

JOHNNIE A. LOTESTA

Appalachian State University
Department of Sociology
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ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

2021- Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Appalachian State University
2019-2021 Postdoctoral Fellow, Ash Center for Democratic Governance & Innovation, Harvard Kennedy School

EDUCATION

2019 Ph.D. in Sociology, Brown University
Dissertation: *Rightward in the Rustbelt: How Conservatives Remade the GOP, 1947-2012*
*Winner of 2020 Theda Skocpol Dissertation Award, Comparative Historical Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association
2014 M.A in Sociology, Brown University
2011 B.A. in Global Affairs, George Mason University, summa cum laude

RESEARCH & TEACHING INTERESTS

Political Sociology, Labor & Social Movements, Sociology of Knowledge & Expertise, Comparative-Historical and Qualitative Methods

PUBLICATIONS

* Denotes student authorship

Peer-Reviewed Articles and Book Chapters

Lotesta, Johnnie, Jerusha Conner, Miranda Febus*, and Morgan Lavery*. Forthcoming. "From The Streets To The Ballot Box: How Youth-Led SMOs Connect Youth Activism and Electoral Participation." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*.

Graizbord, Diana and Johnnie Lotesta. Forthcoming. "Knowledge & Knowledge-Actors in

Comparative-Historical Political Sociology.” *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Historical Sociology*, edited by Rebecca Jean Emigh and David M. McCourt. New York: Oxford University Press.

Conner, Jerusha, Johnnie Lotesta, and Rachel Stannard*. 2023. “Intersectional Politicization: A Facet of Youth Activists’ Sociopolitical Development.” *Journal of Community Psychology* 51(3):1345-1364. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22941>.

Lotesta, Johnnie and Cedric de Leon. 2020. “Political Parties: From Reflection to Articulation and Beyond.” Pp. 646-665 In *The New Handbook of Political Sociology*, edited by Thomas Janoski, Cedric de Leon, Joya Misra, and Isaac W. Martin. New York: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108147828.025>.

Lotesta, Johnnie. 2019. “The Myth of the Business-Friendly Economy: Making Neoliberal Reforms in the Worst State for Business.” *American Journal of Cultural Sociology* 7(2): 214–245. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41290-018-0058-x>.

Lotesta, Johnnie. 2017. “The Strength of Civil Society Ties: Explaining Party Change in America’s Bluest State.” *Research in Political Sociology* 24: 257-287. <https://doi.org/10.1108/s0895-993520160000024009>.

Under Review

Lotesta, Johnnie. “Configuring the Political Landscape: Why Parties Adopt Fringe Policies.” (revise & resubmit, *American Journal of Sociology*)

Article Manuscripts in Preparation

Lotesta, Johnnie. “Opinion Crafting and the Campaign for Right-to-Work in America’s Industrial Heartland.”

Lotesta, Johnnie and Apollonya Porcelli. “Towards a Gramscian Sociology of Working-Class Knowledge: What it Takes to Build a ‘Good Sense.’”

Book Manuscripts in Preparation

Lotesta, Johnnie. *Rightward in the Rustbelt*. Proposal and sample chapter available upon request.

Book Reviews & Academic Essays

Lotesta, Johnnie. 2025. “Who Can Capitalize on Capitalism’s Disposessions?” Review of Edwin Ackerman’s *Origins of the Mass Party*. *Critical Sociology* 51(3): 629-631. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08969205241248112>.

Bradlow, Benjamin H. and Johnnie Lotesta. 2019. “Whither a Global Wave of Populism.” *GATS: Newsletter of the Global and Transnational Sociology Section of the ASA*. 16-22.

Public Sociology

Lotesta, Johnnie. 2025. "Apathy to Engagement: Sociology's Problem-Solving Potential." *First Publics*. <https://thesocietypages.org/firstpublics/2025/04/16/apathy-to-engagement-sociologys-problem-solving-potential/>.

Conner, Jerusha, Johnnie Lotesta, Tova Wang, and Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg. 2021. *The Role of Electoral Engagement in Youth Social Movements*. (Study I of Protests, Politics, and Power: Exploring the Connections Between Youth Voting and Youth Movements). Medford, MA: CIRCLE, Tufts University.

Lotesta, Johnnie. 2019. "Does Canceling Primaries Cancel Democracy?" *Daily Herald*, September 25, <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20190925/does-canceling-primaries-cancel-democracy>.

