Address	<b>12:00 - 1:15 PM</b>	Graduate Student Panel: <i>Navigating Job Markets: Spaces Inside and Outside of Academia</i>	<b>12:00 - 1:15 PM</b>	Plenary Speaker: Earl Wright II, <i>Booker T. Washington, Tuskegee Institute, and a Colonized Discipline: The Black and Southern Roots of Rural Sociology in the United States</i>	<b>12:00 - 1:15 PM</b>	Plenary: Ruy Teixeira, <i>The Rural Voter in the Age of Trump</i>
<b>1:30 - 2:45 PM</b>	RSS 2021-2022 Full Council Mtg. (Council members, only)	<b>1:30 - 2:45 PM</b>	Author Meets Critics Session: Jennifer Sherman Discusses <i>Dividing Paradise</i>	<b>1:30 - 2:45 PM</b>	Session 1: Rurality, Race & Ethnicity - A <i>Rural Sociology</i> Special Issue Symposium	<b>1:30 - 2:45 PM</b>	Awards Ceremony

Thursday, July 29		Friday, July 30		Saturday, July 31		Sunday, August 1	
	RSS		RSS		RSS		RSS
3:00 - 4:15 PM		3:00 - 4:15 PM	Plenary Speaker: Raj Patel, <i>Documentary Film Talk Back-- The Ants and the Grasshopper</i>	3:00 - 4:15 PM	Session 2: Rurality, Race & Ethnicity - A <i>Rural Sociology</i> Special Issue Symposium	3:00 - 4:15 PM	Ethics Committee Report and Q & A
4:30 - 5:45 PM		4:30 - 5:45 PM	Panel: <i>Translating Rural Sociological Scholarship to a Broader Audience</i>	4:30 - 5:45 PM	Roundtable: Researching Race and Ethnicity in Rural Sociology - A Panel Discussion	4:30 - 5:45 PM	RSS Business Mtg.

## **RURALITY AND CRISES OF DEMOCRACY**

### **Thursday, July 29**

Time: 12:00 pm – 1:15 pm EDT

Welcome and RSS President Kai Schafft's Address

"Rurality and Crises of Democracy: What Can Rural Sociology Offer the Present Moment?"

### **Thursday, July 29**

Time: 1:30 pm – 5:45 pm EDT

RSS Council Meeting

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**Friday, July 30**

Time 12:00 pm – 1:15 pm EDT

**2021 Graduate Student Panel: Navigating Job Markets: Spaces Inside and Outside of Academia**

**Moderators:**

**Jasmine L. Whiteside**, PhD Candidate at The Ohio State University

**Sonja Lindberg**, PhD Candidate at Iowa State University

**Outside of Academia Panelists:**

**Dani Deemer (she/hers)**, (Social Science Research Analyst, USDA Food and Nutrition Service Office of Policy Support)

**Kathryn (Kate) Anderson**, (Senior Researcher, Farms & Forests, Sightline Institute)

**Katherine Dentzman**, (Social Science Program Specialist, USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture)

**Stephanie Teixeira Poit**, (Assistant Professor, North Carolina A&T State University) 7 years of experience at RTI International and 5 years of experience at the Center for Urban Affairs and Community Services

**Mary Sketch**, (Coordinator of the Virginia Soil Health Coalition, Virginia Cooperative Extension)

**Jennifer Rachels**, PMP, MBA, MPA. (Current PhD student at Michigan Technological University) experience with national service programs

**Academic Panelists:**

**Robert Francis**, (Assistant Professor of Sociology, Whitworth University)

**Paige Kelly**, (Post-Doctoral Associate, Cornell University)

**Clare Cannon**, (Assistant Professor, University of California, Davis)

**Amanda McMillan Lequieu**, (Assistant Professor, Drexel University)

**Elizabeth Ransom**, (Interim Director and Associate Professor, The Pennsylvania State University)

**Description:** This panel session will examine job market opportunities within governments, NGOs, and private industry while also addressing employment opportunities within academia. It is an open forum style that encourages RSS graduate students to ask questions about job markets and application processes.

