

Rural Sociological Society Annual Meeting – July 27-30, 2017 – Columbus, Ohio

Call for Papers on Rural Population Health

Rural people and places face a number of enduring and new health challenges. Life expectancy is lower, and rates of several chronic diseases, obesity, disability, and mortality from the leading causes of death are higher in rural versus urban areas. Over the last three decades, rural and urban life expectancy and mortality have diverged, with rural areas seeing fewer improvements in population health compared to urban areas. Morbidity and mortality from drugs, alcohol, and suicide – the so-called ‘diseases and deaths of despair’ have been especially pronounced in rural areas over the past decade. There has been significant conjecture about the roles of rising anxiety and distress (particularly among non-Hispanic whites) on these rural population health trends. Slow-moving stressors that have manifested over the past 40 years (e.g., industrial transformation, wage stagnation, rising income inequality, population aging, climate change) and short-term economic and policy shocks (e.g., the Great Recession, safety net policy/program changes) affect the health of rural people differently than their urban peers due to greater concentrations of vulnerable groups, less diversified economies, thinner and weaker institutions, and fewer local services in rural areas.

We are interested in bringing together papers on the links between volatility, shocks, and stressors and rural population health for one or more organized sessions co-sponsored by the Population Research Interest Group (RIG) and the Community, Health, and Family RIG. Papers may be conceptual, empirical, and/or applied. Population health is conceived of broadly to include physical and mental health, health-related quality of life, and aging. Shocks and stressors may be economic, social, political, institutional, or environmental. We encourage scholars from disciplines outside of sociology, including those who do not regularly attend the RSS annual meeting, to submit abstracts. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- trends in rural population health, including variation by sex, race/ethnicity, and SES
- relationships between economic downturn and physical and/or mental health
- policy impacts (including the ACA) on health care access, use, and/or outcomes
- environmental or climate issues related to health
- consequences of poor health on other outcomes (e.g., political, social, economic)
- community or institutional responses to population health changes and challenges
- rural progress towards Healthy People 2020 goals
(<https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives>)
- strategies to improve rural population health
- data and/or methodological developments and innovations

Please submit an abstract (350-500 words) that outlines the purpose of the paper. If applicable, include a summary of data, methods, and preliminary or expected findings. Email your abstract to Shannon Monnat at smm67@psu.edu by **Tues, Feb 21 at 11:59 PM**. We will submit papers as a fully compiled session. If you have already submitted your abstract via the RSS submission system, but would like for it to be considered for this session, please email smm67@psu.edu to indicate this request.

The general Call for Papers is below. Find out more at: www.ruralsociology.org.

2017 Rural Sociological Society Annual Meeting Call for Papers, Posters, and Organized Sessions

The theme of the 2017 conference is *Rural Peoples in a Volatile World: Disruptive Agents and Adaptive Strategies* and will be held in Columbus, Ohio - July 27-30 2017. Over the past thirty years rural peoples have had to cope with an increasing range and number of disruptive events. These events have come in a wide variety of forms: economic downturns, fires, severe storms, droughts (e.g. climate change), the arrival of outside investors, and wars. Clearly, the strategies for coping vary by class and related disadvantages, making some people more vulnerable to the deliberate machinations of elites as well as to the almost random turns of events like storms and droughts. Embedded within this larger theme would be several subthemes. One would continue last year's focus on class and examine the special challenges facing disadvantaged rural peoples in moments of change. Another might look at the special politics of change during these crises and the ways that they affect rural peoples. We invite you to explore these topics and a wide variety of other topics at our 2017 meeting. RSS encourages a variety of rural practitioners and disciplines to attend. Please join us in Columbus! <http://www.ruralsociology.org/annual-meeting-call-for-papers>