

**Selected Documents in the History of
the Rural Sociological Society**

Creating the Journal:
Rural Sociology

For Display Only

Creating the Journal

Rural Sociology

This publication is one of five display volumes created for the
75th Anniversary of the Rural Sociological Society.

The idea for the volumes came because of a request from the conference program chair, Keiko Tanaka, that artifacts from the history of the Society be on display during the 75th Anniversary celebration. Given the fragile nature of the original documents and a need to contextualize their importance, a decision was made to create this series of display volumes.

Most of the documents included herein were originally copied from the RSS Archives for the 6-part series on the history of the Rural Sociological Society written by John Holik and Edward Hassinger for the 50th Anniversary of RSS. The series was published in *The Rural Sociologist*.

“The Rural Sociological Society: Its Beginnings.”

1986. 6(5):331-340.

“The RSS: Coming to Formalization.”

1986. 6(6):407-420.

“The RSS: Ties that Bind.”

1987. 7(1):3-18.

“RSS During the Depression and World War II Years.”

1987. 7(3):154-165.

“RSS in Midlife: 1950-1962.”

1987. 8(1):5-31.

“The RSS: Reaching Outward and Inward, the 1960s and 1970s.”

1987. 8(5):385-404.

Complementing the archive documents are copies of documents from the RSS Historian’s Files and selections from journals including the *American Journal of Sociology*, the *American Sociological Review*, *Sociologia Ruralis*, and *Rural Sociology*.

In addition to these volumes, posters with photographs of past presidents, editors of *Rural Sociology*, editors of *The Rural Sociologist*, Distinguished Rural Sociologist award winners, previous archivists/historians, and a 75-questions trivia game were also created and displayed during the 2012 conference.

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*By seeing and reading the words of those who created our history,
it is hoped that these documents will help to bring
our organization's history to life.*

This booklet is for display purposes only.

Unless otherwise indicated, documents included herein are from
the Archives of the Rural Sociological Society.

Located at the University of Missouri,
the collection is managed by the State Historical Society of Missouri.

<http://shs.umsystem.edu/manuscripts/descriptions/desc-socsci.html>

**Contents should not be used without
proper attribution**



Creating the Journal

Rural Sociology

Despite various attempts to increase publication outlets for rural sociology research, frustrations on the part of rural sociologists within the American Sociological Society (ASS) were growing. Part of the frustration was that publication opportunities with the ASS were seen as not keeping pace with the growth in rural sociological research. As a result, members of the ASS Section on Rural Sociology considered creating their own professional journal.

After 3 hours of “vigorous” debate, Fred C. Frey jumped up and declared that if financing were all that was holding the group back, he promised that Louisiana State University would sponsor the journal. With that support, in December 1935, members of the ASS Section on Rural Sociology agreed to establish the journal *Rural Sociology* [Tab 1].

The premier issue of *Rural Sociology* appeared only three months later in March of 1936 [Tab 2]. The first editor was Lowry Nelson and the first managing editor was T. Lynn Smith.

During its first year of operation, discussions ensued as to what content would be appropriate for the new journal [Tab 5]. While it was agreed that the journal would have a scholarly focus, it was also clear that submissions would not be limited to rural sociologists alone.

Also in its first year, a request to have the journal listed amongst those that members of the American Sociological Society could choose from was rebuffed – even though the journal addressed all issues of sociology, just in a rural context [Tab 3; Tab 4].

After the initial sponsorship of LSU, university sponsors/publishers changed about every 5 years or so. In 1962, the transition brought a desire for greater stability prompting the question of asking if the American Sociological Association (ASA) would publish the journal through its organization [Tab 6].

The question of ASA publishing *Rural Sociology* never went very far. The ASA publication committee schedule caused delays and in the interim, Michigan State University agreed to take over the role of sponsoring the journal.

Indeed Talcott Parson’s letter suggests that the decision from ASA would have been to the negative. The summary of events by Allan Beegle as well as Parsons’ letter indicate that larger issues of relations between the ASA and RSS were also at hand as the ASA would have required that the RSS resume its section status.



Editor
1936-1940
Lowry Nelson
Utah State University



Managing Editor
1936-1940
T. Lynn Smith
Louisiana State University

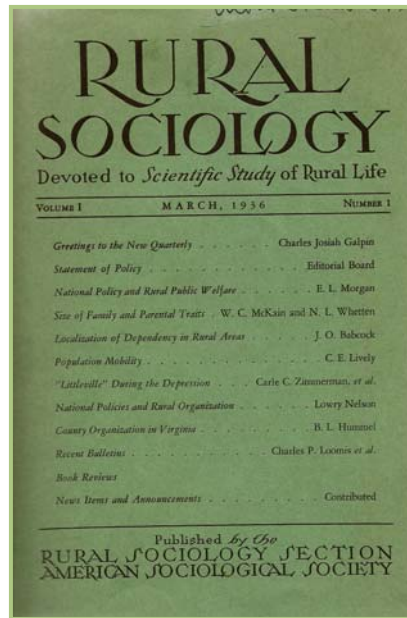
Creating the Journal

Rural Sociology

This year marks the 77th volume of *Rural Sociology* and 75 years of being the official journal of the Rural Sociological Society. As the current editor Alessandro Bonanno notes “*Rural Sociology* is the oldest and most recognized journal in the world that specifically deals with rural sociological themes” (2012. 77(1):1-2).