The goal of the **Outside of Academia Panel** is to provide graduate students with insights on how to be a strong, successful candidate as they seek careers in spaces outside of the academy. The goal of the **Academic Panel** is to serve as a setting for interested graduate students to explore how to be a compelling and successful candidate on the academic job market. Panelists come from a range of fields and possess varying years of experience.

**Friday, July 30**

Time: 1:30 pm – 2:45 pm EDT

**Author Meets Critics Session: Jennifer Sherman discusses *Dividing Paradise***

**Moderator:** Nick Garcia (Washington College)

**Panelists:** Emily Wornell (Ball State University), Paige Kelly (Cornell University), Lisa Pruitt (University of California, Davis), Richelle Winkler (Michigan Technological University)

**Description:** How rural areas have become uneven proving grounds for the American Dream

Late-stage capitalism is trying to remake rural America in its own image, and the resistance is telling. Small-town economies that have traditionally been based on logging, mining, farming, and ranching now increasingly rely on tourism, second-home ownership, and retirement migration. In *Dividing Paradise*, Jennifer Sherman tells the story of Paradise Valley, Washington, a rural community where amenity-driven economic growth has resulted in a new social landscape of inequality and privilege, with deep fault lines between old-timers and newcomers. In this complicated cultural reality, "class blindness" allows privileged newcomers to ignore or justify their impact on these towns, papering over the sentiments of anger, loss, and disempowerment of longtime locals (<https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520305144/dividing-paradise>).



**Friday, July 30**

Time: 3:00 pm – 4:15 pm EDT

**Plenary:** Raj Patel (University of Texas at Austin), Documentary Film Talk Back -- *The Ants and the Grasshopper*

**Moderators:** Florence Becot (Marshfield Clinic Research Institute) and Elly Engle (McDaniel College)

**Panelists:** Loka Ashwood (University of Kentucky), Krushna Ranaware (University of Syracuse), Elizabeth Ransom (Pennsylvania State University), Doug Jackson-Smith (Ohio State University)

**Description:** Filmed over a decade in the US and Malawi, *The Ants & The Grasshopper* follows the journey of Anita Chitaya, a community leader and farmer as she tries to end hunger in her village. Under the auspices of the [Soil, Food and Healthy Communities](#) group, agroecological practices have reduced malnutrition, improved soil, and raised measures of gender equality. Climate change threatens these achievements. Baffled by US inaction on climate change, she journeys to the United States with her mentor, Esther Lupafya, to talk with farmers and food system activists there to learn, and support them in their struggles to improve their communities. Raj Patel joins us to discuss the making of this film, which will be available to all RSS conference registrants one week prior to this panel.

**Friday, July 30**

Time: 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm EDT

**Panel: Translating Rural Sociological Scholarship to a Broader Audience**

**Organizers:** Robert Francis (Whitworth University), and Amanda Buday (Grand Valley State University)

**Moderator:** Robert Francis (Whitworth University)

**Description:** "If a tree falls in a forest and no one hears it, does it make a sound?" Rural sociologists are experts, but what are strategies for translating rural research knowledge to multiple audiences with broad interests and experiences? How can sociological knowledge effectively impact policymakers, elected officials, and the public? And what responsibility do rural sociologists have to promote rural-inclusive knowledge production? Join us for a moderated panel discussion about these questions with opportunities for audience interaction and discussion.

**Panelists:** Tim Marema (The Daily Yonder), Shannon Monnat (Syracuse University), Philip Cohen (University of Maryland), Lisa Pruitt (University of California, Davis)

**Saturday, July 31**

Time: 12:00 pm – 1:15 pm EDT

**Plenary:** Earl Wright (Rhodes College), *Booker T. Washington, Tuskegee Institute, and a Colonized Discipline: The Black and Southern Roots of Rural Sociology in the United States*

**Moderator:** Julie Zimmerman (University of Kentucky)

**Description:** Over the past five years scholars have re-examined the origin and development of sociology in the United States and uncovered disciplinary malpractice through the marginalization or exclusion of significant contributors to the discipline who were Black and worked primarily at HBCUs (historically Black colleges and universities). In this presentation the rural sociology exploits performed at Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute (1892-1905) are highlighted while its significance and contemporary relevance to the area scrutinized. Moving beyond a recitation of past accomplishments, this presentation ends with an assessment of how the discipline could have developed differently had Tuskegee been fully embraced by the rural sociology community.

