

Summer 2017 Newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 8

July 2017

Message from the Chair

Greetings from Mount Oread! This has been another exciting year for Sociology at KU, where we have once again demonstrated our steadfast commitment to the goals of educating students and advancing social science research. While our state's budget problems continued to create formidable headwinds for KU, it appears that the worst of the storm has passed and hopefully we will see better days ahead. We have and continue to benefit enormously from the generosity of supporters of KU Sociology who have gifted funds to us. The latest contribution has been the creation of the Samuel and Freda Schaeffler Sass Fund in Sociology. Both Sam and Freda were students at KU in the 1930s and they were particularly fond of several sociology faculty members. The bequest is intended to support research, lectures and activities "directed toward the study and practice of the humanistic tradition of sociology." We are very grateful to the Sasses for their legacy donation to KU.

I am very pleased to announce that Dr. Brittany Slatton has been selected as the KU Langston Hughes Visiting Professor for the fall 2017 semester. Dr. Slatton is currently Associate Professor of Sociology at Texas Southern University and a Visiting Scholar in African American Studies at University of Houston. A former student of Joe Fagin's from Texas A&M, Dr. Slatton's books include *Mythologizing Black Women: Unveiling White Men's Deep Frame on Race and Gender* (2014), *Hyper Sexual Hyper Masculine? Gender, Race, and Sexuality in the Identities of Contemporary Black Men* (2014), as well as *Policing Black Bodies in the 21st Century*, and *Women and Inequality in the 21st Century*, both forthcoming. In her application, Brittany wrote, "When I was an adolescent, I participated in city-wide poetry contests in Toledo, Ohio. The first poem that I performed was *Mother to Son*, a poem written by Hughes in 1922. This poem has a special place in my heart. Hence, it would be an absolute honor to be a Langston Hughes Visiting Professor." We look forward to welcoming Dr. Slatton to KU in the fall.

In October, the seventeenth annual Carroll D. Clark Lecture was delivered by Dr. Abigail Saguy, Professor of Sociology and Gender Studies at UCLA. Saguy spoke on the topic of her 2013 Oxford University Press book, *What's Wrong with Fat?* In recent years, the "obesity epidemic" has emerged as a top public health concern, and scholars, journalists, and politicians alike are scrambling to find answers. In her lecture, Dr. Saguy argued that these fraught debates obscure more sociological questions such as: How has fatness come to be understood as a public health crisis at all? Why has the view of fatness as a

medical problem and public health crisis come to dominate more positive framings of weight – as consistent with health, beauty, or a legitimate rights claim—in public discourse? Why are heavy individuals singled out for blame? And what are the consequences of understanding weight in these ways? It was an engaging lecture and Abigail's presence on campus provided an excellent opportunity for provocative conversations for faculty and graduate students with this stellar sociologist.

Prof. Bill Staples in Aarhus, Denmark, Sum17.



Message from the Chair

In early May, we recognized the important contributions of two faculty members who retired at the end of the academic year: Shirley Hill and Joey Sprague. Faculty gathered in the Union for a delightful and jovial luncheon in honor of these dear colleagues. As I said at the time, it is staggering to think of all the lives that have been touched by these award-winning teachers and prolific and important scholars. Both have spent their entire careers in dedication to KU sociology and we thank them for all of their efforts and friendship. To both of you we say, “May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be ever at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face and the rain fall softly on your fields.”

Finally, while stepping back into the Chair role was not originally a part of my plan for the next few years, I want to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues for their support and cooperative spirit in helping me make this transition. And, as always, thanks to our staff including Office Manager Janelle Williams, Corinne Butler, Graduate Academic Advisor, Kat McCreery, Undergraduate Academic Advisor, Tony Brown and Edith Bond of KUIT, and our fine student assistants, especially Sophie Tapko, for all their good work supporting our mission.

