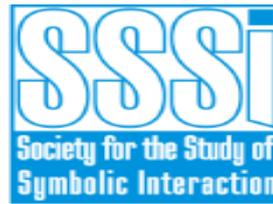




Lancaster University
Law School



Annual SSSI-meeting (Couch-Stone) in Lancaster (UK)

Dear colleague

On 4, 5 and 6 July 2018 the annual (Couch-Stone) SSSI meeting will be held in Lancaster at the Lancaster University (UK). The meeting will be a combined effort of the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction (SSSI) and European SSSI. The title of the conference is *'Whose side are we on?'* Power, Stigma, Transgression and Exclusion in Everyday Life. So far, we have three confirmed keynote speakers: Kathy Charmaz, Ken Plummer and Staci Newmahr. Kathy Charmaz will also give a two-day workshop on Grounded Theory on the Monday and Tuesday before the conference. For more information and registration, see our website: <http://wp.lancs.ac.uk/sssi2018/>.

Before I continue outlining the logistics and describing the location of this conference, I want to say something about its character for those who are not familiar with the SSSI. I have noticed over the years that quite a lot of people outside of the SSSI use a narrow definition of symbolic interactionism with a strong focus on classic scholars, such as Mead and Cooley. But the SSSI is a group of academics who adhere to a broad and inclusive definition of SI, which tends to focus on qualitative research and is inspired by the work by a wide range of authors, such as Patti Adler, David Altheide, Paul Atkinson, Howard Becker, Joel Best, Sherri Cavan, Kathy Charmaz, Adele Clarke, Stan Cohen, Norman Denzin, Jack Douglas, Gary Allan Fine, Erving Goffman, Harold Garfinkel, Arlie Hochschild, Deborah van den Hoonaard, Ruth Horowitz, Jack Katz, Lyn Lofland, Donileen Loseke, Ken Plummer, Laurel Richardson, Clinton Sanders, David Silverman, Jacqueline P. Wiseman, Helena Znaniecki Lopata and many, many others.

Most scholars who attend our conferences share the use of qualitative methods to describe and analyse the social construction of the worlds they study. Most of us share a common set of academic concepts, such as 'social construction', 'meaning', 'perspectives', 'interpretation' and 'interaction'. Most studies that are presented at our conferences have a micro- or meso-sociological character, some have a more theoretical angle and few focus on the more general level of society. In general, academics from a wide range of fields, such as urban studies, health, sexualities, media, race/ethnicity, identity work, deviance and crime, participate in the conferences. Therefore, it is not uncommon that papers are accepted that are not directly related to the theme of the conference. Still, it would be appreciated if you could relate your work to the theme of the conference.

We are preparing this conference with an academic community in mind. We hope it will not only be a place to network and advance your career, but also and preferably a place for academic dialogue, learning and adventure – both during the sessions but also during the social life in between and after the sessions. Therefore, the conference is organised in such a way that we can meet and build connections with others in different settings, such as during lunch, dinners and live music.

The (early bird) conference fee is £ 275 for SSSI members three days. Non-members pay £ 320 pounds¹. This includes three dinners (high quality buffet, banquet and barbeque, with different options such as vegetarian and vegan, including drinks and live music), three lunches and coffee and juice three times a day. We also have a lower fee of £ 95 for PhD-students, non-funded academics and colleagues from emerging economies. For spouses/partners it is possible to join the dinners for a fixed rate². I want to emphasize that the conference welcomes and supports young academics, such as those who are working on Master's degrees and PhDs, who would like to present their developing work. Please send your abstract (150 words) to t.muller@lancaster.ac.uk.

Submissions will be checked for quality and we will try to place them in a session with papers that address similar themes/topics. Still, those who want to organize a specific session are welcome to do so. You can send me a proposal and your email address will be published on the website so persons can reach you directly. So far, we have sessions on radical sociology/criminology, management studies, music, friendship, cultural criminology, self-injury, disability and the online world (gaming).

Accommodation on campus is available. The hotel rooms are around £85 a night (\$ 112) (book on time, <http://englishlakes.co.uk/lancaster-house/>) and Bed and Breakfast Accommodation in Lancaster University Halls is around £ 48 (\$ 63) a night. (see <https://www.conferences.lancs.ac.uk/bedandbreakfast/> use Promo code LAW18 in the Promo Box). There are also plenty options for accommodation in and around Lancaster. My favourite one is hotel The Sun, <https://www.thesunhotelandbar.co.uk/>) There are direct (intercontinental) flights to Manchester and Glasgow with an easy train connection to Lancaster. I am not a list fetishist, but Lancaster University is nominated as the Sunday Times university of the year and is ranked as the number seven UK university. Our sociology department is number three in the UK ranking and, by the way, my section, Criminology, is number 1 in the UK ranking.

I hope to see you all in Lancaster this summer for a great academic and social meeting.

Thaddeus Müller, Vice President SSSI (t.muller@lancaster.ac.uk)

¹ Membership depends on your income and is between 32 and 60 pounds for academics per year.

² Wednesday: Buffet dinner £26.00; Thursday: Gala dinner £30.00; Friday: BBQ dinner £15.00.