**Saturday, July 31**

1:30 pm – 2:45 pm EDT

**Session 1: Rurality, Race, and Ethnicity – A *Rural Sociology* Special Issue Symposium**

**Moderator:** Carol Ward (Brigham Young University)

**Discussant:** Earl Wright II (Rhodes College)

**Description:** The two sessions on Saturday after the plenary feature articles forthcoming in *Rural Sociology* on the topic of “rurality, race and ethnicity.” Our discussant for the first session is plenary speaker Earl Wright II. In the first paper, Carrillo, et al. provide a framing for the articles in the forthcoming special issue as well as an historical perspective on the discipline’s scholarly treatment of rurality, race, and ethnicity. Escobar presents her research on her work with Hispanic young adults in northwest Arkansas. She uses the concept of “liminal belonging” to articulate Hispanic young adults’ geographically contingent and unsteady or fluctuating sense of community and racial belonging within former “sundown towns.” Last, Ford’s work examines Preppers, a sub-culture of Americans who prepare for the collapse of society via emergency preparedness and self-sufficiency. She uses thematic narrative analysis of data derived from multi-method ethnographic research, to investigate the relationship between settler-colonialism, white hegemony and environmental privilege in preppers’ discourse about the rural.

**Authors and Titles:**

Carrillo, Ian, Katrina Quisumbing King, and Kai A. Schafft. “Race, Ethnicity, and Twenty-First Century Rural Sociological Imaginings: A Special Issue Introduction”

Escobar, Maria. “Liminal Belonging in *El Nuevo South*: Belonging Amid Layers of Exclusion”

Ford, Allison. ““They Will Be Like a Swarm of Locusts”: Race, Rurality and Settler Colonialism in American Prepping Culture”

**Saturday, July 31**

3:00 pm – 4:15 pm EDT

**Session 2: Rurality, Race, and Ethnicity – A *Rural Sociology* Special Issue Symposium**

**Moderator:** Carol Ward (Brigham Young University)

**Discussant:** Mara Tieken (Bates College)

**Description:** The two sessions on Saturday after the plenary feature articles forthcoming in *Rural Sociology* on the topic of “rurality, race and ethnicity.” Mara Tieken will serve as discussant for this second session. The first two papers examine race and rural education. In the first paper, Mann and Rogers use a Critical Race Spatial Analysis to examine patterns of racial and economic isolation and dissimilarity in the Alabama Black Belt to determine patterns of school and neighborhood segregation. In the next paper, Aylward and colleagues use event history methodology to understand how changing district-level factors are associated with the issuance of federal citations for disproportionality in special education during 2004–2005 to 2011–2012 school years within rural New York school districts. The second two papers are focused on settler colonialism and environmental issues in the context American Indian community and sovereignty. Mauer’s work with the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe (LEKT) on the Olympic Peninsula of Washington State suggest the ways in which colonial ecological violence associated with the damming of the Elwha River continues to shape contemporary possibilities for Klallam resurgence, sovereignty, and self-determination. Last, Bray’s work draws on theories of settler colonialism and rural environmental justice to investigate the historical formation of water inequality in the American Southwest, in particular looking at the Navajo Indian Irrigation project (NIIP) and the San Juan-Chama Project (SJCP). She argues that settler officials used the NIIP as a mechanism to appropriate Native resources and shows how racial projects within NIIP negotiations contributed to colonial domination by diminishing the political sovereignty of the Navajo Nation.

**Authors and Titles:**

Mann, Bryan, and Annah Rogers. “Segregation Now, Segregation Tomorrow, Segregation Forever? Racial and Economic Isolation and Dissimilarity in Rural Black Belt Schools in Alabama”

Aylward, Alexandra, Brenda Barrio, and Catharine Kramarczuk. “Exclusion from Educational Opportunity in Diversifying Rural Contexts

Mauer, K. Whitney. “Unsettling Resilience: Colonial Ecological Violence, Indigenous Futurisms, and the Restoration of the Elwha River.”

