

## **Dr. Jeremy A. Ross**

Jacksonville State University  
Sociology and Social Work  
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### **Education**

PHD, Oklahoma State University, 2012.

Major: Sociology

Supporting Areas of Emphasis: Criminology, Social Inequality

Dissertation Title: The Anniston Study: Chemical Weapons Incineration and the Negotiation of Risk

MA, Middle Tennessee State University, 2007.

Major: Sociology

Dissertation Title: Conversations Beyond the Classroom: Establishing Voice for Local Teachers

BS, Jacksonville State University, 2005.

Major: Sociology/Political Science

### **Professional Positions**

#### **Academic - Post-Secondary**

Instructor, Northern Oklahoma College. (August 16, 2012 - August 1, 2013).

### **Professional Memberships**

Mid-South Sociological Association. (January 1, 2005 - Present).

## **TEACHING**

### **Awards and Honors**

OSU Outstanding TA, Oklahoma State University Sociology Club. (June 1, 2012).

## **RESEARCH**

### **Published Intellectual Contributions**

#### **Refereed Journal Articles**

Ross, J., Deshotels, T. H., Forsyth, C. J. (in press). Fantasy Objects: The Perception of Safety of Emergency Shelter in Place Kits. *Deviant Behavior: An Interdisciplinary Journal/Routledge/Taylor and Francis*.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/udbh20#.VcOuDbyUEsI>

### **Presentations Given**

Savage, J. J. (Panelist), Ross, J. (Panelist), Panel Presentation at Community Meeting, "Building Better Relationships between Police and the Public in Calhoun County," JSU Justice and Civil Rights Initiative (JCFRI), Jacksonville, AL. (August 25, 2014).

Ross, J. (Author & Presenter), Inequality in America: Myth or Reality?, "Spirit and Inequality," JSU American Democracy Project, Houston Cole Library - Jacksonville State University. (February 24, 2014).

Ross, J. (Author & Presenter), Action Sociology: Opportunities in a (Post) Modern World, "Symbolic Safety in Anniston, Alabama: How Fantasy Objects Reify the Social Order," Mid-South Sociological Association, Atlanta, GA. (October 26, 2013).

Ross, J., "Expectations for Graduate School," JSU Sociology Club, Jacksonville, AL. (October 2, 2013).

## Awards and Honors

Faculty Research Award, Jacksonville State University. (May 6, 2014).

## Research in Progress

### "Durkheim's Homo Duplex: Anthropocentrism in Sociology" (Writing Results)

Previous analyses of anthropocentrism in sociology theory trace the origins of anthropocentrism to George Herbert Mead. This study addresses anthropocentrism in the influential works of Emile Durkheim. At the core of Durkheim's theory is his concept of the homo duplex, an inherent but tentative quality separating humans from all other animals. Durkheim uses the homo duplex as an ontological device, as he defines humanity as having the unique capacity to create and participate in the social. This collective process permits humans to transcend the profane, or what he observes as the immoral, passionate, animalistic individualism of non-human animals, into social solidarity, morality, and ultimately, the sacred. This key distinction serves as the basis of all Durkheimian theory. This profound anthropocentrism becomes significant considering the degree of Durkheim's influence on the field of sociology and the extent of anthropocentrism in sociology as a whole.

### "Fantasy, Risk, and the Social Order in Anniston, Alabama" (On-Going)

We investigate the relationship between fantasy objects and the social order in Anniston, Alabama. This research extends previous scholarship on the use of symbolic planning and fantasy documents. Using interview data (n=30), we examine the meaning respondents give to the safety objects and plans, and we find that while residents openly question the effectiveness of the fantasy objects, the organizational attempts to quell oppositional thoughts and actions in the public are indeed successful, in that participants do not question the social arrangements producing the risk, even though they question the safety promised by fantasy objects. Our analysis illustrates how fantasy can maintain the legitimacy of organizational power, thereby reifying the existing social order which supporting the logics underpinning complex organizations producing risk.

### "Symbolic Safety in Anniston, Alabama: How Fantasy Objects Reify the Social Order" (Writing Results)

Contemporary society has largely become denoted by its ubiquitous risk. We contend that many organizations knowingly endanger the public, but at the same time, they produce contingency planning to compensate for this fact. Building on the works of Lee Clarke, we assert this planning is largely fantasy. This paper documents the successful use of symbolic safety. Symbolic safety is socially constructed, based on official definitions of risk, and promoted by those in power to appease the public and create the impression that things are under control. Organizations conducting fantasy work carefully craft and insert their own definitions of reality—informing the public what is reasonable, legitimate, and realistic. This construction becomes reified through the production and distribution of emergency plans and objects. When effective, symbolic safety calms the public and silences critics. It frames

oppositional thoughts as unmerited, illegitimate, and ultimately problematic. Symbolic safety legitimates those in power, thereby reinforcing social arrangements and extending the status quo. The case study of chemical weapon stockpile and incinerator in Anniston, Alabama, illustrates this process.

## **SERVICE**

### **Department Service**

Committee Member, Department Assessment Committee. (August 1, 2013 - August 1, 2014).

Committee Member, Search Committee. (August 1, 2013 - August 1, 2014).

Faculty Advisor, Sociology Club. (August 1, 2013 - August 1, 2014).