

## **2024 Section Annual Report: Part 1 for Section on Environmental Sociology**

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### **Introduction**

Annual reports are used by the Sections Committee to assess the health of a Section, measure the Section's vitality, and identify processes, programs, or initiatives that could serve as a model for other Sections. In addition, they serve to provide institutional memory, socialize new Section leaders, and promote transparency to Section members.

This annual report covers the period of Section activity from September 2022 to August 2023 and a fiscal year from January 2023 to December 2023. This portion of the report will be shared publicly.

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### **Section Governance**

Provide details of your Section's governance activity during the period between September 2023 and August 2024.

#### **Business Meeting**

Copy and paste below (or attach separately) the agenda and draft/approved meeting minutes from the Section business meeting which include a count of members present and summary of decisions made at this meeting. Minutes are not a transcript of proceedings, but a listing of what discussions took place and official actions taken.

\*Note: I (Debra Davidson) was unable either locate, or to reach the Section Secretary to retrieve, the minutes taken at the Business Meeting, so the minutes below were reconstructed based on my own notes.

## **ASA Section on Environmental Sociology**

### **Business Meeting August 12, 2024**

### **AGENDA and MINUTES**

In attendance: Council members with the exception of Scott Frickel, Alan Rudy, Cameron Whitley and Nikhil Deb, plus approximately 50 members at large.

#### **Report from the Chair: Debra Davidson**

Land acknowledgement

Gratitude expressed to outgoing Council office holders, and introductions of new office holders. Thank you to Margaret Walkover and Andy Szasz for spearheading a 'teaching climate change initiative', which as involved a revamping and updating of the teaching resources section on our website.

Margaret thanked Michael for his assistance in revamping the website for this purpose, and encouraged members to contribute resources.

Announcement of a climate change meetup to take place at the conference prior to our reception.

**Report from the Chair-elect: Raoul Lievanos**

Reported on the number of submissions received for Section sessions, the criteria used for selection. Sessions have been well-attended, announcement of next sessions this afternoon and tomorrow.

**Communications Committee: Michael Lengefeld**

Website has been improved, thanks to everyone for newsletter contributions

**Treasurer: Maricarmen Hernandez**

The total income in 2024 is \$3,310. This includes membership dues (\$1,178), and our section budget allocation (\$2,132).

We spent \$2,088.00 to host the annual reception at ASA 2024. Because it is a joint reception, the SREM contributed to the cost as well. The breakdown of cost per section was in accordance to section size and budget.

Some more funds than anticipated are remaining due to the fact that CRIEJ events that had funds allocated to them did not take place.

Budget report approved

**CRIEJ Committee: Michael Murphy**

No report

**Nominations Committee: Cameron Whitley, presented by Debra Davidson**

We successfully filled all slates for all open positions, the campaign was successful overall.

**Policy and Research Committee: Nikhil Deb, presented by Debra Davidson**

The main responsibilities for this year involved overseeing the Student Paper Award and the Outstanding Publication Award, which considered books this year. These tasks encompassed assembling a selection committee, collecting nominations for the awards, coordinating the review process, and announcing the award recipients through various channels such as ASA Connect, newsletters, and the awards reception at ASA.

Student Paper Award: We received a total of 15 submissions for this year's award. The review and selection process was carried out by the 2024 Student Paper Award committee, which was comprised of Camila Alvarez, Nikhil Deb (Chair), Patrick Greiner, Andrew McCumber.

Outstanding Publication Award: We received a total of 20 books for this year's Outstanding Publication Award. The 2024 award review committee consisted of Paul Ciccantell, Nikhil Deb (Chair), Hannah Holleman, Brent Kaup, Annabel Ipsen.

The committee evaluated submissions based on several primary selection criteria, including:

1. Originality:
  - Uniqueness of the research topic and approach.
  - Innovative ideas or perspectives that contribute to the field.
2. Contribution to the Discipline:
  - Impact on advancing knowledge within (environmental) sociology.
  - Relevance to current debates and areas of interest within the discipline.
3. Relevance:
  - Alignment with the theme or focus of subdiscipline
  - Addressing pressing issues or gaps in the field.
4. Style and Readability:

- Clarity and coherence of writing.
  - Engaging and accessible presentation of ideas.
  - Adherence to academic standards of writing and citation.
5. Diversity:
- Representation of diverse perspectives, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, and geography. The chair advocated for the inclusion of global south perspectives and research to broaden the scope of environmental sociology.

