

THE HUMANIST SOCIOLOGIST

Newsletter of the Association for Humanist Sociology
Summer 2023

The Rutgers Strike: An On-the-Ground Take

By Jeffrey Dowd, Rutgers: The State University
of New Jersey, New Brunswick

On Monday, I walked to the picket line wearing my new union shirt - a raised fist and large all caps "SOLIDARITY" on the front and a list of different Rutgers unions on the back. A colleague passed these shirts out at our faculty meeting the week before. As department rep, I already had one. Indeed, I've amassed many union shirts over the years, each one seemingly more militant than the last, in a way that reflects the union's evolution. We have, over the last 20 years moved increasingly towards a wall-to-wall organizing strategy that builds solidarity across all job categories and extends into student issues and the surrounding communities. And we've built a strike-ready union.

Still, despite weeks of preparation for the strike (phone banking, regular conversations with colleagues, and assembling supplies), on Monday morning, I had one question on my mind "Are people going to show up?" After all, this was no normal protest, we had six campuses and multiple picket sites on each one to cover and we needed to do this for days? Weeks?

On Douglas campus, at 8:45, coffee, bagels, megaphones, picket signs, and less than 10 people had arrived. Pickets began at 9:00. "Well, when are people ever on-time to these things?" I thought. Within an hour we needed to expand the pickets to every corner of the intersection while we cheered as empty buses honked in support. We had chanted at a Board of Governors meeting back in December of 2022: "If We Don't Get It... SHUT IT DOWN!" By

10:00 AM it was clear that a labor action had, for the first time in its 257-year history, shut Rutgers down. The sprawling campuses would remain a space dedicated to labor activism for the entire week.



Photo by Jeffrey Dowd

I've been to many union protests on campuses. We generally get turn out of anywhere from 100-500 people, mostly union members though there are always a handful of activist students marching with us. Rutgers on Strike was wholly different. Not only did students outnumber us on the picket lines, virtually everyone on campus was actively participating. Reporters went into libraries to seek out different opinions. While they found some students who took the opportunity to catch up on studying, they were unable to find a single person not in favor of the strike. Again, it was difficult to find anyone who wasn't actively participating.

By Wednesday night it was clear the strike was going the full week. Picket lines remained strong and we had built a cooperative relationship with police to ensure everyone's safety while engaging in various disruptions. We introduced ourselves to police early each day and gave them a courtesy 15-20 minutes notice before we took streets for what were essentially unpermitted marches through New Brunswick. Still, there were deep disagreements about moving into week 2. Our bargaining team was in Trenton, away from campus and our pickets, and engaged in intense negotiations with mediators appointed by the Governor. Threats of a criminal injunction from our University President were on temporary hold at the request of Governor Murphy while "firm" deadlines from the Governor had come and gone all week. On Friday, we made some additional gains and there was another threat/deadline. We could lock in the current gains and suspend the strike or money from the State would be off the table, gains could be pulled back, and an injunction would likely follow.

Our democratically elected executive committee (made up of rank-and-file workers) voted in a highly contentious meeting that went to 1:00AM to suspend the strike and lock in a tentative framework. Some, mostly grad workers, wanted to keep pushing for more, while others (e.g. adjuncts and full-time workers) wanted to lock in gains and suspend the strike. There are members who still disagree on whether we would have got more (or less) if we defied the Governor (again). The Governor had asked us not to strike in the first place but to rely on mediators in Trenton. We had agreed to go to Trenton but not to hold off on the strike.

After the suspension and despite internal disagreements we remained focused and united. We kept pressure on with large rallies and marches. The negotiations pace slowed at first, but within a few weeks we had a tentative agreement. 93% of voting members would ratify the contract. In the end, we made substantial

gains without giving anything up: increased job protections, enhanced job security and promotion schedules, raises for everyone (including 33% and 44% for TAs and adjuncts, respectively, over the 4 years of the contract) and a lot more.



Mary Chayko (R), past AHS Treasurer, with her husband Glenn Crooks (L), at the Rutgers University strike in April.

On that first day of the strike, everyone gathered on Voorhees Mall on the College Ave campus in the late afternoon. A few union leaders were trying to ensure we had enough speakers and I volunteered to give an unprepared speech... to a crowd of well over a thousand (thankfully, a good number of the TV cameras had left by my turn). I quickly rehearsed an applause line in my head while waiting for my turn to speak. When I got the mic, I said "I have been a Rutgers for 20 years as a grad worker, an adjunct, and now full-time faculty. I've been involved in our union for nearly as long, so I know something that President Holloway doesn't [pause]... we're going to win [applause]." The

line went well. My initial (and to be honest, ongoing anxiety) during the contract campaign aside, I did know that wall-to-wall organization brings strength, a pro-labor Governor in a blue state matters, strong student support is crucial (and awesome to see), democratic unions can have internal disagreements and still win, every contract campaign builds off the last one, and that there is no justice without struggle.

