2017-2018 NASSS Research Fellow Award Committee Report

Award Committee: Algerian Hart, Michael Giardina, Parissa Safai, Audrey Giles, and Joshua Newman (Chair)

There was considerable feedback from the NASSS community with respect to the inaugural NASSS Research Fellows award class/ceremony. The Committee Chair received a dozen or so emails following the 2017 Conference and was encouraged to look for ways to expand the diversity of the membership and scholarship recognized by the Fellowship. To do this, he sought feedback from the Board, members, and the DCCC with respect to how to best achieve this end. As a first step, the following message was sent to the NASSS members in November:

> The inaugural class of Fellows was inducted at the 2017 Members Lunch, which included a moving tribute to Stan Eitzen given by long-time NASSS member George Sage. While the inaugural class featured many amazing scholars whose contributions to our field have proved immeasurable over the years, what was also clear was that as an organization we have to look to ways which we might develop a Fellowship that exemplifies the full diversity of scholars and scholarship within NASSS. More specifically, the 2018 Fellows Committee and DCCC are actively looking into ways where we can identify and bring to the fore research being done by scholars from varied cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds—as well as a plurality of nationalities, gender and sexual identities. As Chair of the Fellows Committee (as per the PPM), I can assure you that this is a priority for our group, and I have already been in contact with numerous scholars from across the NASSS membership exploring ways, within the framework of what was approved by the members in 2016, we can make sure that the Fellows Society reflects the depth and richness of our scholars, their identities and backgrounds, and their work. It is the Committee's plan to reach out to all Fellows-eligible scholars (or those who might be eligible based on SSJ criteria) as we did last year, and solicit the materials (basically a CV) which would be used as evidence that the criteria has been met by the applying scholar. That being said, we would welcome any additional suggestions on 1) how to better connect to scholars from diverse backgrounds, and particularly scholars of color, who are eligible to be NASSS Fellows and/or 2) ways to refine the process such that the Fellowship represents key scholars from all walks of life.

The Chair then sought feedback from the NASSS Board as to answers to the following concerns/question about the award:

> NASSS Awards:
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> - Do the concerns being raised by some NASSS members apply to all awards (e.g., some scholars better positioned, elevating scholars of privilege, etc.)? In other words, are awards inherently discriminatory or do

they privilege or elevate some scholars at the expense or to the detriment of those most vulnerable members of our organization?

- Is this award, in its nature, more likely to do so over others (service awards, SSJ award, early career award, book award, student paper award, etc.)?
- If so, see next category:

Fellows Criteria:

- What specific elements of the NASSS Fellows criteria, as outlined in the PPM, might be privileging certain scholars' identities or institutional positioning?
- Are there revisions that can be made to make for more inclusive criteria or a more inclusive Fellowship?

Fellows Process:

- What specific aspects of the application process might be discouraging scholars of color or various intersectional backgrounds from applying to the award?
- What can be changed to make sure that there are no barriers based on race, gender, sexual identity, ability, generationality, nationality, social class, or any social identity?

General (these are ideas which have been resented to me, not my own):

- What other problematic aspects of the award do we need to consider?
- How do we go about dialoguing with 'those who might be silent but concerned' on this issue?
- Should we suspend the award?
- Change the SSJ article requirement or the total article requirement?

Based on that feedback and after deliberations with the DCC Chair, it was announced to the members that the following actions would be taken:

Based on the various forms of dialogue and feedback the Board has received regarding the NASSS Research Fellows, the Board has established a number of changes to the PPM:

The majority of members who responded to the original call for feedback were in favor of changing the Fellows in some way, either significantly or with only some minor amendment. One of the most popular choices—which would to be to form a Fellows Society where scholars are acknowledged for teaching, service, and research through different streams and different criteria for each stream—is not something the Board is able to enact outside a member vote. Another prevalent suggestion, which was to do away with awards altogether, is again not something that can be enacted without due process and a members' vote. Given all of the existing awards were established by the members and changes this significant (i.e. establishing a way to recognize teaching excellence, collapsing existing research

awards such as the Early Career or SSJ awards, etc.) would require a vote of the full membership, there is nothing that can be done in this regard until next November.