Best wishes,
Bill Staples



Faculty Activities

Victor Agadjanian had several publications based on his research in various part of the world. His sole-authored article titled “Women’s schooling and religious mobility: Joining, switching, and quitting church in a Christian sub-Saharan setting” was published in *Sociology of Religion*. His research on health consequences of migration is exemplified by an article titled “Male labor migration, patriarchy, and the awareness-behavior gap: HIV risks and prevention among migrants’ wives in Armenia” published in *AIDS Care*, on which he was the lead author. He was also the lead author of an article titled “Legality, racialization, and immigrants’ experience of harassment in Russia” published in *Social Problems*. His research on migration in sub-Saharan Africa, led to a publication titled “Labor migration and marital dissolution in rural Mozambique” in *Journal of Family Issues* (again, with Agadjanian as the lead author). He was also the lead author of “HIV status, fertility intentions, and contraception in the era of expanded access to antiretroviral therapy: A case study of

rural Mozambique” published in *Global Public Health*. He has also co-authored the following peer-reviewed articles: “Old habits die hard? Lingering son preference in an era of normalizing sex ratios at birth in South Korea” in *Population Research and Policy Review*; “How to allocate limited healthcare resources: Lessons from the introduction of antiretroviral therapy in rural Mozambique” in *Applied Geography*; “Financial and emotional support in close personal ties among Central Asian migrant women in Russia” in *Social Networks*; “Father’s labor migration and children’s school discontinuation in rural Mozambique” in *International Migration*; “Determined to stop? Predictors of the desire to stop childbearing in rural Mozambique” in *Population Studies*; and “Migrant women’s economic success in Russia: Objective reality and subjective assessment” in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Finally, his sole-authored piece titled “Interrelationships of Forced Migration, Fertility and Reproductive Health” is forthcoming in the edited volume on “Demography of Refugee and

Forced Migration” to be published by Springer.

In the summer of 2017, Agadjanian has coordinated the fifth wave of the longitudinal project on sexual and reproductive health of rural women in Mozambique. Agadjanian is also a co-Director (along with Prof. Cecilia Menjívar) of the KU Center for Migration Research. In the past academic year, the Center organized several activities and sponsored migration-related research on KU campus.

Bob Antonio “Immanent Critique and the Exhaustion Thesis” was published this spring in *Palgrave Handbook of Critical Theory*. His “The Piketty Thesis and the Environmental Wall” is in-press in *Twenty-First Century Equality: Marx, Piketty, and Beyond* (Brill); his (with Brett Clark) “Social Theory in the Anthropocene: Ecological

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Crisis and Renewal” is in-press in *The Cambridge Handbook of Social Theory* (Cambridge University Press); and he is currently working on “Post-bourgeois Cultural Consumption: What is the Future of Bourgeois Liberalism” in *Handbook on Max Weber* (Oxford University Press). Bob presented “Capitalism and Ecology” at the Seattle ASA, “Reactionary Tribalism Revisited: Nietzsche, & Schmitt, & Benoist” at Nietzsche and Critical Theory (San Diego), and Reactionary Tribalism San Diego, and Trump, the Alt Right, & Global Neopopulism at the Midwest Sociological Society in Milwaukee. Bob especially enjoyed the excellent group of graduate students in his graduate seminar on Modern Social Theory this spring, reminiscent of the best groups in that class from the past. And as always found seeing former students and friends at professional meetings and personal trips to be a high point of the year.

Kelly H. Chong has been engaged in a wide array of research, teaching, and service activities in the academic year 2016-2017. Prof. Chong’s article “‘Asianness Under Construction’: The Contours and Negotiation of Panethnic Identity/Culture among Interethnically Married Asian Americans” was published in *Sociological Perspectives* in 2017. Prof. Chong also has several articles in press, under review, and in progress, including “‘New Traditional Man’: The Construction and Definitions of Asian-American Masculinity (under review),” and “Theorizing Women’s

