

Statement of Interest in Applied Geography-Dr. Sheila Lakshmi Steinberg

Applied Geography is a very interesting field to me that feels like home. As an interdisciplinary scholar- my background has always examined the connection between people, space and place. My PhD is in Rural Sociology- and I was one of the early adopters to begin using GIS back in the 1990s as part of my multiple methods research that utilized ethnographic methods, quantitative survey research, interviews, non-participant observation and environmental spatial analysis to conduct a re-study of famous anthropologist Walter Kollmoran's research on the Amish and community life. My dissertation explored the connection between environmental change of the place (measure by mapping environmental aerial photos) and analyzing the connection between spatial change of the environment and social change in a community.

Since that time my area has focused on communities and the way that people interact with and are impacted by their physical geography. I really enjoyed participating in the most recent Applied Geography Conference in Charlotte N.C. as it's very applied and focused group geared toward solving problems. It is this applied nature of the group using geography with a purpose to better understand societal issues that attracts me to your organization.

Additionally, I do much work with creating inclusive environments through my work with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiative at my university. I look forward to helping the Applied Geography Association to help expand and diversity it's membership which in turn brings in new areas of focus. My specialty is in GIS Research Methods and community engagement and I've written a few books on topics related to these issues with Sage Publications, Springer Press and Esri Press. I was featured as one of the top 100 female scientists by Springer Press <https://www.springernature.com/gp/researchers/campaigns/women-in-science/conversations-with-our-authors/sheila-steinberg> last year due to my co-editorship of *Extreme Weather Health and Communities: Interdisciplinary Engagement Strategies*.

I hope to join your Board of Directors and to be an active contributor to future activities of your society and its important work. Thanks for considering my interest.