For the time being, the options for the Board are actually quite limited: we can change the PPM (process, criteria) in an effort to make the Research Fellowship as inclusive as possible so long as these changes do not fundamentally alter the award. It should be noted that the award was voted on and overwhelmingly approved by the members at the Business Meeting in Tampa. It should also be noted that the NASSS Research Fellows was enacted by the members under the following portents: “The North American Society for the Sociology of Sport Research Fellow designation recognizes scholars who, through active and sustained dissemination of high quality research, have provided a significant contribution to the sociology of sport.” Thus changes to the PPM cannot deviate from the 'quality/significance' focus, the ‘sustainment' aspect (longevity over a career), the ‘dissemination' element, and most importantly, the fact that this is a ‘research' award.

Taking into consideration and attempting to synthesize the extensive feedback provided by numerous members of NASSS regarding
the NASSS Research Fellows Award and its selection criteria (both positive and negative), the Board has unanimously voted to enact the following amendments to the PPM for the 2018 cycle:

- Restructure the NASSS Fellows Award Committee to include the Chair of the Diversity and Conference Climate Committee or an appointee thereof;
- Adjust the publication eligibility criteria to include various types of research activity (shifting the focus award from refereed journal articles);
- Allow for other forms of creative or scholarly output to be included to satisfy the criteria of 20 total scholarly products; these might include: books and book chapters published by scholarly presses, (co-)principled federal or foundation grants, public sociology activities (such as editorials or articles in (inter)nationally-circulated magazines or (inter)national digital media), community-based research and activism, and service-oriented research activities;
- Encourage Fellows applicants to submit a statement of explanation which describes the author’s perceived impact of all scholarly outputs that satisfy the criteria. This would include a summative description of the qualifying journals articles, books, and book chapters, as well as a description of all ‘non-traditional’ forms of scholarship such as editorials or articles in (inter)nationally-circulated magazines or (inter)national digital media, community-based research and activism, and service-oriented research activities.

> These are of course first steps, and the Board and
> the NASSS Research Fellows Award Committee is dialoguing with the DCCC to explore ways to make sure that this year's process is as inclusive as possible. Any more significant action regarding changes to this or any other awards established in the NASSS By-Laws will require a vote during the Business Meeting in Vancouver. I appreciate all those who provided excellent ideas and raising important concerns on this issue, and to the Board for their careful deliberation on how to best move forward for 2018.
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> The NASSS Research Fellows Award Committee will be sending out a call for applications and more detailed information regarding eligibility criteria later in the spring.

Changes were made to the PPM and to the website, and the new criteria was announced as part of the call for application that went out in summer 2018:

> NASSS Research Fellows
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> I. According to Article VI, Section 8 of Revised NASSS' Bylaws: "At each annual meeting of the Society, the President shall appoint, subject to the confirmation of the Board of Directors, a NASSS Research Fellow Award Committee. The President shall be the chairperson and direct the selection of the committee. The committee will be comprised of, at minimum, the current SSJ Editor, another member of the Board of Directors, the Chair of the Diversity and Conference Climate Committee (or an appointee thereof), and a NASSS Research Fellow. This committee shall review all NASSS Research Fellow applications submitted prior to the deadline set and communicated by the Chair. The name(s) of the Fellow(s) will be announced at the Annual meeting of the membership."
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> The North American Society for the Sociology of Sport Research Fellow designation recognizes scholars who, through active and sustained dissemination of high quality research, have provided a significant contribution to the sociology of sport. The NASSS Research Fellow designation is intended to serve three purposes. First, the NASSS Research Fellow recognition acknowledges the contributions of leading scholars within the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport (and namely those actively publishing with the NASSS's flagship journal, the *Sociology of Sport Journal*). Second, the recognition is intended to recognize Fellows' standing within their chosen academic discipline, particularly to communicate to home academic institutions each Fellow's achievements within the field of the sociology of sport. Third, the NASSS Research Fellow recognition is meant to encourage and recognize high standards of research and other forms of scholarship among the NASSS community of scholars.

II. Description of Procedures: The procedures follow those of other NASSS award committees and include: A.) committee formation; B.) eligibility; C.) review process; D.) selection of Fellows; and E.) wrap up.

A.) Committee Formation

1) The NASSS Research Fellow Selection Committee consists of, at minimum, five members: 1) the current NASSS President, 2) the current SSJ Editor, 3) another member of the Board of Directors; 4) the Chair of the DCCC; and 5) a NASSS Research Fellow.