Thanks and Thoughts from the Editor

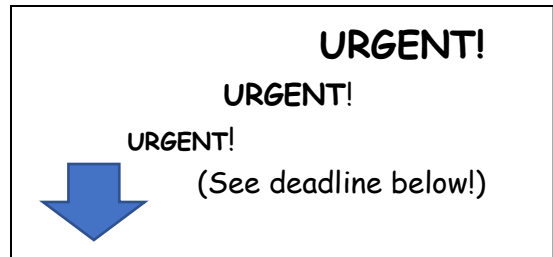
Welcome to the Summer 2023 edition of the Humanist Sociologist. The AHS newsletter dates back to the summer of 1976, when it was the Humanist Sociology Newsletter. The first editor was Charles P. Flynn, one of the founders of AHS, and it announced “an organizational meeting for the new association during the A.S.A. meeting time in August.” It included ideas about editorial policies, written by Flynn and Alfred McClung Lee, for the new journal *Society and Humanity* (now *Humanity & Society*). It also presented working principles and concerns for the establishment of AHS. A membership application form was provided with a questionnaire about when meetings should be held, feedback on the policies and principles mentioned above, and what tasks members would be willing to take on. As indicated in the AHS Constitution put together by some of those founding members, the newsletter is the place for reporting board actions. Added later was the website (where the newsletter is now located) and through “other electronic media.” A mea culpa here, I didn’t get former VP for Membership Cameron Lippard’s final report for the 2022 meeting in the last issue. Perhaps it was that he turned his report in immediately upon my request (an admirable quality I must not have been prepared for). He brings up some important points we need to consider and act upon if we are going to keep AHS alive and well.

The newsletter is also a place to celebrate our wins and mourn our losses. This edition has both. Jeff Dowd provides his perspective on the

successful Rutgers University strike. As an alumnus of Rutgers and a member of AAUP since my graduate days there, it was inspiring to see AAUP-AFT affiliated unions across the Rutgers campuses make their collective case for better pay. I lived in New Jersey for eight years, and as anyone on much of the East Coast knows, it’s not cheap to live there. There are other success stories—publications and awards—and information about the 2023 meeting in New Orleans, November 2-5. On the mourning side, Joti Sekhon put together a remembrance with multiple testimonials to the life and work of our friend Hal Pepinsky. Thank you, Joti.

Last, this newsletter is enriched by what you share—your thoughts, accomplishments, and challenges. It is a place where issues can be brought up and discussed. Saying that, I can only pull together what I have received. I did try to prod a bit with some prompts when I sent out the call for contributions. Thank you, Jeff, for responding with the strike story, and thanks as well as congratulations to those whose accomplishments are shared within. I had also suggested that you send me your stories about favorite memories of meetings past. Thanks to Steve and Greta for bringing those memories back for some of us. I know many of you have had those moments. If you have a memorable AHS moment you would like to share, send me a few lines about it (or more if you want) and I will include it in the fall newsletter. I plan to get that out in September, but if something crosses your mind right now, right it down and send it to me (jpennell@uindy.edu) and I will get it in there. Maybe one of our three past meetings in New Orleans was one of your favorites. I know the second one made me an AHS member for life, thanks to John Leggett, Frank Lindenfeld, Tony Ladd, and many others who welcomed Greta and me as nervous grad students, dressed in our best clothes and looking a little out of place given the laid-back AHS vibe. That meeting included a wonderful evening at Tipitina’s with Mary Erdmans, Jerry Starr, Steve

McGuire, and a bunch of other folks. AHS meetings have been my activist-academic battery charger ever since. Have a wonderful summer and gear up for another great meeting in November! --Jim



THE 2023 BETTY AND ALFRED MCCLUNG LEE BOOK AWARD IS NOW OPEN FOR SUBMISSIONS!

The Association for Humanist Sociology is pleased to announce the 2023 Betty and Alfred McClung Lee Book Award. **Authors, publishers, and AHS members may nominate books for consideration.** The winner will be recognized at our annual meeting November 2-5, in New Orleans. Nominations should be for Sociology or interdisciplinary social science books that approach their topics from a humanist perspective.

Our Mission states:

Humanist sociologists strive as professionals, as scholars and as activists to uncover and address social issues, working with others to lessen the pain of social problems. We view people not merely as products of social forces, but also as shapers of social life, capable of creating social orders in which everyone's potential can unfold. Difficult times give humanist sociologists opportunities to apply their special skills and perspectives for the purpose of creating a more humane world.

Eligible books should have been published in the calendar year 2022 or the first half of 2023. If a book was submitted for last year's consideration, it cannot be nominated again. Edited volumes and textbooks are not eligible for this award.

To nominate a book, authors/publishers/nominators should e-mail a letter of nomination with the subject line "AHS 2023 Book Award Nomination" <CBDOLLAR@uncg.edu>. Authors/publishers should send one copy of the book to each of the award committee members at addresses listed below. **The deadline for nominations is July 15, 2023.** Additional information about AHS is available at www.humanist-sociology.org

AHS 2022 Book Award Committee:

Cindy Brooks Dollar (Chairperson)
Associate Professor, Internship Director, and Pre-law Advisor
Department of Sociology
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
337 Frank Porter Graham Building
PO Box 26170
Greensboro, NC 27402-6170

Eve Darian-Smith

422 River St
Windsor, CT 06095

Johnny E. Williams
Trinity College
Department of Sociology
Hartford, CT 06106

BETTY AND ALFRED MCCLUNG LEE BOOK award past recipients

2022 Eve Darian-Smith (2022) *Global Burning: Rising Antidemocracy and the Climate Crisis*, Stanford University Press.

Honorable Mention: Pallavi Banerjee (2022) *The Opportunity Gap: High-Skilled Workers, Indian Families, and the Failures of the Dependent Visa Program*. NYU Press.