Today, the journal is published by Wiley Blackwell and early issues are available at the Core Historical Literature of Agriculture website at Cornell University.

Rural Sociology **Volume 1 Issue 1** **1936**



Board of Editors

Lowry Nelson, Editor
John H. Kolb
C.E. Lively
Dwight Sanderson
Carle C. Zimmerman

Managing Editor

T. Lynn Smith

Contributing Editors

Volume 1 Issue 1

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A. W. Ashby, University College of Wales
O. E. Baker, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, USDA
Josephine Brown, Works Progress Administration
E. deS. Brunner, Columbia University
F. S. Chapin, University of Minnesota
Carl A. Dawson, McGill University
Fred C. Frey, Louisiana State University
C. J. Galpin, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, USDA
Corrado Gini, University of Rome

Charles S. Johnson, Fiske University
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Louise Stanley, Bureau of Home Economics, USDA
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Paul S. Taylor, University of California
George S. Wehrwein, University of Wisconsin
T. J. Woolfer, Jr., University of North Carolina
B. Youngblood, Office of Experiment Stations, USDA

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Reprints

Tab 1.

- a) Minutes of meeting held December 29, 1935 where decision was made to establish the journal. Originally published in *Rural Sociology* 1(1), reprinted in 1985, 50(1).
- b) Announcement of the new journal *Rural Sociology* published in the *American Sociological Review* (1936. 1(1):133).
- c) Letter of congratulations from ASS President Henry Pratt Fairchild (published in *Rural Sociology* 1926 1(2):244).
- d) History of *Rural Sociology* by Jim Christensen in recognition of the 50th volume of the journal. *Rural Sociology* 1985. 50(4):606-613.

Documents

Tab 2. Setting up the new Journal

- a) Lowry Nelson's letter to Dwight Sanderson on getting the journal started (incl. draft of the editorial board and draft announcement of the journal). February 1936.
- b) T. Lynn Smith letter to Lowry Nelson giving update on the journal. February 1936.
- c) Lowry Nelson note to C. E. Lively and submission of Charles Galpin's statement for the journal's first issue. February 1936.

Tab 3. Rural Sociology and the ASA

- a) Lowry Nelson letter to ASA president Henry Pratt Fairchild giving background on the new journal and discussing its relationship with other ASA efforts and publications. (includes statement from the *Rural Sociology* editorial board). February 1936.
- b) Fairchild's response to Nelson wherein he correlates the new journal with the increase in regional sociological associations. March 1936.

Tab 4. Correspondence about including Rural Sociology as journal offered to ASA members

- a) Handwritten notes between Stuart Chapin and Lowry Nelson. No date.
- b) Handwritten letter from H. A. Phelps indicating ASA decided against including *Rural Sociology* amongst the journals offered to the ASA membership. October 1936.
- c) Reaction from T. Lynn Smith to the *Rural Sociology* Editorial Board. October 1936.
- d) Follow-up note to ASA President Faris from managing editor T. Lynn Smith. November 1937.

Tab 5. Determining the content for the new journal

- a) Ray Wakely letter to Bob Polson includes discussion about the potential content for the journal. February 1936.

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(Continued)

Tab 6. Determining the content for the new journal (continued)

- b) Lowry Nelson letter to T. Lynn Smith on submissions of book reviews. February 1936.
- c) T. Lynn Smith letter to Lowry Nelson concerning international material. February 1937.
- d) Dwight Sanderson letter to Lowry Nelson concerning the inclusion of a poem. May 1936.
- e) Invitation to M.L. Wilson (Undersecretary of Agriculture, USDA) to prepare a paper to be published in the journal. February 1939.
- f) T. Lynn Smith letter to Lowry Nelson concerning articles for *Rural Sociology* addressing teaching curriculum content. April 1940.
- g) Letter from W.A. Anderson to Carl C. Taylor discussing the desirability of devoting issues of the journal to single individuals and the possible content of a memorial issue to Dwight Sanderson. June 1945.
- h) Carl Taylor letter to Lowry Nelson concerning issues raised by W. A. Anderson. June 1945.

