Australian Thematic Sessions

Australian Thematic Sessions, organised by the Australian Local Organizing Committee, will be held at 14:00-15:20, on Monday to Thursday, June 26-29, 2023

The Sociology of Refugees, Asylum and Border Control in Australia
A politics of ‘keeping out the boats’ has driven Australia’s response to people seeking asylum. Australia’s draconian approaches to policing the border and to mandatory detention of asylum seekers has provided a template for a rising populist and authoritarian response to refugees across many countries. This session will interrogate Australia’s approach, highlighting the role of sociology in understanding the politics of border control and to understanding social movements responding to it.
Session Organisers: Anna Halafoff and Ashleigh Haw, Deakin University

The Social and Political Implications of Climate Change
Addressing the climate emergency effectively and with urgency is one of the greatest global challenges. Australia is a land of fire, drought and flood. The impact of these events is being intensified by population growth, poor land management and governance and, particularly, by climate change. The social sciences provide ways to understand and act on the climate emergency – and sociological insight is critical to addressing our climate future. This session will showcase the contributions of Australian sociologists in understanding and responding to climate change and related disaster events, highlighting their implications for social life, social inequality and the rise of authoritarian and populist politics.
Session Organisers: Jo Lindsay, Monash University and Kim Humphery, RMIT

Indigenous Sociology in Australia and the world
The continuing impacts of colonialism and authoritarian politics have profound effects on Indigenous peoples across the world. The social issues impacting Indigenous people are important topics for sociological research, demanding an Indigenous lens to understand. However, Indigenous sociological perspectives are of much broader significance for understanding a world in crisis and in which authoritarianism, populism, and xenophobia are on the rise. This session will showcase the work done by Australian Aboriginal sociologists, and other First Nations scholars, to show how Indigenous perspectives can help all sociologists better understand these issues.
Session Organisers: Theresa Petray, James Cook University and Catherine Hastings, Macquarie University
The Reshaping of Inequality in Australia

Australia is a wealthy country ostensibly based on the principles of egalitarianism. The 20th century saw Australia transformed by immigration, an asset price boom, global integration, expanded higher education access and by social and identity movements. Yet social inequalities are deeply embedded in Australia and in some cases intensifying. This session will look at the sociology of inequalities in the context of Australia focusing on the intersections of various forms of inequality, including how such inequalities are being reproduced and reconfigured in contemporary conditions.

Session Organisers: Annette Bromdal, University of Southern Queensland, Sonia Martin, RMIT and Brady Robards, Monash University