Victoria Reyes (2022) *Academic Outsider: Stories of Exclusion and Hope*. Stanford Briefs.

2021 Michael Méndez, *Climate Change from the Streets: How Conflict and Collaboration Strengthen the Environmental Justice Movement*, Yale University Press

2020 Celeste Watkins-Hayes, *Remaking a Life: How Women Living with HIV/AIDS Confront Inequality*, University of California Press.

Honorable Mention: Nicole Nguyen, *Suspect Communities: Anti-Muslim Racism and the Domestic War on Terror*, University of Minnesota Press.

2019 Robert Durán. *The Gang Paradox: Inequalities and Miracles on the U.S.-Mexico Border*. Columbia University Press.

2018 Ana Raquel Minian, *Undocumented Lives: The Untold Story of Mexican Migration*. Harvard University Press.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF NOTE:

Allen, Shaonta' E. 2023. "Is the Black Church Dead? Religious Resilience and the Contemporary Functions of Black Christianity." *Religions* 14(4):1-21. (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14040460>)

Allen, Shaonta'. 2023. "From "We Shall Overcome" to "We Gon Be Alright:" Assessing Black Liberation Movements Through Music" in *Theology and Protest Music*, edited by Jonathan H. Harwell and Heidi M. Altman. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books/Fortress Academic.

Thakore, Bhoomi K. 2023. "Adopting Rubrics for Teaching Undergraduate Sociology Research Methods." *Teaching Sociology*, Online First, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0092055X231170618>

Smith, Andrea C. and Bhoomi K. Thakore (equal authorship). 2023. "Let's Play, Zoomers: Cultural Authority and Stereotypical Representations in Video Games." *Sociation Today*, 22(1): 6-20. https://sociation.ncsociologyassoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/zoomer_proof_final.pdf

Thakore, Bhoomi K. 2022. "Jil Oslo Generation Palestinians and the Fight for Human Rights." *Critical Sociology*, Online First, <https://doi.org/10.1177/08969205221131991>.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF NOTE:

Paul Chang, Associate Professor of Sociology, Harvard University, along with his co-author Kangsan Lee, were the winners of the 2022

Outstanding Published Article Award from The Peace, War, and Social Conflict Section of American Sociological Association for the article: Chang, Paul Y. and Kangsan Lee. 2021. "The Structure of Protest Cycles: Inspiration and Bridging in South Korea's Democracy Movement." *Social Forces* 100(2): 879-904.

Jeffrey Dowd, Asst. Teaching Professor and Undergraduate Director at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, received the **2022-23 School of Arts and Sciences Award for Distinguished Contributions to Undergraduate Education** at the Teaching Faculty rank.

Courtney B. Ross was awarded the 2023 Outstanding Graduate Student Research Award in the Sociology Department of Virginia Tech University. (Editor's note: Courtney was featured in the previous issue of the *Humanist Sociologist*.)

BOOK REVIEWERS WANTED:

Sociological Inquiry is looking for Book Reviewers for their forthcoming issues. Graduate students and early career faculty/scholars welcome! Reviews are approximately 800-1200 words. Please send your list of related interests to Bhoomi K. Thakore, Book Review Editor, bhoomi.thakore@uconn.edu.



Le Pavillon: Site for the 2023 AHS Annual Meeting in New Orleans, LA, Nov. 2-5

Humanist Sociologists at the End of the World? Conference Update from President Marc Settembrino

Dear Friends,

As the semester ends, it's time to look forward to our 2023 Annual Meetings. We remain in "unprecedented and uncertain times." Although the World Health Organization has declared that COVID-19 is no longer a "global health emergency," we continue to wade through the murky waters of fear and alienation this deadly pandemic rained upon us. Societally and organizationally, we must reconnect to assess the destruction, care for one another, and rebuild.

Our conference theme, *Humanist Sociologists at the End of the World? Confronting Cascading Crises Together* is meant to highlight the work that you all have done during yet another, "once in a lifetime" world-changing series of events. It also calls us to confront the challenges facing our organization and strategize a sustainable future. Like many of you, I consider AHS to be "home." Our annual conference is an opportunity to reconnect with friends and recharge my humanist soul. It's cliché but AHS is nothing without you! The pandemic and institutional reactions to it have prevented many of us from attending the conference, and I'm hoping we can break free and that you will join me in New Orleans this November to mourn, celebrate, and reconnect.

You'll find the call for participation flyer at the end of the newsletter. Please share this information with friends and colleagues - but more importantly, please submit your abstract TODAY. You can learn more and submit your abstract at <https://www.humanist-sociology.org/annual-meeting-2023.html>. The deadline for submission is July 15, 2023.