Winners to be announced at our reception

### **Teaching, Training and Practice: Alan Rudy**

No report

### **Membership Committee Chair: Jennifer Givens**

Membership is slowly increasing to 545 members. If we committed to recruiting new members to reach 600, we would be allocated additional conference sessions.

### **Communications: Michael Lengefeld**

Website has been revised, and new climate change teaching resources added

### **Legacy Chair: Scott Frickel, presented by Debra**

The section's Oral History Project has a new look, with many thanks to Michael Lengefeld. In the past few weeks, Micheal has reorganized the page and posted transcriptions of oral history interviews previously conducted by Beth Caniglia and Rachel Schwom. Members can now access interviews with Tom Dietz, Tom Rudel, Timmons Roberts, Andy Szasz, and Phil Brown. These transcripts have been lightly edited for clarity and ease of reading. We have also begun a historical documents archive with a key piece of section history: the original directory compiled in the early 70s by Riley Dunlap. The directory contains a list of sociologists working at the time on environment or resource related topics and offers a unique perspective on the institutional breadth of the discipline's interest in environmental research and teaching in the years before something called 'environmental sociology' existed.

### **Council Meetings**

Copy and paste below (or attach separately) the agenda and draft/approved meeting minutes of all council meetings. Minutes must include a list of council members present and a summary of decisions made. Minutes are not a transcript of proceedings, but a listing of what discussions took place and official actions taken.

ASA Section Council Meeting

September 11, 2023

AGENDA and Minutes

In attendance: Debra, Sandy, Raoul, Maricarmen, Jenn G., Rudy, Scott, Michael, Nikhil

Introductions

Four updates from Debra:

Section Annual Report is due Nov 15. Sandy as past-Chair will take the lead, will reach out to others as needed.

Association award nominations are due Jan 1. Debra suggested we encourage nominations from our Section, perhaps by identifying potential candidates, and organizing nomination packages. Anyone else interested in pursuing this is encouraged to email Debra.

Agenda item flagged for next meeting: Jennifer couldn't make it, but would like to discuss our awards procedures in our next meeting, and Nikhil also has some things he would like to discuss regarding our awards as well.

Membership report from Steve and Mircea just shared via Dropbox. Some highlights and suggestions: Current membership is at 544, second highest it's been in the past 10 years. Some areas of concern noted include graduate student recruitment, and racial/ethnic diversity of our membership. Steven and Mircea offered some recommendations in the report in response, including:

For recruiting graduate students (mentorship programs and networking events that pair senior academics with early career members),

For racialized minorities, they suggest "developing a database of undergraduate and master students from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups, inviting them to become members of the SES, and linking them to departments with a focus on environmental sociology in order to create opportunities for potential Ph.D. students who might not apply otherwise to environmental sociology graduate programs."

We discussed other strategies, particularly ways to ensure that our Section is an attractive and inclusive space for both graduate students, and radicalized minorities. Making the great work of CRIEJ more broadly known would be good, and also focusing on conference content: Alan for example recalled an annual meeting held in LA decades ago in which one panel included local activists, and Raoul mentioned the pre-conference focused on race and justice from a few years ago.

Raoul and Margaret both offered to work with Jenn Givens, the incoming membership chair, to consider the development of these and possibly other recruitment and retention strategies.

Next, Scott and Michael led a discussion of the oral history project, seeking clarification of what we want this to be? Different priorities determine the ultimate scope of the project, which is limited by the human resources we are able to bring to it. We all agreed that it would be great to capture stories about the foundation of our field, but also illustrate how we have changed over time. We also agreed that limiting the project to previous award recipients and past Section chairs—a criteria that had been entertained previously—was too limiting of the many important voices that could contribute. There was a suggestion to decentralize the project, and invite other members to identify interviewees, and conduct the interviews themselves, which would be exciting but also perhaps very ambitious. Scott mentioned that several interviews have been conducted in addition to the ones already available on the website, that have yet to be transcribed, but given that they all happen to be white men, he suggested we may want to hold off on releasing them all right now, and see if we can diversify our pool a bit first.

