

XXX South African Sociological Association Conference 2021

Hosted virtually by the Sociology Department

University of the Free State

Bloemfontein



Sociology without Borders: The relevance of Sociology in Society, Life, and Academia in the 21st Century

27-30 June 2021

Much has changed since sociology's emergence in the late 19th century – a sociology that is often deemed parochial and unable to respond to our current and diverse social challenges. Within our rapidly transforming global society, the value of sociology could be questioned in a world much focused on technological progress and solutions but where inequalities are becoming more entrenched and stark in the face of “progress”. The role of the discipline of sociology needs to constantly evolve and respond to a world increasingly characterized by isolationism, sensationalism, and de-contextualization. Bearing this context in mind, sociology should take the lead in making our world a better place by questioning and refining existing theories and theorists inasmuch as these are still relevant to contemplate our current predicaments and positions.

Using “borders” as a heuristic device provides us with the possibility to look at sociology through a variety of lenses. For example, who do we include and exclude when we do sociology? Is our sociology solely focused on “intellectuals” and academics, or does our sociology speak to ordinary people and relevant societal issues? How can we grow our African sociological vocabulary to address the linguistic of the past and the present? To what extent do we recognize non-Western and non-hegemonic theories as possible perspectives when grappling with societal issues or do we continue to adopt and apply dominant and mostly Western perspectives when addressing social issues? Are our sociological interests only vested in our immediate concerns and dictated by our personal life-worlds or do we engage with sociology as a global enterprise? How do we engage with, and ignore, certain methodological approaches and stances in our quest to generate new and valuable knowledge? Who are the audiences we connect with and who are the ones we ignore when we try to understand our social world? Is it possible to do sociology without borders? These are but some questions that a focus on “borders” could potentially give rise to.

Please consider submitting abstracts that pertain to the SASA working groups. A comprehensive list of these which can be found at: <https://sociology.africa>

Submissions open on 25 January 2021 and close on 7 May 2021. Abstracts should be no longer than 250 words.

For all queries related to the conference and for abstract submissions please use the following email address: sasa2021@ufs.ac.za