I know that many of you have been anxious to learn about the details of our conference, we're working on getting the website updated ASAP, but in the meantime, here is some additional information:

The conference will be hosted at Le Pavillon Hotel located in New Orleans' Central Business district. Our group rate is \$159/night (plus taxes and fees) on Wednesday, November 1, and \$189/night (plus taxes and fees) from November 2 through 4. You can book your room directly at this [website](https://www.jpnsi.org/short-term-rentals) or by calling 1-844-656-8636 and requesting the Association for Humanist Sociology Group Rate. As always, it's imperative we book with the conference hotel to ensure that we meet our contractual obligations - BUT before you head over to AirBnB, please consider the impact that short-term rentals have had on New Orleans. If you stay in an Airbnb, you are contributing to the ongoing displacement of the people who make New Orleans, New Orleans. If you would like to learn more about how short-term rentals are affecting the city please read the *Short Term Rentals, Long Term Impact* report by the Jane Place Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative:

<https://www.jpnsi.org/short-term-rentals>

The registration portal will be active soon. Conference registration rates are listed below. All presenters must register by October 1, 2023, or they may be dropped from the final program. Registration will include one activist cafe lunch, and you will have the opportunity to purchase an additional lunch when registering.

AHS MEETING REGISTRATION	Rates
Regular Member	\$155
Contingent Faculty, Retired, Student	\$65
Non-Member	\$190
International	\$65

Aside from the conference I had some additional updates/asks:

- If you haven't renewed your membership, please do so today!
- We are looking for individuals to serve in several board positions. Please let me know if you are interested in running for or being appointed to an officer position.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions or if there is anything I can do to support you.

In Solidarity,

Marc

REMEMBERING OUR LOSSES:

HAL PEPINSKY (1945-2023)

By Joti Sekhon

The last time I met Hal in October 2021, at the home he and Jill Bystydzienski shared in Durango, Co., he looked me straight in the eye and said: "I am so happy you came." Though he could not communicate at length anymore, and his memory and health were failing, Hal's kind eyes and warm face spoke volumes! Hal left us on January 28, 2023 at the age of 78, but his presence at AHS and in our lives is enduring, starting with the early years of AHS until just a few years ago in Cuba in 2017. He was a constant and supportive presence in most of the sessions I presented on, even though I cannot say I went to many of his presentations. And I was delighted to learn that he and I shared the same birthday, January 18! But well beyond my personal interactions with Hal and formal sessions, Hal engaged in conversations with newcomers to AHS as well as long timers. His commitment to social justice, peacemaking, and shifting paradigms to look at criminal justice in new ways was always evident in not just what he said and wrote, but also in the way he comported himself and interacted with anyone around him. Though he had a distinguished career at Indiana University and other institutions, it was his unassuming and down-to-earth nature, love and humanity that I always remember. And while we went around meeting various folks and attending

sessions and other AHS events, I have fond memories of the dinners we went for in groups small and large; and always, always, his guitar and music and singing with Corey Dolgon and Jim Pennell and Mary Chayko in the Hospitality Suite late into the night!



Hal Pepinsky, 2007. Photo by Diane Schaefer.

After retiring, Hal moved to Columbus to be with Jill who was at the Ohio State University, and to be near his mother who also lived in Columbus. He continued to come to AHS meetings, and engaged in discussions on leading meaningful and productive lives as many of us transitioned to life after formal academia. And when Jill too retired, they both moved to Durango to be near their daughter Katy and her husband Christian and their children, Mila and Evan. As Hal started to have significant memory loss after 2018 and his health declined, Jill shared that Hal brightened up and became more animated and engaged whenever his grandchildren visited.

Jill recalls that she and Hal “started going together to AHS meetings in the early 1980s. We were inspired by Al and Betty Lee and hoped that we would be able to continue to be active in AHS into our old years, as Al and Betty did. Our last AHS meeting was in 2017 in Cuba. Hal was still in pretty good shape and we both had a fantastic time attending great sessions and plenaries and taking advantage of several of the opportunities to meet with local folks. It was such a memorable meeting.” Jill and I also remember taking long walks together through Havana, and visiting Chuck McKelvey, another early AHS member who now lives in Havana. Though they could not attend meetings after Havana, Jill notes that “AHS was always an

intellectual and activist home for us. It has been a place where we could connect with like-minded people, re-energize our social justice commitments and gain support and encouragement for the activist work we were doing back home. We always came back from the meetings inspired and invigorated.”



Hal Pepinsky, Jill Bystydzienski, and Joti Sekhon at the 2006 AHS Meeting, in St. Louis, MO.