Tab 7. Transitions in journal sponsorship

- a) T. Lynn Smith letter to John Kolb concerning *Social Forces* relationship with the Southern Sociological Society and the possibility of a similar relationship so that LSU might continue its sponsorship. April 1940.
- b) Dwight Sanderson letter to C. E. Lively about the possibilities for a new university sponsor for the journal. October 1940.
- c) Letter to Dwight Sanderson outlining a possible procedure for a regular transition of university sponsors at 5-year intervals. November 1940.

Tab 8. Exploring the possibility of ASA publishing the journal *Rural Sociology*. June 1962.

- a) Memo describing process and survey to gauge support for negotiating with ASA for publishing *Rural Sociology*. October 1961.
- b) Memo describing interactions with ASA. November 1961.
- c) Memo describing continued interactions with ASA and the recommendation that sponsorship of the journal move to Michigan State University. January 1962.
- d) Recommendation that RSS continue publishing the journal and that Michigan State assume that role while continuing discussions on publication alternatives. February 1962.
- e) Memo from Talcott Parsons, Secretary of the ASA, suggesting that discussions concerning ASA publishing *Rural Sociology* should not be raised. February 1962.
- f) General background on the journal, including financial report.
- g) First draft of response to Talcott Parson's letter from RSS President Harold Kaufman. June 1962.

**Copies of Archive
and other documents**

Archives of the Rural Sociological Society

State Historical Society of Missouri
Social Sciences and Humanities Collection Descriptions
<http://shs.umsystem.edu/manuscripts/descriptions/desc-socsci.html>
(List Downloaded: March 2012)

- Rural Sociological Society of America Archives, (WUNP4618)
2 linear feet. Addition. Development Committee materials, presidential papers of C. Milton Coughenour, and RURAL SOCIOLOGIST manuscripts for volume 4.
- Rural Sociological Society of America Archives, (WUNP4585)
2 linear feet. Addition. Includes material from Daryl Hobbs, Willis J. Goudy, 1983 program materials and copies of publications.
- Rural Sociological Society of America Papers, (WUNP4244)
2 linear feet. Addition to professional organization's archives. Detailed inventory in accession folder. Addition. Files on OUR CHANGING RURAL SOCIETY, edited by Tom Ford.
- Rural Sociological Society of America Papers, (WUNP4296)
1 folder(s). NEWSLINE, 1979 issues; 1979 annual meeting program; RSS annual meeting abstracts; preliminary program for 5th World Congress of Rural Sociology.
- Rural Sociological Society of America Papers, (WUNP4358)
2 linear feet. Addition. See accession folder for inventory.
- Rural Sociological Society of America Papers, (WUNP4463)
2 linear feet. Addition. Correspondence, committee and council meeting minutes, printed material from Society.
- Rural Sociological Society of America Papers, 1910-1973 (C3305)
Inventory: <http://shs.umsystem.edu/manuscripts/invent/3305.pdf>
MICROFILM
9.6 linear feet. 2 volumes, 2 audio tapes, 27 rolls of microfilm
The papers of the Rural Sociological Society of America contain presidential and committee correspondence and includes accounts of how some of the first rural sociologists became interested in the profession. Microfilm is available for Rural Sociology, the official quarterly.

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(List Downloaded: March 2012)

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Rural Sociological Society of America, Archives, (WUNP5646)

8 linear feet. INVENTORY. Addition of research project files; committee files; presidential papers; secretarial papers; annual meeting records; publications; endowment committee materials; audio and visual materials; histories; and miscellaneous.

Rural Sociological Society of America, Archives, (WUNP5223)

0.4 linear feet. INVENTORY. Addition of annual meeting materials, administrative records, publications and other materials.

Rural Sociological Society of America, Archives, (WUNP5071)

MICROFILM

1 linear feet. INVENTORY. Addition to records of the Society. Includes correspondence, photographs, meeting materials, publications, and records of the International Rural Sociological Assn.

Rural Sociological Society of America, Archives, (WUNP4971)

MICROFILM

0.8 linear feet. INVENTORY. Addition to the correspondence, records, and publications of the Society.

Rural Sociological Society of America, Archives, (WUNP4787)

MICROFILM

7.9 linear feet. INVENTORY. Publications, directories, programs, pamphlets, conference files, video tapes, photographs and minutes of the Society.

Creating the Journal

Rural Sociology



The **Rural Sociological Society** is a professional social science association that promotes the generation, application, and dissemination of sociological knowledge. The Society seeks to enhance the quality of rural life, communities, and the environment.

For additional information and resources on the history of the Rural Sociological Society or Rural Sociology, visit the Historian's page at www.ruralsociology.org

This publication was created by
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Any questions, comments, or suggestions can be sent to:
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The American Sociological Society's Section on Rural Sociology

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Creating the Journal: *Rural Sociology*

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Establishing the Rural Sociological Society

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Congress Strikes Again: The Era of the Big Chill

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Organizing the 1st World Congress of Rural Sociology: The Beginnings of the International Rural Sociological Association