Consent: Familism, Motherhood, and Middle-Class Feminine Subjectivity in Contemporary South Korea,” forthcoming in the volume *Psychology of Patriarchy* and published by the School for American Research. Prof. Chong has been hard at work on completing her book manuscript for *Across Borders: Asian Americans and the Politics of Intermarriage and Family-Making*, under contract with Routledge. Beginning in the fall semester of 2016, Prof. Chong began her tenure the new Associate Chair for the Sociology Department, an interesting and challenging position which she enjoys very much. Prof. Chong has presented her work in a number of conferences, and performed service work for her profession at the local and national levels. For KU, she has completed her third term as a member of the Faculty Senate and has served in several special committees, including as a member of the Office of Graduate Studies Special Working Group on Minority Recruitment and Retention. She also continues to serve on the department’s graduate studies and executive committees.

Brian Donovan is hard at work on his new book *American Gold Digger: Marriage, Money, and Law from the Ziegfeld Follies to Anna Nicole Smith*. Brian’s research examines the “gold digger” as a persistent “folk devil” in US law and culture. Brian published “Alimony Panic, Gold Diggers, and the Cultural Foundations of Early Twentieth-century Marriage Reform in the United States” in the *Journal of Family History* (April, 2017). He’s

also co-directing the Hall Center’s Gender Seminar.

David Ekerdt will assume office later this year as President of the Gerontological Society of America, the oldest and largest interdisciplinary society for research, education, and practice in the field of aging. This summer the organization is hosting the quadrennial World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics in San Francisco, convening over 5,000 scientists and scholars from 73 countries for symposia, paper presentations, and exchanges. In the year past, Dave authored or co-authored publications on work and retirement; on residential relocation and downsizing in later life; and on older adults’ views of time and longevity in Germany, Hong Kong, and the U.S., the latter work with support from the Volkswagen Foundation. He keynoted conferences at Purdue University and at the European Network of Aging Studies in Graz, Austria; later this summer he will keynote at the Chinese Congress on Gerontology and Health Industry in Suzhou. For the third year in a row, he taught a public course on the politics of Social Security for KU’s Osher Institute for Lifelong Learning.

Shirley A. Hill is officially retiring from KU effective July 31, after being in the department since 1986 and on the faculty since 1991. She started as a doctoral student and was honored to be recruited as a tenure-track faculty member upon the completion of that degree. She has taught many courses in her specialty areas—families, medical sociology, social

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inequality, and qualitative analysis—at the graduate and undergraduate levels, and enjoyed the opportunity to engage in research, scholarship, and service to the department and university. Shirley is grateful for the wonderful support she has received over the years from the KU faculty and office staff, and eager to start the next chapter.

ChangHwan Kim has returned to KU after spending a full year on sabbatical. In the past academic year, he served his 1st year as Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). He is glad that the Sociology Department could win the University Graduate Fellowship and Dean's Graduate Fellowship from the College. With these fellowships, KU Sociology has successfully recruited nine graduate students for the incoming cohort. As for his research, ChangHwan Kim published an article titled "Education and Contributory Pensions at Work: Disadvantages of the Less Educated" in *Social Forces* with Christopher R. Tamborini at the Social Security Administration. It investigates how contributory pensions at work vary by level of education. This paper has been featured by the New York Times, Washington Post, CNN Money and etc. He also has a forthcoming paper in *Demography*, "Women's Progress for Men's Gain? Gender-Specific Changes in the Return to Education as Measured by Family Standard-of-Living, 1990 to 2009-11" in October 2017. Another exciting news is that he won the 2016 Research Paper Award from American Sociological Association's Asia and Asian America Section with Yang Zhao, a former KU Sociology student.

Tracey LaPierre, thanks to support from the Midwest Sociological Society (MSS), has begun follow-up interviews with grandparents who were raising their grandchildren and were part of her 2008-2010 study investigating how grandparents make decisions about the grandchildren they are raising. This follow-up study is focused on how these relationships evolve over time and how families negotiate social, biological and legal roles. Preliminary findings were presented at the MSS Annual Meeting last March. **Lynn Davidman** is exploring her interest in grandparents raising grandchildren through this follow-up study and new lines of inquiry and book ideas are being discussed. A separate grandparent caregiving study with co-authors Hye Jin Kim and Rosemary Chapin (Social Welfare, KU) on the impact of providing grandchild care on economic preparation in later life in Korea is forthcoming in *Ageing and Society* and available online.