2) In selecting the Board Member and NASSS Research Fellow committee members, the Chair should endeavor to demonstrate diversity of membership in terms of such factors as: subject of expertise, methodological approach, discipline, nationality, race/ethnicity, ability, and gender.

3) The Chair is responsible for soliciting members for the committee and for finding replacements for committee members who resign over the course of the year prior to the NASSS conference in which the award will be presented.

B.) Eligibility

1) North American Society for the Sociology of Sport members wishing to gain Research Fellow status must have a continuous and high quality record of scholarship.

2) Special consideration will be given to senior and emeritus scholars whose contributions to the field meet the eligibility criteria, but only when date of recent publications and presentations is not considered.

3) The minimum criteria that must be met include (both A and B):

a.) *Publications:* All NASSS Research Fellows must have at least 20 research outputs, including no less than 10 published (or in-press) refereed journal articles. Additional research outputs might include (but are not limited to): books and book chapters published by scholarly presses, federal or foundation grants which the applicant served as (co-)principal investigator; public sociology activities (such as editorials or articles in (inter)nationally-circulated magazines or (inter)national digital media), community-based research and activism, and service-oriented research activities. Five of the total refereed journal articles must be within the last six years (see special consideration in II.B.2.). Three of the total refereed journal articles should be published in, or accepted for publication in, the *Sociology of Sport Journal*. Each NASSS Research Fellow should be first or solo author on at least five of the refereed journal articles, including at least one refereed publication in the *Sociology of Sport Journal*.

b.) *Presentations:* All NASSS Fellows must have 20 refereed conference presentations. Four of the total presentations must be within the last six years; six of the total presentations must be presentations delivered at the annual proceedings of the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport.

4) Members seeking selection as a NASSS Research Fellow must submit qualifications (listing of minimum criteria) in PDF format to the NASSS Research Fellows Selection Committee by the published deadline. All members seeking Fellowship status must be active members of NASSS (dues for the year having been paid) upon submission. All questions should be addressed to NASSS Research Fellows Selection Chair. Each packet must include:

a.) A cover page listing the candidate's name, rank and/or title, institutional affiliation, research areas/interests, address, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail address.

b.) An up-to-date curriculum vitae that includes a list of candidate's publications and presentations;

c.) A statement of explanation which describes the author's perceived impact of all scholarly outputs that satisfy the criteria listed in "II.B.3.a" as listed above. This would include a summative description of the qualifying journals articles, books, and book chapters, as well as all 'non-traditional' forms of scholarship such as editorials or articles in (inter)nationally-circulated magazines or (inter)national digital media, community-based research and activism, and service-oriented research activities. The author must explain how each non-traditional research activity is distinct from others and should be considered by the committee in meeting the total number of research outputs.

C.) Review Process

1) All applications for NASSS Fellows will be reviewed by the NASSS Research Fellow Selection Committee. Members qualify for NASSS Research Fellow distinction upon attaining a certain scholarly record (see minimum criteria, above). The Fellows Selection Committee will rely on a) the candidate's statement of explanation in concert with b) the spirit of the Fellows criteria above in order to evaluate any non-traditional items.

2) Members who qualify are designated as NASSS Fellows upon the NASSS Research Fellows Award Selection's authentication of the candidates' academic record.

3) The chair must report the name(s) of all NASSS Research Fellows to the NASSS Board of Directors no later than the preconference Board meeting at the annual NASSS conference. In addition, the chair will need to report the name(s) of the winner(s) to the Secretary (at least four weeks prior to the NASSS Conference), who orders the plaque or awards to be given out at the Business Meeting.

D.) Making the Award

1) The Fellow(s) will be announced each year at the annual NASSS Conference (although it is possible there may not be any eligible Fellows in a given year). The announcement of the winner usually takes place at the Business Meeting.

2) The award consists of a plaque or certificate to be discussed and finalized each year by the NASSS Board.

E.) Wrap up
These guidelines are to be kept by the Selection Committee Chair in a separate folder to be passed down each year to the next Chair; guidelines are to be included and updated in the "Policies and Procedures" Manual.

After reviewing all applications, the committee selected the following applicants as recipients of the 2018 NASSS Research Fellowship:

Jim Denison
Louis Harrison
Billy Hawkins
Ryan King-White
Robert Rinehart
Holly Thorpe
Theresa Walton-Fisette
Lawrence Wenner

These awardees were notified in late summer and will be recognized during the NASSS Members' Lunch on the Saturday of the Conference.