Music was dear to Hal’s heart. Mary Chayko remembers Hal as “the dearest man — always ready to share a story, a laugh, or a song. I’ll remember playing classic labor tunes with him in the hospitality suite year after year. A great man who embodied the values of AHS.” Jim Pennell adds: “the image and sound of Hal that I see and hear is the time (probably more than once) when he sang and played “Chain Gang” by Sam Cooke. Hal had this big baritone voice that belied his short stature. On the particular time that is etched into my memory, he was wearing a tight, long-sleeved navy blue and white long sleeve tee-shirt that sort of reminded me of the old striped chain gang outfits you would see driving along the U.S. highways in the South. Some things have changed in the South—the outfits are orange now!” Corey remembers Hal most “when he would play guitar and sing in the hospitality suite. His voice was big and his vibrato hard and commanding. But his hands struck me the most—they were big strong hands that had clearly done more than just strum and type.”

It is one of these “famous AHS after hour soirees,” that is seared into Gina Petonito’s memory. She adds: “I was delighted when Hal picked up his guitar to provide his rendition of “Over the Rainbow” from the Wizard of Oz. Now, I am a huge Wizard of Oz fanatic. I never missed a day that it was aired on TV, a Thanksgiving treat for the kids. I loved Judy Garland as Dorothy and eagerly anticipated what became her signature song. A few bars in, however, my delight turned to amazement. No sweet, nostalgic song for him. Hal’s version was a gritty ballad of longing and transformation. “Over the rainbow” was not some fantastical land where all dreams come true, but a vision of 1930s union organizers, tirelessly laboring for better working conditions for themselves and their comrades. As long as I live, I will never hear that song without thinking of Hal, and those social justice warriors he brought to life. Truly humanist sociologists have that gift: to make real the hopes and dreams of those who struggled so we, their descendants, could live in a real sky-blue land where all our troubles “melt like lemon drops.””

His welcoming presence and enduring legacy at AHS and beyond is remembered by many. Tony Ladd recalls: “Hal (and Jill) was one of the first members I met when I joined AHS in 1980 and I was immediately drawn to his gentle spirit, infectious humor, intellectual acumen, and steadfast dedication to social justice. Indeed, it was through Hal’s conference presentations, articles, and humanistic activism that I first learned about the field of Radical Criminology and what its possibilities could be for helping marginalized populations stand up to police brutality and the discriminatory policies of the criminal (in)justice system. Rest easy, Hal, wherever your spirit resides--and know that you will always be remembered and missed by everyone who knew you.”

Corey recalls Hal as “one of the first folks I met at AHS when I arrived in Austin for the 1998 annual meeting. Hal embodied the AHS mission, not as a set of principles or organization value statement but as a way of life. He treated all people he encountered as brothers and sisters in fellowship, as agents to change the world for the better—in large ways and small—with every

conversation, every inquiry, and every song. Hal brought lifetimes of experiences and engagements to his every word, his every handshake and every embrace—he packed everything into all he did and thought about the world. Like Whitman, he contained multitudes. It made him humble in his approach to justice, always prepared to comfort the afflicted but when necessary, afflict the comfortable. And he gave his life to that goal of a society without bars and exploitation and hatred.”

Greta Pennell remembers that “Hal warmly welcomed Jim and I into AHS when we were grad students and was one of the first to welcome us back to Indiana when we started at UIndy. His home and heart were always open and he definitely challenged me, in the most supportive and peaceful ways, to think critically about justice and the hidden forms of torture far too many have suffered under in our world. Hal was a steadfast supporter of AHS, building community and solidarity in the organization and just being that smiling face with a big hug that greeted everyone. And he always signed his emails and letters Love & Peace, which eventually became l&p. We will miss him greatly.”

Jim notes the time when Hal “came to the University of Indianapolis to talk about criminal justice reform, although reform isn’t really the right word—transformation is closer. Hal was so radical about the problems of our system that even his former student who invited him was dismissive of the restorative justice model he laid out. But if the system went half as far as Hal envisioned, it would be transformative.”

“My times with Hal at AHS meetings,” notes another longtime AHS member Kathryn Gaianguet, “were a quiet and unassuming sharing of ideas that gave me hope; hope that a humanist approach, i.e., focus on the roots of violence and dominance, could be applied to changing our seemingly intractable and entrenched criminal justice system. I had dabbled in prison and state level corrections reform, and given up on being effective in ever changing this oppressive system. His unique approaches, nurtured by bringing together worldwide research and experiences, always left me feeling lighter. Out of our light banter and

sharing grew new ideas and convictions for me that any work, grounded in transforming dominance-based relationships through his prescriptions of "peacemaking", contributed to broader change. Hal's sometimes-offered insights helped maintain organizational purpose and focus within our Association. His unique perspectives, often challenging, enriched and nurtured our discourse in AHS.

Chris Dale reflects: "When I think about Hal these are the words that come to mind: supremely gentle, loving & kind. A scholar who challenged all of us to think outside the box (exemplified in his innovative work on peace-keeping criminology). An engaging, dedicated & compassionate teacher who eschewed bureaucratic grading protocols for a humanistic connection with his students. A beacon of hope for peace & social justice in the universe. Forever a warm smile & affectionate hug." We remember him as an introspective and curious soul who questioned everything. He was a kind-hearted man who put others' needs before his own. Mary and Tim.

