The Legacies of Middletown

The fourth annual Small Cities Conference, sponsored by the Center for Middletown Studies at Ball State University, and Minnetrista, East Central Indiana’s Center for Natural and Cultural History, explores the unique challenges that have confronted and still confront municipalities with populations between 40,000 and 100,000.

The theme of the Small Cities Conference 2004 is “The Legacies of Middletown,” in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the publication of Middletown: A Study in Contemporary Culture by Robert S. and Helen Merrell Lynd.


Other featured speakers at the conference include Theodore Caplow, Commonwealth Professor of Sociology at the University of Virginia and author of All Faithful People (1982) and Middletown Families (1983), and Philip Raisor, professor of English at Old Dominion University and the author of Outside Shooter: A Memoir (2003). Sessions will explore the social, economic, political, and cultural significance of the Middletown studies.

The conference will be held from November 4 to 6, 2004, at Ball State University and the Minnetrista Cultural Center. For more information, contact:

James J. Connolly, acting director
Center for Middletown Studies
206 Bracken Library
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306
Phone: (765) 285-8037
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Sponsored by
The Center for Middletown Studies,
Ball State University, and Minnetrista,
East Central Indiana’s Center for Natural and Cultural History
Session Titles and Participants

Sessions will be held at the Minnetrista Cultural Center, 1200 North Minnetrista Parkway, Muncie, Indiana, telephone (765) 282-4848, and at Bracken Library on the Ball State campus.

Thursday, November 4

7:30 P.M., Indiana Room, Minnetrista Cultural Center
Performance: Shedtown, written by Indiana playwright Madge Dishman, will be performed as a staged reading by members of the Department of Theatre and Dance at Ball State University. Shedtown chronicles the struggles of a working class family in Muncie during the twentieth century. The play won an honorable mention citation in the Writer’s Digest Playwriting Competition.

Friday, November 5

9–10:15 A.M., Room 215, Bracken Library, Ball State

Session 1: “Muncie Before the Middletown Studies”
Paper Presentations: James A. Glass, professor of architecture, Ball State, “The Gas Boom Era in Muncie and Central Indiana”
Earl A. Conn, professor emeritus of journalism, Ball State, “Frank C. Ball and the Ball Family’s Move to Muncie”
Moderator/Commentator: Owen R. Glendening, president, Minnetrista

10:30–11:45 A.M., Room 215, Bracken Library, Ball State

Session 2: “Developing the Middletown Research Collection: From the Lynd Studies to the Middletown Digital Archives”
Presenters: John B. Straw, director, Archives and Special Collections, Ball State, and Dwight W. Hoover, founding director, Center for Middletown Studies, and professor emeritus of history, Ball State
Moderator/Commentator: Nancy K. Turner, director emerita, Archives and Special Collections, Ball State

1 P.M., Indiana Room, Minnetrista Cultural Center

Session 3: “A Discussion of Luke Eric Lassiter’s The Other Side of Middletown”
Presenter: Luke Eric Lassiter, associate professor of anthropology, Ball State, and currently visiting professor of anthropology, University of North Carolina–Greensboro
Moderator/Commentator: Jayne R. Beilke, associate professor of educational studies, Ball State

2 P.M., Indiana Room, Minnetrista Cultural Center

Public Address: “The Art of the Memoir”
Speaker: Philip Raisor, professor of English, Old Dominion University
Moderator/Commentator: Joseph F. Trimmer, director, Virginia B. Ball Center for Creative Inquiry, and professor of English, Ball State

3–3:15 P.M., Break

3:15–4:45 P.M., Indiana Room, Minnetrista Cultural Center

Session 4: “A Roundtable Discussion on the Middletown Jewish Oral History Project”
Panelists: C. Warren Vander Hill, provost and vice president for academic affairs emeritus, Ball State; Dwight W. Hoover, professor of history emeritus, Ball State; Martin D. Schwartz, businessman and philanthropist, Muncie; Dana R. Narter, assistant professor of psychological science, Ball State
Moderator/Commentator: Janet R. Bednarek, professor of history, University of Dayton, and secretary, Urban History Association

3:15–4:45 P.M., Large Conference Room, Minnetrista Cultural Center

Session 5: “Voting in Middletown in Recent Presidential Elections”
Presenters: Raymond H. Scheele, professor of political science, Ball State, and Gary L. Crawley, assistant professor of political science, Ball State
Moderator/Commentator: Stephen D. Johnson, professor of sociology, Ball State
Saturday, November 6

7:30–8:15 A.M., Minnetrista Cultural Center
Registration and Continental Breakfast
8:15–8:30 A.M., Minnetrista Cultural Center

Welcome
Owen Glendening, president, Minnetrista

8:30–10 A.M., Indiana Room, Minnetrista Cultural Center

Plenary Session: “Recent Research on Muncie as Middletown”
Presiding: Theodore Caplow, Commonwealth Professor of Sociology, University of Virginia

Louis Hicks, associate professor of sociology, St. Mary’s College, Maryland, “Entrepreneurial Bureaucracy in Middletown”
Sarah A. Igo, faculty fellow, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, University of Pennsylvania, “The Mass Mediation of Middletown”

10–10:15 A.M., Break

10:15–11:45 A.M., Indiana Room, Minnetrista Cultural Center

Session 6: “Middletown and Basketball: The Muncie Central/Milan Phenomenon”
Moderator/Commentator: C. Warren Vander Hill, provost emeritus, Ball State, and co-author (with Anthony O. Edmonds), Ball State Men’s Basketball (2003)

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Registration

Name ___________________________________________________

Affiliation ________________________________________________

Mailing address ___________________________________________

City_____________________ State ________ ZIP ________________

Phone (_____)___________________________________________

Fax (_____) ______________________________________________

E-mail ___________________________________________________

Preregistration fee is $35, which includes attendance at all sessions, refreshments, and the continental breakfast and luncheon on Saturday, November 6. Registration is due on or before October 15, 2004. The registration charge after October 15 is $45 for the conference and $30 for single-day registration. Checks should be made payable to Ball State University.

Preregistration (includes conference sessions, continental breakfast and luncheon on November 6) $35

Single-day registration $20

Saturday conference luncheon (if separate from the registration charge) $10

Total amount included $ _______

Send completed form with payment to:

Small Cities Conference
James J. Connolly, acting director
Center for Middletown Studies
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306

Accommodations

Please identify yourself as attending the Small Cities Conference. Reservations should be made by October 4, 2004, to ensure rooms and rates. Conferees are encouraged to make their lodging reservations as soon as possible.

Best Western
3011 W. Bethel Avenue · Muncie, IN 47304
(765) 282-0600 · Fax: (765) 282-0377

Super 8 Motel
3601 W. Fox Ridge Lane · Muncie, IN 47305
Phone and fax: (765) 286-4333
Toll-free reservations: (800) 800-8000

Comfort Inn
4011 W. Bethel Avenue · Muncie, IN 47305
Phone and fax: (765) 282-6666

Signature Inn
3400 N. Chadham Lane · Muncie, IN 47304
Phone and fax: (765) 284-4200 or (800) 822-5252
E-mail: Muncie@signature-inns.com.

Hotel Roberts
420 S. High Street · Muncie, IN 47305
Phone: (765) 741-7777 · Fax: (765) 747-0067
Toll-free reservations: (800) 333-3333
The closest airports are in Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Dayton, Ohio. Traveling time from these airports to Muncie is approximately 90 minutes. All major car agencies have offices at the airports.