



Sociologists for Women in Society



Congratulations to Katie L. Acosta, the 2020 SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer Award Winner

The 2020 SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer Award Winner is **Katie L. Acosta**. Thank you to the SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer Subcommittee that was comprised of Marybeth C. Stalp (Chair), Kimberly Kelly, Angela Hattery, and Koyel Khan. The SWS Distinguished Lectureship was founded in 1985 as a way of recognizing members whose scholarship employs a feminist perspective, and of making this feminist scholar available to campuses that are isolated, rural, located away from major metropolitan areas, bereft of the resources needed to invite guest speakers, and/or characterized by hostility to feminist scholarship. A key goal of the program is to provide a feminist voice on campuses where such a perspective is unusual and/or unwelcome. Please note

that the Lectureship originally carried the name of Cheryl Allyn Miller, but now there is a separate Cheryl Allyn Miller Award.

Katie L. Acosta is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Georgia State University. She earned her Bachelor's degree from Hunter College in New York. She went on to earn her MA and PhD from the University of Connecticut. She is unapologetically proud of being a first generation college student and daughter of immigrants. Her research and scholarly interests center the intersections of gender, sexuality, Latinx Studies, race/ethnicity, family, and immigration. She is the author of *Amigas y Amantes: Sexually Nonconforming Latinas Negotiate Family*, which explores the ways sexually nonconforming Latinas manage relationships with their partners, families of origin, and families of choice. Her second book, *Stepping into Queer Parenting* centers the social, and legal experiences of LBQ stepparent families before and after marriage equality. *Stepping into Queer Parenting*, which highlights the complex dynamics that influence parenting under these circumstances and the ingenious ways respondents make their families work, will be available for purchase in 2020. In addition to her books, her work appears in the *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, *Family Relations*, *Sexualities*, *Journal of Homosexuality*, *Sexualities Research and Social Policy*, *Gender & Society* and various edited volumes. Her most recent research project is a mixed-methods study that explores the experiences of Central American and Mexican asylum seekers in the age of Trump. This project focuses on how this most recent influx of asylum seekers shapes

race and ethnic ties with impoverished racially minoritized Atlantans. Dr. Acosta regularly teaches Race and Ethnic Relations, Families & Society, Qualitative Research Methods, Sexualities, and Gender & Society. As a public sociologist and scholar activist, Dr. Acosta has served as a consultant for nonprofit organizations interested in promoting racial equity in their workplaces. She also serves in a consulting capacity for educators committed to bringing a multicultural curriculum to their schools. She is a current council member for the American Sociological Association's Sex and Gender section, Vice President elect for the Southern Sociological Society and Co-chair of the Discrimination and Academic Justice Committee for the Sociologists for Women in Society.

Julia McQuillan and Nancy Naples submitted the central nomination letter for Acosta. They highlight that Acosta's work advances feminist insights in innovative and exciting ways to understudied areas (i.e. the intersections of family, sexuality, and ethnicity). They note that she is dedicated to bringing feminist intersectional lenses to multiple audiences inside and outside the academy. Her blog (<http://www.katielacosta.com/blog/>) makes clear that she can bring feminist research to broader audiences and speak to publics that may not be familiar with feminist scholarship. They note that Katie's area of research – feminist intersectional approaches to families, sexuality, immigration, race, and gender – focused primarily on Latinas – is innovative and important.

Others who contributed to Acosta's nomination include: Jessica Fields, Carla A. Pfeffer, Barbara Gurr, J.E. Sumereau, Marni Brown, Wendy Simonds, Mindy Stompler, Elisabeth O. Burgess, alithia zamantakis, Dresden Lackey, and Dionne Parris.

J.E. Sumereau wrote the following statement about Acosta, "Stepping outside the academy, there are even more examples of her impact and ability to speak to multiple audiences. For example, I think about the way she started blogging about politics, laws, classroom negotiation, and civil rights battles happening in her own part of Atlanta and throughout the nation."

Carla A. Pfeffer notes, "Dr. Acosta also maintains a blog, on her personal website, in which she writes about the experiences and struggles of women of color in the academy, the emotional labor of women in the #metoo movement, navigating the world and its assumptions as a mixed-race family, academic precarity and surviving the job market, and racist and xenophobic social policy in the U.S. today. It is in this way that Dr. Acosta continuously, through her research and teaching practices across numerous and diverse modalities, continues to productively push, challenge, and transform disciplines and disciplinary boundaries. Dr. Acosta's research publications have also been reprinted, which attests not only to their importance and popularity, but to their ability to shift and broaden thinking and conversations as well.

Wendy Simonds, Mindy Stompler, and Elisabeth O. Burgess note the following regarding Acosta: "She recently gave a talk on her results to our department and she did a wonderful job sharing her findings in a clear and engaging way, despite the complexities of presenting the effects of family law across states (and time)."

As part of the recognition, Acosta will develop a lecture that she will deliver in two venues: 1) at the 2022 Winter Meeting and 2) on one selected college or university during the 2021-2022 academic year. Her lecture or a paper based on it will be published in *Gender & Society*.

We hope you will join us in congratulating Katie L. Acosta and that you will make plans to join us for the 2020 Winter Meeting SWS Awards Reception to be held on Saturday, February 1, 2020 starting at 6:30 pm in San Diego, California.