These qualities are echoed by Diane Schaefer, a student and friend of Hal who also became a regular part of AHS: "Hal Pepinsky, a gentle soul, mentored in a quiet, non-authoritarian manner that freed me to go beyond barriers imposed by myself and set by institutions. The constant pull of my background (born to a West Virginia coal-mining family) made Indiana University a hostile soil until I met Hal. Hal's non-conditional acceptance when I visited his office kept me on course. Indeed, if it wasn't for Hal and his wife Jill, I would not have defended my dissertation. It is difficult to know how many lives have been positively impacted by Hal's remarkable personality. I'm just one small part of Hal's living legacy, one tiny part of his vast afterlife. Peace and love for eternity my dear friend and mentor."

Mary Erdmans and Tim Black remember Hal "as an introspective and curious soul who questioned everything. He was a kind-hearted man who put others' needs before his own."

And Hal's daughter Katy reflects: "I will always remember his kind, caring, and compassionate spirit, his relentless contributions to transforming broken systems, and his love of

spreading peace through music. He is forever in my heart, and his spirit is forever in the universe."

It is fitting to conclude with a quote from Hal shared by Katy: "It came to me that the most precious commodity to a sense of social security is to feel honestly valued by so much as another soul (human or superhuman) for what one truly believes and feels. In day-to-day terms, that means knowing one has made a significant difference for the better in at least one other being's life. Love & peace — Hal"

Links to a memorial by a colleague in the Department of Criminal Justice at Indiana University, and his obituary:

<https://criminaljustice.indiana.edu/about/emeritus-faculty/pepinsky-hal.html?fbclid=IwAR3FNzAoMHQqutZAFqkhpbfjSJ8wscxxUqAtDTiGWhtd4tMOucipmYNUSk>

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/durangoherald/name/harold-pepinsky-obituary?id=39843714>

Ensemble Moments at AHS meetings

By Steve McGuire

I recall an intriguing presidential moment at our Santa Fe meeting. Emma Bailey and her ensemble of students switched up the format of a presidential address to address important issues.

Emma's action was foreshadowed many years ago in a session by undergraduates. They had seen Marlene Gorris' great feminist film, *A Question of Silence*, and they fashioned a kind of theatrical, performance-art response, again spread throughout the room.

Don Goodman's Presidential Moment in Burlington brought us another AHS ensemble, enacting a prison-based play that he wrote for the occasion.

I also recall a Jerry Starr-led regular session doing acting exercises that, given the

composition of some AHS near-lifers like Mary Erdmans, Tom Arcaro, and Charles McKelvey, soon morphed into improv of a joyful sort.

Note the collaborative nature of the examples.

I first came to a meeting in 1985 and we had a good session that was distracted by a cacophony of barely recognizable exuberant sounds coming from the next room -- my introduction to the Brian Sherman Experience. He called it The Available Resources Band. People made sounds from found objects in the room and he choreographed. That evening at dinner he went around collecting talismans/scraps of paper to use for some kind of intended performance art piece down the road.

There are about seventeen more such stories, or maybe it's thirty-seven.

Picturing Past AHS Meetings

By Greta Pennell

Aided by a trove of photos, my trip down AHS memory lane brought me many smiles and a few tears. However, choosing just one or two fond memories per Jim's call for this newsletter from the 28 AHS meetings I've attended seemed impossible. From inspiring plenaries and presidential addresses, to innovating and immersive sessions, to the camaraderie and passion of fellow AHSers working tirelessly "to lessen the pain of social problems" and help foster "a more humane world" (AHS Mission), there are so many special moments for me. And, like so many personally meaningful experiences, I find that they are hard to capture verbally. So, with the idea that a picture speaks a thousand words, I'll share a few favorite images.



AHSers are always willing to lend a hand, or their reading glasses in this case, to help sort out the restaurant bill – an endeavor on par with a classic Abbott and Costello routine as the table for 10 becomes one of 14 and our esteemed leaders Woody Doane and Chris Dale ask “Who ordered first, What’s on Special, and I don’t know what this is...” in St. Louis, 2006.

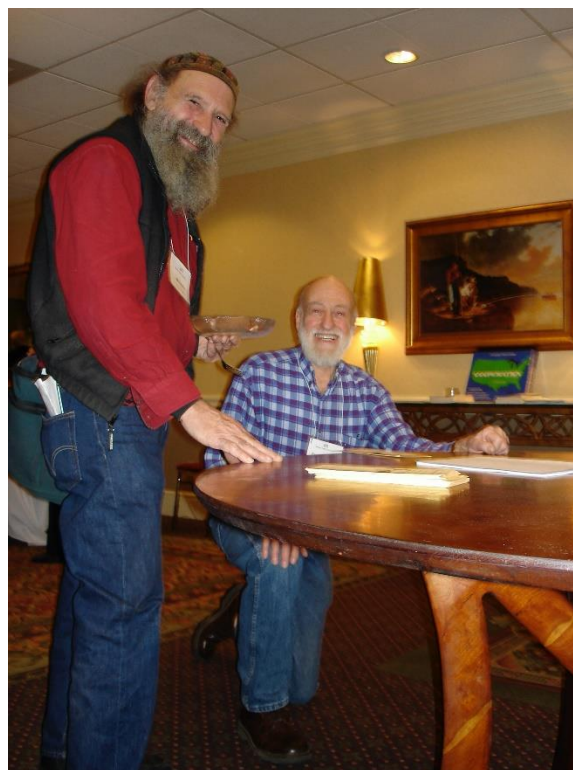


Table for Peace – Alan Haber (former Students for a Democratic Society president) and Frank Lindenfeld (AHS president, 1996) in St. Louis 2006. Alan designed and built this table in response to the failed 1973 peace talks. They failed because world leaders couldn’t agree on what shape the table for a meeting should be. No