Also presented at MSS were findings from Dr. LaPierre's collaborative project with **Mary Zimmerman** and Joanna Brooks (Department of Health Policy and Management, KUMC) that investigated the experiences of Missouri Medicaid Consumers and was funded by the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City (HCFGKC). Graduate students **Andrea Gómez Cervantes** and **Jennifer Dueñas** assisted with this project. A new project with Jean Hall and Nolle Kurth (Institute for Health and Disability Policy Studies, KU) was also funded by the HCFGKC. Data were collected from 189 Kansas Medicaid enrollees with Severe Mental Illness to evaluate access to care, experiences with coverage and

areas of unmet need. The final report was submitted to the HCFGKC in May and efforts to disseminate the findings to promote policy reform are in progress. Dr. LaPierre also continues to work with former graduate student **Carrie Wendel-Hummell** on a state funded project revising Medicaid waiver functional eligibility instruments. Lessons learned from implementing this universal assessment in Kansas were presented in July at the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics World Congress.

Last summer Dr. LaPierre (with collaborators Jean Hall and **Mary Zimmerman**) conducted four focus groups with women who had disabilities, including chronic physical and mental health conditions.

Cecilia Menjívar, in collaboration with Center for Migration Research graduate assistants, finalized data collection and analysis that was the basis of the Temporary Protected Status report that she presented at a legislative briefing in Washington DC in June. The report is making the rounds in the House and Senate.

She also received an Andrew Carnegie Fellowship for 2017-2018 to work on her book on temporary legality.

Mehrangiz Najafzadeh has been continuing her research and teaching on global gender issues and continues to be active in various aspects of KU's area studies programs including the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies and the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies. During the academic

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year, Mehrangiz presented a paper, "Azeri-Language Printed Media and the Re-Conceptualization of Women's Issues in the Late 1800s and early 1900s in Azerbaijan," at the 55th Annual Meeting of the Central Slavic Conference, and she also continued to serve on the Board of Directors of the Research Institute of the South Caucasus. Further, Mehrangiz is the lead co-editor of an extensive anthology, *Women of Asia and Eurasia: Globalization, Development, and Change*, which is under contract with Routledge. She and her coeditor Linda Lindsey (Washington University in St. Louis) are currently editing over 34 original chapters written by scholars from 20 different countries. Also, Mehrangiz was awarded an American Philosophical Society grant to continue her fieldwork in the Republic of Azerbaijan. During her fieldwork this summer, she again met with the Director of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences Institute of Manuscripts, named after the renowned 16th century Azerbaijani literary figure, Muhammad Fuzuli, and had access to numerous Azeri social historical documents. She also conducted research at the Museum named after Jalil Mammadguluzade, an early 20th century Azerbaijani intellectual, advocate for women's rights, and editor of the highly influential sociopolitical satirical magazine, *Molla Nttırtıtdin*, and at other archival sites including the Azerbaijan National Library named after Mirza Fatali Akhundov, the leading 19th century Azerbaijani intellectual. This archival material from the 1800s and early 1900s that Mehrangiz accessed was pub-

lished in the Azeri language, which during this era was written using the original Azeri Turkic Arabic script rather than the contemporary Azeri Latin script. Finally, Mehrangiz was awarded a sabbatical for the 2017-2018 academic year to continue her research and writing.



Dr. Najafizadeh at the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences Institute of Manuscripts, Baku, Azerbaijan.

Ebenezer Obadare, fresh from his sabbatical leave, signed a contract with ZED Books (London) to write a book on the role of religion in the politics of the Nigerian Fourth Republic (1999-). Tentatively titled *The Pentecostal Republic*, the book postulates pentecostalization of governance as the 'spirit' of Nigerian politics since 1999, and is the first regime by regime account on the subject. Ebenezer also presented invited papers at international conferences in South Africa, Ghana, Canada, and the United Kingdom, and published arti-

cles and review essays in several outlets, including *HTS Theological Studies*, *Africa, Journal of Modern African Studies*, *Journal of Religious and Political Practice*, and *Current History*.