Lastly Debra invited everyone to share their perspective on how the meeting in Philly went, and what we might do differently for 2024, in Montreal. We discussed reaching out to another Section or two to co-hosting the reception; which was also noted earlier as a potential way to get Section exposure and potentially recruit new members, including in particular among racial and ethnic minorities, who are better represented in some other Sections. Everyone enjoyed the book raffle so we should definitely make that a tradition. We also discussed allowing virtual roundtable presentations, particularly to accommodate those members who cannot afford to attend in person, or are seeking to limit their travel-related carbon footprint.

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### **ASA Environmental Sociology Council Meeting January 19, 2024**

**Attendance:** Debra Davidson, Jennifer Carrera, Nikhil Deb, Jennifer Givens, Michael Lengefeld, Margaret Walkover, Cam Whitley, Michael Murphy, Alan Rudy, Raoul Lievanos, Michael Haedicke, Maricarmen Hernandez

**Agenda:**

Nominations Committee Updates—Cameron  
Policy and Research Committee Awards Nominations Updates—Nikhil  
Annual Conference/Reception Planning—Raoul  
CRIEJ Updates—Michael M.  
Publications/Newsletter Committee Updates—Michael H.  
Digital Communications Committee Updates—Michael L., Christina  
Legacy Chair Updates—Scott  
Grad Rep Updates—Margaret  
Treasury Updates—Maricarmen  
Secretary Updates—Jennifer  
Past Chair Updates—Sandra

**Discussions:**

Introductions and Check ins.

Nominations Committee: A lot of nominations but a lot of people are less inclined to take on service. Many early career nominations with apprehension to accept nominations. Did get a full slate with a lot more effort to recruit. Next year please submit nominations and consider continuing work with Section Council.

Policy and Research Committee: Awards nominations – Debra has gotten through drafting solicitation to share with Nikhil. Committees are ready for the two awards for this committee. Discussion confirmed that awards renaming was passed as a bylaws change in 2023 by the vote of the section membership. Discussion about possible bylaw change regarding the awarding of similar work by different people. This requires further discussion. Suggestions: same person cannot receive the same award twice. The same paper cannot be awarded twice for a different author contribution. Should we move deadline up from April 15<sup>th</sup> for deadline for submissions so committee has more time to review book submissions?

ASA Annual Meeting: Three sessions: Intersectional Environmental Inequalities, Managing Risks and Uncertainties around Climate Change, Intersectional Solidarities. Day 3: Monday August 12<sup>th</sup>. Animals and Society invited our section to collaborate/co-sponsor pre-conference. Cam is Chair of Animals and Society section. Several proposals for co-sponsorship of our reception. SREM interested in sharing reception. Working to discuss more with SREM organizer. Didn't work out for shared session with SREM this year. RCG does joint reception with Sex and Gender. Would be very large to do with three sections. Currently prioritizing SREM partnership because we have been in conversation with them longer about the reception and as a section working to build this relationship through our investments in CRIEJ. One factor for consideration is we usually do awards at our reception and SREM does their awards at the business meeting. We could do ours at our business meeting.

CRIEJ: Were thinking about a graduate student focused event around climate change but due to lead organizer personal reasons this is postponed. Planning a February 23<sup>rd</sup> 3PM EST event around environmental justice in Gaza and the West Bank. Tricky to think about the framing. Confirmed Presenters: David Pellow, Samer Alatout, Stephen Gasteyer, and Anaheed M. Al-Hardan. Hour-long session planned. Another event for the spring around Just Transitions and labor. All energies currently focused on February event. Afterwards will turn to the next event. Considering issues around safety of presenters and emotions arising during the event.