Bray, Laura A. “Settler Colonialism and Rural Environmental Injustice: Water Inequality on the Navajo Nation”

**Saturday, July 31**

4:30 pm – 5:45 pm EDT

**Roundtable: Researching Race and Ethnicity in Rural Sociology – A Panel Discussion**

**Moderator:** Ian Carrillo (University of Oklahoma)

**Panelists:** Marcus Bernard (Kentucky State University), Robert Chiles (Pennsylvania State University), Diego Thompson (Mississippi State University), Jasmine Whiteside (Ohio State University), and Dreamal Worthen (Florida A&M University)

**Description:** This panel discussion focuses on approaches to studying race and ethnicity in rural sociology research. The expertise of panelists covers a wide range of sub-fields within rural sociology. Panelists will provide opening remarks, which will be followed by a Q&A period.

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**Sunday, August 1**

12:00 pm – 1:15 pm EDT

**Plenary: Ruy Teixeira (Center for American Progress), The Rural Voter in the Age of Trump**

**Moderator:** Kai Schaftt (Pennsylvania State University)

**Panelists:** TBD

**Description:** This plenary talk will focus on trends in rural voter support for Trump, its precedents, underlying motivations of rural voters, and implications for future election cycles.

**Sunday, August 1**

1:30 pm – 2:45 pm EDT

**Awards Ceremony**

**Host and Moderator:** Alisha Coleman-Jensen (Economic Research Service-USDA), Chair  
Awards and Endowment Committee

**2020-2021 RSS Awardees**

- Distinguished Rural Sociologist
  - Cynthia "Mil" Duncan, Meridian Institute, University of New Hampshire
- Excellence in Research
  - Shannon M. Monnat, Syracuse University
  - Lisa R. Pruitt, University of California, Davis
- Excellence in Instruction
  - Kathryn Teigen De Master, University of California, Berkeley
- Certificate of Appreciation
  - Carol A. Jenkins, Glendale Community College
- The Fred Buttel Outstanding Scholarly Achievement Award 2020 (Book)
  - For-Profit Democracy: Why the Government is Losing the Trust of Rural America (Yale University Press, 2018)
    - Loka Ashwood, University of Kentucky
- The Fred Buttel Outstanding Scholarly Achievement Award 2021 (Article)
  - “The Opioid Hydra: Understanding Overdose Mortality Epidemics and Syndemics Across the Rural-Urban Continuum,” *Rural Sociology* (2019)
    - David J. Peters, Iowa State University
    - Shannon M. Monnat, Syracuse University
    - Andrew L. Hochstetler, Iowa State University
    - Mark T. Berg, University of Iowa
- The Olaf Larson Graduate Student Paper Award
  - Kristina P. Brant, Harvard University, “When Mamaw Becomes Mom: Legal Capital and Kinship Family Formation amid the Rural Opioid Crisis”
  - Alec P. Rhodes, Ohio State University, “Student Debt and Geographic Disadvantage: Disparities by Rural, Suburban, and Urban Background”

**RIG Paper Award Winners**

**2020 Thesis, Dissertation, and Early Career Awardees**

**2021 Thesis, Dissertation, and Early Career Awardees**

**Sunday, August 1**

3:00 pm – 4:15 pm EDT

**Session: Ethics Committee Report and Q & A**

**Moderator:** Elizabeth Seale (SUNY- Oneonta), Current Chair of Ethics Committee

**Committee Members:** Sunday Ogunjimi (Federal University Oye Ekiti), Julie Keller (University of Rhode Island), Grace Wildermuth (Pennsylvania State University), Megan Griffin (Pennsylvania State University), and Leland Glenna (Pennsylvania State University)

**Description:** The Ethics Committee session this spring will involve a report to the Society and an opportunity for members to ask questions, voice concerns, and provide feedback to the committee. Our report will focus on violation claims and on our recent policy changes. We will also discuss other activities of the committee and possible projects for the future.

**Sunday, August 1**

4:30 pm – 5:45 pm EDT

**RSS Business Mtg.**

Host and Moderators: Kai Schafft, President RSS and Dreamal Worthen, President-Elect

# **84<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Rural Sociological Society**

**August 4 – August 7, 2022 \* Westminster, CO**

**Community Voices Informed Choices:  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion  
(CIVIC/DEI)**



President: Dreamal Worthen  
Co-Program Chairs:  
Ian Carrillo, University of Oklahoma  
Mark Harvey, Florida Atlantic University