Emily Rauscher recently began a new project investigating the relationship between school funding and inequality of academic achievement. Her work in this area is supported by a postdoctoral fellowship from the National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation, the William T. Grant Foundation, and the American Educational Research Association. She will present some preliminary results from her work in this area at the KU Law Symposium in February 2018. This work is a new step in Emily's efforts to understand intergenerational mobility. As part of those efforts, Emily organized three sessions on intergenerational mobility at the 2017 meeting of the Population Association of America. One of the presenters – Professor John Ermisch, in the Department of Sociology at the University of Oxford – earned his Ph.D. from KU! Emily is collaborating with graduate student Byeongdon Oh on a new paper – "Going Places: Effects of Early U.S. Compulsory Schooling Laws on Internal Migration" – investigating effects of education on internal migration. A draft of this paper, which was graciously supported by the Center for Migration Research, is nearing completion. A paper from Emily's earlier work on educational expansion ("Does Educational Equality Increase Mobility? Exploiting Nineteenth-Century U.S. Compulsory Schooling Laws," which appeared

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in the *American Journal of Sociology*) won the 2016 Research Award from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

Jarron M. Saint Onge continues to study the social determinants of health with several ongoing projects examining racial identity in health behaviors; physical activity patterns and education; social capital and maternal health; and racial discrimination and mental health. Additionally, he is working on a recently funded, mixed-methods, collaborative project with researchers at KU Medical Center to investigate the community health care worker program in the metro-Kansas City region. The project includes interviews with both health care workers and supervisors with a general aim to determine how to better meet health care needs of marginalized populations in Kansas City. In the past year, he has continued to publish work on health differences by race/ethnicity and social class including recent publications in *Social Science & Medicine: Population Health* and *Population Research and Policy Review*. Prof. Saint Onge wrote an invited op-ed on new policy changes in smoking bans in public housing for the *British Medical Journal*. He recently co-presented papers at the Population Association of America and the Southern Demographic Association with graduate student **Sarah Smith**. He also gave invited talks at West Virginia University and the University of Missouri.

David Smith enjoyed his return to the faculty -- as one of this year's Paul Gibbons Roofe and Helen Waddle Roofe Professors -- after serving as department chair from 2012-2016 and as associate chair from 2009-2012. He presented two papers at the annual meeting of the Midwest Sociological Society and published several book chapters, including "Charisma and the Spirit of Capitalism" (in *The Anthem Companion to Max Weber*) and "Theory and Class Consciousness" (in *The Palgrave Handbook of Critical Theory*).



Profs. Sprague, Staples, and Hill at the Retirement Luncheon, May 2017, for Prof. Joey Sprague and Shirley Hill! You will be missed!

Joey Sprague has begun her retirement by moving to Milwaukee. This move is the culmination of a couple years of collective discussion and planning by her two adult daughters, their partners, two grandchildren, and her partner, Gary Brunk. Thinking through the long term consequences of unmitigated climate change, the family decided to move north and near abundant water, which happily coincide with Joey's hometown. The migration was completed this spring and we are all now living within a 1 mile radius of one another in the very walkable, diverse, and lively community that is Milwaukee's east side. Joey continues her

work as a co-editor of The Gender Lens book series, including editing a forthcoming book on Gender & Food by KU alumna Shelley Koch. Joey's chapter "Feminist Epistemology, Feminist Methodology, and the Study of Gender" will appear in the forthcoming Handbook on Gender (Springer). In the meantime she is working with Citizen

Action of Wisconsin, especially their fights for single payer health insurance and the nonpartisan drawing of district maps for elections. Every morning she walks 4 to 5 miles along the shores of the jewel that is Lake Michigan. Life is very good.