Publications Committee: Newsletter includes short feature articles from members of the section around innovative research, teaching, community engagement activities. Recent one from Northeastern group about PFAS. Nice way to get members of section to talk about work they are doing. Good way to engage graduate students. Upcoming issue doesn't have one of these feature essays as none received. Two more under tenure of current PC chair. Welcome contributions around climate change and extending conference conversations beyond the conference. Need to have conversations around the reach of the newsletter and our communications strategies. Have some level of being required by ASA to produce newsletters as a section.

Digital Communications: Website is up to date. Send any updates to affiliations as needed.

Legacy Chair: Transcribed audio interviews conducted previously (Dorceta Taylor, Penelope Canan, Shirley Laska, Bill Freudenburg, Gene Rosa). Once transcriptions validated they will be posted on the website. Plans for additional interviews with Timmons Roberts, Tom Dietz, Tom Rudel, Andy Szasz, and Phil Brown.

Graduate Rep Update: Graduate students coming to the conference should email Margaret to organize a gathering at the annual meeting both with each other as well as with section leadership. Needs a list of graduate students to email. Working on getting the list to reach out to graduate students. Will probably need multiple strategies for contacting graduate students. It's still early yet and people don't know if they are going at this point.

Membership: No updates.

Treasurer: No updates.

Secretary: No updates.

Past chair: No updates.

Other business: None.

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## **ASA Business Meeting April 9, 2024 AGENDA and Minutes**

### **1. Discussion of Teaching Climate Change initiative Andy Szasz:**

Andy has expressed a desire to develop ‘some kind of virtual space in which we could share ideas, resources for teaching climate change,’ and he has approached us to see if we would be willing to host such an initiative, perhaps on our website?

### **2. Announcement: ASA Campaign to support minority fellowship program:**

ASA’s [Making a Difference Today for Tomorrow](#) campaign to support our Minority Fellowship Program (MFP), is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. The MFP supports underrepresented sociology PhD students with stipends offered to future Fellows. They have launched a fundraising campaign. Starting on April 1, ASA launched the Section and Community giving competition. During the month of April, all donations of \$50 or more made by a member of your Section or Community will count toward what we’re calling the “\$50 for 50 Competition.”

At the end of April, the group with the highest percentage of members who have given at least \$50 during the month will win the competition. The winning group will receive an additional \$500 to spend toward their reception at the 2024 Annual Meeting. The group also will be recognized at the MFP Reception, and you or another group leader of your choice will be invited to make brief remarks at that event. In addition to recognition as part of the Section and Community competition, all donors will receive individual recognition based on the amount of their contribution. See our [donate/pledge page](#) and our [donor recognition wall](#) for more information.

### **3. Sections Committee feedback: Environmental Sociology Section Annual Report**

The committee was happy to see the section has maintained a healthy membership. However, the committee did note that award nominations for this past year were relatively low, especially when considering the section’s healthy size.

While the committee didn’t have any major budgetary concerns, it is interesting that the section intends to raise dues to support more speaker honorariums. [apparently we didn’t make it clear enough that these funds were for CRIEJ]

Alternatively, the committee wonders if the section could consider co-hosting a joint reception, as many other sections have been doing, and put these saved resources towards these efforts instead.

Annual Meeting planning updates provided by Raoul

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## Awards

Provide a list of Section awards and awardees conferred in the past year.

Environmental Sociology Distinguished Contribution Award presented to Dr. Brett Clark, University of Utah

Environmental Sociology Teaching and Mentorship Award presented to Dr. Corrie Grosse, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's

Environmental Sociology Outstanding Publication Award presented to Dr. Daniel Jaffee, Portland State University

Environmental Sociology Outstanding Publication Award Honorable Mention presented to Dr. Erik Kojola, Texas Christian University

Environmental Sociology Student Paper Award presented to Ankit Bhardwaj, New York University

Environmental Sociology Student Paper Award Honorable Mention presented to Jonathan Tollefson, Brown University

## 2024 Finances

Provide a narrative on how the 2023 budget matched with actual expenses and income from 2023. Please account for any substantive differences.