Lotesta, Johnnie and Cedric de Leon. 2015. "Challenging Racist Speech in US Politics." *Truthout*, October 8, <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/33128-challenging-racist-speech-in-us-politics>.

Baiocchi, Gianpaolo, Diana Graizbord, Johnnie Lotesta, Michael Rodríguez-Muñiz. 2015. "Resilient Communities and Distressed Neighborhoods: The Findings of the Southern Nevada Strong Ethnography Research Summer Clinic." Pp. 136-137 in *Southern Nevada Strong Regional Plan*. Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition. Las Vegas, NV.

AWARDS

2024	Nominee, Teacher of the Year, Appalachian State University
2023	Academy of Outstanding Teachers, Appalachian State University
2020	Theda Skocpol Dissertation Award, Comparative Historical Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association

GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

2024	University Research Council Grant, Appalachian State University, \$3,899
2022	Jerry Wurf Memorial Fund, AFSCME International, \$28,629
2022	CAS Summer Grant, Appalachian State University, \$5,000
2021	Student and Faculty Excellence (SAFE) Grant, Appalachian State University, \$400
2019	New Venture Fund & League of Conservation Voters, "Youth Movements in the 2018 Midterms and Beyond," Co-PI with Jerusha Conner, John Holbein, Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg, \$125,000

2019-2021	Harvard Kennedy School Ash Center for Democratic Governance & Innovation Postdoctoral Fellowship
2018	History of American Democracy Graduate Student Fellowship, The Tobin Project
2016	Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant, National Science Foundation, Grant #1602931, \$11,743
2016	Dissertation Fellowship, Department of Sociology, Brown University
2015	Hazeltine Fellowship, Business, Entrepreneurship & Organizations Program, Brown University
2013-2015	National Science Foundation Integrated Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (IGERT) Fellowship, Watson Institute for International & Public Affairs, Brown University

INVITED TALKS & PANELS (Last 5 years only)

2024	“Reading Political Possibilities Through the Past.” Keynote talk at second convening of the Historical Knowledge and World Problems Workshop. Brown University. Providence, RI.
2024	“Configuring the Political Landscape: Why Parties Adopt Fringe Policies.” Transformations of Democracy/Institutions and Political Inequality Workshop. WZB Berlin Social Science Center. Berlin, Germany.
2024	Discussant. Plenary panel on the “Politics of History.” First convening of the Historical Knowledge and World Problems Workshop. University of Turku. Turku, Finland.
2024	Panelist. Invited panel on “Politics, Elections, and Teaching as Public Sociology.” (with Edwin Ackerman, Benjamin Bradlow, Cedric de Leon, and Diana Graizbord). <i>First Publics</i> .
2024	Discussant. Invited panel on “21 st Century Labor Movement Strategy” (with Jared Abbott, Barry Eidlin, Andrew Elrod, Ben Fong, and Stephanie Mudge). Center for Work and Democracy. Tempe, AZ.
2023	Interview. “Johnnie Lotesta and Tom VanHeuvelen on Right-to-Work Laws” (with Barry Eidlin and Tom VanHeuvelen). <i>The Marxist Sociology Blog Podcast</i> . 13 April 2023.
2023	Panelist. Author-Meets-Critics Panel on Daniel Laurison’s <i>Producing Politics</i> (with James Jones and Andrew Perrin). Eastern Sociological Society Conference. Baltimore, MD.

- 2022 “Manufacturing Consent: Opinion Crafting and the Campaign for Right-to-Work in America’s Industrial Heartland.” Invited Panel on “Party Problems: Electoral Politics, Ballot Initiatives, and Egalitarian Aspirations.” Center for Work and Democracy. Tempe, AZ.
- 2022 Panelist. Invited presidential panel on “State of the Unions: Labor Law and the Future of Collective Bargaining” (with Barry Eidlin, Veena Dubal, and William V. Gould IV). American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Los Angeles, CA.
- 2021 “Voting in Youth-Led Social Movements” (with Jerusha Conner, Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg, and Tova Wang). Invited Presentation. Democracy, Power & Innovation Fund Annual Convening. Remote.