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Bill Staples continues to serve as department chair and Director of the Surveillance Studies Research Center. He was also one of two Paul Gibson and Helen Waddle Roofe Professors of Sociology for 2016-17. Bill contributed several handbook entries and reviews and published, with **Graduate Student Andrea Gomez Cervantes** and colleague **Cecilia Menjivar**, ““Humane” Immigration Enforcement and Latina Immigrants in the Detention Complex in *Feminist Criminology*. Bill also presented his work at numerous venues including colloquium presentations at Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic and at Aarhus University in Aarhus, Denmark. He also gave keynote addresses at the *Aesthetics of Surveillance in German Literature and Culture* at Vanderbilt University and the *IAFOR: International Conference on the Social Sciences* in Honolulu, Hawaii. Supported by a fellowship from the Aarhus University Research Founda-

tion, Bill spent the month of June as a Guest Researcher at the Centre for Science Technology Society Studies at Aarhus. While there, he also presented, “It was the Bible of High School”: Real-Time Grade Books and the Quantified Student,” at the conference, *Metric Culture: The Quantified Self and Beyond* at the Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies. The paper will appear as a chapter in the forthcoming volume, *Metric Culture: Ontologies of Self-tracking Practices*, edited by Btihaj Ajana. The new edition of his, *Everyday Surveillance: Vigilance and Visibility in Postmodern Life*, was awarded the 2015 Surveillance Studies Network Book Prize.

Paul Stock continues his work on the sociology of family farmers. The New Farmers Project (<http://newfarmersproject.com/>) has been presented at Harvard, Yale and the University of Neuchatel in Switzerland. At Neuchatel, Paul was the keynote speaker for the Food Utopias in Switzerland conference where he presented a talk entitled, “In Search of Good Farmers: Food Utopias, Care, and the Future of Food.” This fall he looks forward to his graduate seminar called the Sociology of Utopias.

Emeritus Faculty Activities

Lew Mennerick has continued to participate actively in the profession. This includes fieldwork in Azerbaijan during summer 2016 and also summer 2017 focusing on various elements of social change. Among his fieldwork activities were meetings with university and government officials as well as archivists. He is currently working on a manuscript on education in Azerbaijan, from the late 1800s to present, and he also continues to be active in professional associations.



Prof. Mennerick in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Graduate Program



ChangHwan Kim will continue as Director of Graduate Studies for the coming year. Other faculty members on the committee for 2017-2018 are **Victor Agadjanian**, **Eric Hanley**, and **Mehrangiz Najafizadeh**. Currently, there are 2 students at the master's level of the program and 30 students at the PhD level. We are expecting an incoming cohort of 9 students (8 Pre-MA and 1 Post-MA) this fall.

