



SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION CONGRESS 2024

Call for Papers: SASA Congress , 1-4 July 2024 at Stellenbosch University

Sociology and its Publics: Institutions, audiences, and vocabularies in a new era of contestation

After thirty years of democracy in South Africa, the country remains a rich site for sociological inquiry, with established lines of inquiry around race, class and gender being supplemented by questions of generation, sexuality, and modes and media of expression. Sociology is an established discipline in many of the public higher institutions in South Africa, and its traditions of sociological thought extend back to at least the 1960s, with scholars like Fatima Meer and Bernard Magubane becoming prominent alongside a rich Marxist tradition, within which Eddie Webster was a leading figure. But to whom is Sociology speaking now, this conference promises to ask? If the national association was once dominated by questions of labour, workplace struggles and the shape of post-apartheid democracy, what questions and audiences should sociology now address? What vocabularies are appropriate to sociology and what kinds of institutional form should sociology as a discipline take? At a moment when the liberation party's hold on electoral power has been weaker than at any point in thirty years of democracy, how do popular contestations shape sociology, and which publics acquire platforms for contestations in South Africa?

This conference thus foregrounds questions relating to sociology and its publics in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. During this time, the authority of texts, teaching, and modes of learning are in question, and a deluge of information competes for the limited attention of subjects. While for some, the spectre of neoliberal managerialism haunts the university - turning students into customers and teaching and research into outputs, and provoking the defense of established forms of knowledge - for others, disciplines are themselves colonial products and we need to find new ways of organizing and expressing knowledge. These engagements, and others, suggest the importance of considering our publics, asking us for whom we teach and write, how our audiences might be circumscribed or expanded, and how we as sociologists might transform ourselves to be heard better.

As a site of debate and dialogue, our annual national conference aims to be a site for multiple sociological publics, and we encourage submissions from all with an interest in the present and future of the discipline. We aim to foreground the following themes:

- Sociologies of democracy, citizenship and violence
- Gender and generational contestations
- New politics of nationalisms, racism and xenophobia
- Intersections of economy and environment
- Technological mediations of public and private domains
- Contemporary contestations and audiences in higher education



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Submissions are encouraged in these themes, or in others organized in our SASA working groups, listed at: <https://sociology.africa/annual-conference/sasa-working-groups>

The closing date for abstracts is Friday, 29 March, 2024.

Please email abstracts, together with author details to: sasa2024conference@gmail.com AND cc' the appropriate SASA working group convenor with your submission.