**The 2024 budget planned \$4,050 in expected expenditures**, divided as follows: \$2500 allocated towards the annual meeting reception, \$500 towards awards, \$250 for website security, and \$800 in speaker honorariums for the Theory and Community-Building Café organized by the Section's Committee on Racial Inclusion, Equity, and Justice (CRIEJ). CRIEJ planned to host four events during the 2023-24 academic year. The council voted in 2021 to compensate speakers with a \$200 honorarium.

Accounting for a remaining balance in 2023 of \$4,553 and an estimated income for 2024 of \$3,809, the budgeted expenditures planned for a total of **\$4,312 in estimated assets by the end of August 2024**.

### Regarding actual expenses and income for 2024:

**As of October 13, 2024, the section has a balance of \$6,318**

**The total year-to-date income in 2024 is \$3,310**. This includes membership dues (\$1,178), and our section budget allocation (\$2,132).

### Regarding expenses for 2024:



We spent \$2,088.00 to host the annual reception at ASA 2024. It was a joint event with the Section on Racial and Ethnic Minorities (SREM). The reception was on-site at the Palais des Congrès in Montreal. We paid the venue \$2,088 to cover food, taxes, and gratuity.

The total cost of the reception was \$8500. SREM contributed \$6000 and SES contributed \$2,088. We had budgeted \$2,500 for the reception but the charge on the section account from ASA for the reception came in at \$2,088 (not sure about this discrepancy, will check with ASA about this). The breakdown of cost per section was in accordance to section size and budget. SREM is a larger section than SES.

We spent \$200 on awards. We gave a \$200 cash prize to the 2024 student paper award winner. This year we did not order plaques because the conference was international (in communication with section secretary Jennifer Carrera) and only presented awardees with certificates, so we did not spend on plaques or shipping.

We spent \$276 on communications. We renewed the section's website hosting (\$119.88) and security (\$155.88) for one year.

We did not spend the \$800 allocated for the CRIEJ Theory and Community Building Café speaker honorariums. CRIEJ members Ian Carrillo and Michael Murphy are in the process of organizing CRIEJ activities and they have been notified that these funds are available.

In total, the section's expenses as of October 1, 2024 are \$2,564.

In sum, to date, the section has a surplus from the 2024 budget. This surplus arises from the following line item: (1) CRIEJ planned for four events during the year, none have taken place yet and (2) We did not order or ship plaques for prize winners. We had no unexpected or unforeseen expenses beyond those budgeted for 2024.

## **The Previous Year**

Describe Section activities during the period between September 2023 and August 2024.

*Provide an overview of the Section's communications with its members and include explanation of how your communication strategy meets the goals and values of the Section. Include links to the section website, newsletters, and any other electronic media used.*

Our section produces a regular newsletter, disseminated three times per year. Current and archived newsletters can be found here: <http://envirosoc.org/wordpress/newsletter-archive/>. Our website is also an important communication vehicle for both members and non-members, and it can be found here: <http://envirosoc.org/wordpress/>. We also host a listserv through which Section-related information is shared on a regular basis.

*Describe the Section's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. What steps were taken this year to achieve those goals?*

In the Summer 2020 newsletter, the SES Council (2020:4-7) published an official statement of solidarity and commitment to support Black lives, which included eleven pledges to address racial exclusion and promote greater equity within the section, as follows:

- Focus council work on assessing and developing ways to address the fact that our section and the broader discipline often continue to function as a white institutional space (a seemingly race-neutral social space that reproduces white privilege), and sharing these lessons with the broader membership through the listserv.
- Critically examine and change section business practices to help redress the whiteness of environmental sociology, including but not limited to addressing the overwhelming presence of white scholars among section award winners, council members, presenters in section sessions at the ASA annual meeting, and active participants on the section listserv. These changes are made through section bylaws (for details on those we enacted this year, see here), council positions' instructional handbooks (which we will continue to revise accordingly), and informal practices.
- Work across ASA and in our own departments to recruit sociologists of color as members and leaders in the section and other institutional spaces we inhabit.
- Establish and support a formal Committee on Racial Exclusion and Equity to help continue the work started by our ad hoc Committee on Racial Equity. This was just approved by section membership, and we have issued a call for nominations for this committee (see page... of this newsletter).
- Revise the “canon” of environmental sociology posted on the section’s website. Section members have cultivated lists of recommended scholarship that address race, racism, and the environment; settler colonialism and Indigenous environmental movements; and other critical and underrepresented bodies of literature that decenter and challenge white, heteronormative, and other privileged experiences of the environment. We have more work to do to elevate the work by Black scholars and other scholars of color and others underrepresented in the academy to elevate their
- voices and scholarship within our own teaching, research, service, and outreach, including how we represent “core” environmental sociology.
- •Revise our mentoring program to better serve the needs and interests of junior scholars, particularly those of color.
- The white members of council commit to listening and learning about how to be better accomplices in the fight against racist oppression and to honestly examining our own practices that reinforce white supremacy, which scholars of color have long called for. We implore our white colleagues throughout the section to join us in this work.
- Commit ourselves to speaking up about exclusionary claims, actions, dynamics, and other expressions of white supremacy in section affairs and on section listservs, and to following through on redressing them.
- Push beyond self-education, diversity training, and campus programming into advocating for antiracist policies and structural changes at our universities.
- Increase our media presence in order to more meaningfully support Black Lives Matter and affiliated movements against injustice.
- Regularly disseminate a survey inviting section members to suggest additional ways council can address racism within the section and the discipline more broadly.

In continued pursuit of those pledges this year, the Chair-elect organized the three paper sessions and roundtables in a manner that sought to be inclusive of racially diverse scholars from various academic ranks and national origins, as well as topics that were collectively critical of white supremacy and/or other axes of oppression that contribute to environmental and climate injustice.

In consideration of the fact that our Section membership base includes a significant number of scholars of color, and our commitment to build diverse scholarly relations, our Section liaised with the Section on Racial and Ethnic Minorities to create a joint reception. The joint reception offered the opportunity for members of both sections to get to know more about each other and their important work, as well as develop interest among SREM members to consider joining and becoming leaders in our Section. Helping to create the joint reception thus aligns with one of our DEI pledges to seek opportunities to recruit sociologists of color as members and leaders in the section.

We are also seeking to address racial exclusion and promote greater equity in the revamped mentor program, described in part 2 of this report. We did so by working together with the Chair of our Section Committee on Racial Exclusion and Equity to specifically target junior scholar members of color.

*Provide an overview of the section's programming at the annual meeting and include explanation of how this programming meets the goals and values of the section (e.g. intellectual exchange, professional networking, mentoring, inclusion).*

The Section was allocated three regular sessions and one roundtable session at the Annual Meetings held in Montreal in August, 2024. The themes of the regular sessions were The three paper sessions were: (1) Intersectional Environmental Inequalities: Methodological and Theoretical Advances; (2) Managing Unequal Risks and Uncertainties in a Changing Climate; and (3) Intersectional Solidarities for Environmental and Climate Justice. These themes were intended to capture both well-established and emerging areas of study in the field, align with the intersectionality program theme for the 2024 ASA annual meeting, and respond to the growing interest among members in environmental inequality/justice and climate change, as was elicited in a membership survey conducted in 2021. The Roundtables were thematically clustered according to the abstract and paper submissions received, in an effort to enable a more vibrant scholarly exchange among researchers working in similar areas of inquiry.

*Provide an overview of the Section's programmatic activities outside of the Annual Meeting (e.g. webinars, networking events, mentoring initiatives, resources for dissemination) and include explanation of this programming meets the goals and values of the Section.*

Resources for dissemination: The Section's Legacy Committee has continued to develop our Oral History Project, involving the collection, collating, transcription and archiving of interviews with some founding scholars in the field of environmental sociology, in order to capture this institutional history for the future. These have been organized and posted on a special section of our website.

Resources for dissemination: The Section also revitalized its ‘teaching climate change’ resources, by soliciting our membership for updated content, which was all organized and posted in a newly-designed sub-section of our website dedicated to teaching resources, in response to growing interest among members in integrating the subject of climate change into their classrooms. Efforts are also being made to raise awareness of the availability of these resources through email and social media.