peace without a meeting, and no meeting without a table. So, armed with his vision of a peace meeting to end all wars, Alan built this table. After years of advocating for peace, his table was used as the opening peace table at the 1999 Hague Appeal for Peace, the world's largest ever peace meeting. A central piece in the Megiddo

Peace Project, Alan and his wife Odile Hugonot Haber, have taken the table to Palestine and other places around the world. They are still actively engaged as grassroots organizers in the Ann Arbor area working to foster a culture of peace and non-violence.



Music performance and sing-alongs are a long-standing feature of AHS meetings. Pictured left: Tim Black, Mary Chayko, Jim Pennell, and Alan Spector, Boston 2008; and below that, Jim Pennell, Corey Dolgon, and Alan Spector, Chicago, 2011.



Music also finds its way into sessions, such as the plenary by Mississippi Charles, "A Performance, a talk and a concert on race, music and American Traditions" in Cleveland (2014).

The conversations and fun just keep going into the evening. Johnny Williams, Emma Bailey, and Rebecca Hensley (2014) planting the seeds for AHS going to Cuba.



In 2004, a specially woven stole was given to AHS by Alan Spector. It has been a feature of AHS meetings ever since. Passing of the AHS stole connecting past AHS presidents to future ones in Henderson, NV 2007: From right to left: President Gina Petonito (2007) celebrates past AHS presidents Jerry Starr (1986), Kathryn Gaianguet (1992), Tony Ladd, Frank Lindenfeld, Kathleen Tiemann (1998), Woody Doane (1999). Steve McGuire (2002), Don Goodman (2003), Greta Pennell (2004), Chris Dale (2005), and then president-elect Corey Dolgon (2008).



Seeking Participants: Roundtable on Teaching Criminal Justice and Criminal Justice Reform at the 2023 AHS Meeting

I would like to put together a roundtable on teaching Criminal Justice and Criminal Justice reform for our upcoming annual meeting in New Orleans. I invite AHS meeting participants to contact me (Dennis Kalob - dennis.kalob@gmail.com) if you may be interested in taking part in this session.

In this roundtable, we will be discussing ideas for teaching about the criminal justice system, the protests of systemic injustices, and reform efforts, both actual and proposed. Audience members will be encouraged to participate in our discussion. The goal here is simply to share good teaching ideas (in the form of lectures, articles, books, films, assignments...) that promote both awareness of how the criminal justice system actually operates and the urgent need for reform.

VP FOR MEMBERSHIP REPORT PREPARED FOR THE 2022 AHS CONFERENCE

Greetings from Boone, North Carolina! This year marks my last year of service as the Vice President of Membership for AHS. I started this role as the COVID-19 pandemic took over, and it has not been easy to entice folks to join or re-join AHS efforts as members. Below, I provide a snapshot of the membership numbers from 2019 to 2022. I also explain my efforts to secure continuing and new memberships over the past three years. I finally provide some suggestions to the newly elected VP of Membership, Emily Brissette, and the Executive Committee for consideration as this organization continues to move forward over the next three years. Thank you to everyone who gave me this opportunity to serve, and I hope to continue to participate and influence AHS for years to come!

Membership Numbers 2019-2022

YEAR	# OF DUES-PAYING MEMBERS	Conference Locations
2019	116	El Paso, TX
2020	80	<i>No conference</i>
2021	79	Jackson, MS
2022	94	Mexico City, Mexico

As you can see from the table above, our membership has fluctuated some during my time as the VP of Membership. Our best year was just before the pandemic; our membership numbers were around 120 dues-paying members. These numbers dropped but not too much because we still had several long-time members pay their dues during 2020, when we did not host an annual conference due to the pandemic. In 2021, we still held on to most dues-paying members from 2020. In 2022, we saw that almost returned to a hundred members strong, and I think much of this rebound was because of the terrific location and conference in Mexico City that brought in several new members but has a drop off long-time existing members returning (roughly lost about 15 long-term members). That being said, we need to focus on ways to bring back members and continue to entice new membership among sociology faculty, students, and practitioners.

Membership Drives (2019-2022)

During my term, I worked closely with Dr. Woody Doane, AHS Treasurer, to determine ways to increase our membership. Our first idea to increase membership was to provide steady and regular communication quarterly) with the membership would keep them connected to the organization, leading to paying their dues. To do this in 2019 and 2020, Woody gave me a list of all current and past members. I sent emails periodically to invite them to renew their memberships and showcase what the organization could do for them as members. This email campaign was somewhat successful because it did encourage folks to pay their dues at the beginning of the year instead of waiting until the conference happened in November. However, by 2020, I stopped sending these emails due to a few reasons (1) the Pandemic, (2)

out-of-date email addresses, and (3) no news to report about AHS and the conference. However, I attempted to restart this practice in 2021. Still, I was not as successful in getting regular emails to the membership since there was not much news or items to share (i.e., newsletter, conference announcements, membership drives, etc.).