CONFERENCE PAPERS & PANELS (Last 5 Years Only)

- 2025 “Configuring the Political Landscape: Why Parties Adopt Fringe Policies.” American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL.
- 2024 “Towards a Gramscian Sociology of Working-Class Knowledge: What It Takes to Build a ‘Good Sense.’” American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Montreal, QC Canada. With Apollonya Porcelli.
- 2023 “Reactive Innovation: Why Republicans Became Anti-Labor.” Social Science History Association Annual Meeting. Washington, DC.
- 2023 “What Does It Take to Build a “Good Sense”? Towards a Gramscian Sociology of Working-Class Knowledge Production.” Social Science History Association Annual Meeting. Washington, DC. With Apollonya Porcelli.
- 2022 “From the Streets to the Ballot Box.” American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Los Angeles, CA. With Jerusha Conner and Morgan Laverty.
- 2022 Session organizer. “The New Youth-Led Social Movements.” American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Los Angeles, CA.
- 2021 “The New Sociology of Political Parties and Interest Group Power.” Social Science History Association Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, PA.
- 2021 Discussant. Paper session on “Elite Networks.” Social Science History Association Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, PA.
- 2021 “From Protest to Participation: On the Front Lines of Youth Civic Engagement.” Democracy & Power Innovation Fund Convening. Virtual. With Jerusha Conner.
- 2021 “Relentless Innovators: Youth Perspectives on Social Change and Intersectional Organizing in the Wake of COVID-19.” American Sociological Association Annual

Meeting. Virtual. With Jerusha Conner and Alex Foley.

2021 Session organizer. “Who Governs?: Power and Policymaking in the States.” Social Science History Association. Philadelphia, PA.

TEACHING & ADVISING (Since PhD)

Courses Taught

2025-2026 The Sociological Perspective, Appalachian State University (Fall)
 Political Sociology, Appalachian State University (Fall)

2024-2025 The Sociological Perspective, Appalachian State University (Fall, Spring)
 Political Sociology, Appalachian State University (Fall)
 Wealth, Power & Privilege, Appalachian State University (Spring)

2023-2024 Wealth, Power & Privilege, Appalachian State University (Spring)
 The Sociological Perspective, Appalachian State University (Spring)

2022-2023 Political Sociology, Appalachian State University (Fall)
 The Sociological Perspective, Appalachian State University (Spring)
 Social Movements, Appalachian State University (Spring)

2021-2022 Social Movements, Appalachian State University (Fall)
 The Sociological Perspective, Appalachian State University (Fall, Spring)
 Wealth, Power & Privilege, Appalachian State University (Spring)

Undergraduate Honors Thesis Committees

2024-2025 Annelies West, Department of Sociology, Appalachian State, Reader.
 Molly Spruill, Department of Government & Justice Studies, Appalachian State, Reader.

2023-2024 Elizabeth Moeller, Department of Sociology, Appalachian State, Reader.

2022-2023 Morgan Laverty, Department of Sociology, Appalachian State, Chair.

Undergraduate Honors Contracts

- 2023-2024 Annelies West
- 2022-2023 Elizabeth Moeller, Mané Ortega Poblete
- 2021-2022 Morgan Lavery, Allison Costner

Independent Studies

- 2021-2022 Morgan Lavery, Youth-Led Social Movements

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

National Discipline

- 2025- External Advisory Board, *First Publics*, University of Georgia.
- 2024-2025 Ibn Khaldun Distinguished Career Award Committee, Comparative Historical Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association.
- 2022- External Advisory Board, Center for Work and Democracy, Arizona State University.
- 2022-2023 Nominations Committee, Comparative Historical Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association.
- 2019-2021 Editor, American Sociological Association Sociology of Culture Section Newsletter
- 2018 Mentorship Event Planning Committee, Comparative Historical Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association
- 2017-2019 Managing Editor, *Studies in Comparative International Development*
- 2016 Chair, Mini-Conference Planning Committee, Comparative Historical Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association

Occasional reviewer for *American Journal of Sociology*, *American Sociological Review*, *Contexts*, *Social Science History*, *Sociation*, *Sociological Inquiry*, *Youth & Society*

Appalachian State University

- 2024- Foundations of American Democracy Committee
- 2023-2025 University Forum Committee

Department of Sociology, Appalachian State University

2024-2025 Faculty Development Committee

2023-2024 Policy Committee

2022-2023 Chair, Student Development Committee

 Policy Committee

2021-2022 Chair, Student Development Committee

 Organizer, Speaker Series on Sociology-Related Careers

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Sociological Association
Social Science History Association