My second attempt to bring in members was to enact a “BOGO” offer to increase new memberships. During 2022, any existing member who renewed their membership would be allowed to give a membership to someone who had never participated in AHS. As the Treasurer, Woody calculated the costs of making such an offer, costing the organization \$5 per person who was given this opportunity to be a new member. During 2022, we recruited six new members with this BOGO offer. So, it was not a huge success, but it is something to continue to consider as it might be able to be used to recruit graduate students or newer faculty members, in which dues can be prohibitive.

Finally, I worked with the various program committees of all the conferences to have new membership meetings. Each panel had a coffee or breakfast meet-up between the new members and me to discuss the benefits of the AHS and to field any questions or concerns about membership. Only two or three people showed up at each of the events, but I was able to meet several of the new members via our group lunches and planned outings. While my attempts to meet with folks in the morning did not lead to much interaction, attending the conference and talking to folks about the organization, need to be a priority for this position and for all Executive Committee members to recruit and keep members.

Future Suggestions for Membership Recruitment

I must admit that I am worried about the future of AHS. Small membership numbers will continue to make filling important positions and holding a great conference more difficult. Nevertheless, as an organization, we offer some of the most remarkable conference experiences I have ever had compared to going to regional or national conferences that tend to avoid honest and practical discussions and ways to bring about real social change. We must find ways to continue providing these impactful experiences to our existing members and those who have yet to see us as a home for fellowship. This task will be difficult. So many competing organizations and conferences distract our members and future members from us because they are accepted and respected in our profession as “gold standards” for showing a productive research agenda. Thus, we must find a way to better campaign for ourselves. We are cheaper, more interactive, and more impactful in what we embody and do. We must highlight these benefits and consider ways to make use more attractive to young and older scholars tired of the “rat race” and boredom of those “other” organizations.

WE ARE SOCIAL ACTION, which is more than just research for self-interests and academic debates. We must remind folks that this membership has had honest discussions and created avenues for social change that no other entity has. However, we make much of this work and effort in a vacuum or at least among ourselves. It does not reach the outside worlds that need this organization to engage us beyond the academy and to give us a home when sociology faces threats and foreclosure. Below are some suggestions I would like to pass along for the Executive Committee and future VPs of Membership to consider.

- **The VP of Membership should have access to membership information.** During my time in this role, I had to ask the Treasurer to provide me with data on membership every time I needed to send an email or complete this report. While Woody Doane always gave me the information I needed, I do not think it is his job to manage this information. He should devote his time to treasury-related issues instead of worrying about membership. I believe the VP of Membership should be able to handle the data collected

on membership, which comes through our website when folks pay their dues. If I had direct access to this information, I could have done more to communicate regularly with the membership and answer questions about whether members had paid their dues. Unfortunately, when I would get membership questions, I had to ask Woody to look up the information and share it with me so I could answer their questions. It just seems inefficient.

- **Our media presence must be solid and consistent.** We must create a virtual infrastructure to send messages, alerts, and information to our membership within minutes, not months. We need a central email platform, social media accounts that are updated constantly, and a website that multiple editors can manage. We also need to create a newsletter that is online only and accessible through our AHS website.
- **We need membership benefits beyond attending the annual conference.** We must consider ways for our membership to receive benefits beyond attending a conference or receiving the association's journal. Notably, other organizations are adopting virtual practices to provide workshops and training on various issues facing sociologists. These events can tap our membership to do the presentations and be accessible to those with an existing membership. It may also be a way to draw in new members, especially graduate students who yearn for workshop opportunities beyond their department offerings. We should also consider ways to advertise job opportunities and an active social media presence to alert members about events, topic discussions, and releasing new *Humanity and Society* journal issues.
- **We need to create an Executive Officer position.** One of the problems that I have seen in my years of working with smaller organizations is transition problems from year to year. Also, I have noticed that the members who have been most active for decades are retiring or not participating as much, which leads to problems with having someone to carry forward the mission and having the institutional knowledge to continue the work of this organization. One way to combat this issue is to have someone elected and paid (at least a nominal fee) to carry the organization forward each year. This role would be a 3- or 5-year appointment. It would take on the secretarial and accounting functions necessary to keep the organization moving forward and fill in the blanks when AHS officers leave their roles. For an example of this role, please consider investigating how this works with the Southern Sociological Society.

To all the past and current members, thank you again for this opportunity to serve you and this great organization! I look forward to AHS conferences and experiences in the near and distant future!

Sincerely,

Cameron D. Lippard

Professor and Chair of Sociology

Appalachian State University

AHS VP of Membership (2019-2023)



WE NEED YOU!!

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO AHS? IF NOT, PLEASE GO ONLINE AND DO IT RIGHT NOW AT:
<https://www.humanist-sociology.org/membership.html>.

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