Graduate Awards

Carroll D. Clark Award for Teaching Excellence

Kevin McCannon

Carroll D. Clark Pre-MA Award

Erin Ice

Carroll D. Clark Post-MA Award

Byeongdon Oh

Carroll D. Clark Award for Professional Service

Basil "Bo" Cassell

American Sociological Association Minority Fellowship

Andrea Gómez Cervantes

Centennial Award

Daniel Alvord

Morris C. Pratt Research Scholarships

Zuleica Gerardo

Jacob Lipsman

Byeongdon Oh

Carroll D. Clark Travel Award

Nathan Collins

Jennifer Dueñas

Byeongdon Oh

NSF Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant

Andrea Gómez Cervantes

Jacob Lipsman

Graduate Studies Summer Scholarship

Bo Cassel

Morris C. Pratt Travel Scholarships

Nathan Collins

Jennifer Dueñas

Walter Goettlich

Andrea Gómez Cervantes

Erin Ice

Natalie Jansen

Jacob Lipsman

Byeongdon Oh

Ruth Stamper

Graduate Studies Doctoral Student Research Fund

Daniel Alvord

Jacob Lipsman

Byeongdon Oh

Graduate Studies Carlin GTA Award

Emily Morrow Jones

Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies Charles

Stansifer Fellowship

Erin Adamson

Sherman & Irene Dreiseszun Scholarship

Byeongdon Oh

American Sociological Association Department Prize

Rachel Craft

Anna Kern

Jorge Thieroldt Llanos

E. Jackson Baur Award for Research and Study of

Social Conflict and Its Resolution

Sammy Badran

Graduate Activities

Erin Adamson was awarded a Charles Stansifer Fellowship for study of Central America by the Center for Caribbean and Latin American Studies and spent two months this summer in a town on the south Caribbean coast of Costa Rica studying the impact of Northamerican and European immigration to the area. Her work examines local perspectives on the land and business development and culture change that have occurred with the arrival of this relatively privileged group of immigrants.

Chris Altamura is working on his master's thesis, which focuses on personality traits and political attitudes

Rachel Craft defended her dissertation *Making the Choice to Use Herbs: Pathways to the Practice of Herbalism* on December 2, 2016.

Jennifer Dueñas defended her MA Thesis *Parents' Experiences as Educational Advocates for Children with Autism in Public Schools: Parent-Educator Relationships* on May 5, 2017.

Tony Feldmann passed his Oral Comprehensive on July 27, 2017.

Walter Goettlich and Prof. Bill Staples reviewed Vida Bajc's new book *Surveilling and Securing the Olympics* for the upcoming issue of *Critical Sociology*.

Erin Ice defended her MA Thesis *Disparities in the Uptake of Colorectal Cancer Screenings: The Role of Education, Insurance, and Screening Type* on April 6, 2017.

Melissa Irwin In addition to continued data collection and interviews for her dissertation which is an extension of her work regarding

Facebook memorials and after-death communication, she has been working on a few other things:

The book chapter Melissa has been working on for the past year and was revising in the fall, "Mourning 2.0: Continuing Bonds between the Living and the Dead on Facebook," will be in print later this year in the revised edition of *Continuing Bonds in Bereavement: New Directions for Research and Practice*, edited by Dennis Klass and Edith Steffen (Taylor & Francis 2017).

She has also been working on a book chapter for a history of the supernatural entitled "Nouveau Spiritualism and Technologies of After-death Communication" which focuses on technologies of after-death communication and argues that participants in nouveau spiritualism use thanatechnologies such as Facebook, so-called "smart graveyards," and even smartphone apps to achieve similar ends as those who relied upon automatic writing and Ouija boards a little over a century ago. In both historical periods, people have used a myriad of technologies of after-death communication as coping mechanisms, in the face of bereavement, and mechanisms of discovery, in the search for evidence of life beyond death.

Finally, Melissa is planning to test the waters with interest regarding a campus-centered monthly or bi-monthly "Death Cafe," in the coming months.

Natalie Jansen passed her Oral Comprehensive Exam on March 2, 2017.

Emily Jones passed her Oral Comprehensive Exam on August 3, 2017.

Jake Lipsman passed his Oral Comprehensive Exam on May 3, 2017.

Kevin McCannon defended his dissertation *Challenges of Health Care Devolution: Problems of Legitimacy, Consumer Knowledge, and Work Transfer in Kansas Medicaid* on September 30, 2016.

Lukas Szrot is preparing his dissertation proposal, and will be studying how religious values affect attitudes toward climate change and environmental spending in the United States and globally. Lukas presented at four conferences in the Spring, including the Yale Graduate Forum on Religion and Ecology conference at the Yale Divinity School.

Brock Ternes defended his dissertation, *Sustainable Practices in the High Plains: A Study of Water Conservation Efforts and Well Ownership* on November 28, 2016. He continues to work on manuscripts and a book prospectus stemming from his dissertation. As the editor of *Social Thought and Research*, he completed Volume 34 on The Anthropocene. Brock also worked with professors and graduate students in the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications on three manuscripts. He accepted a Visiting Assistant Professorship in the Sociology & Anthropology Department at the State University of New York-Cortland.

Jorge Thieroldt Llanos defended his dissertation *The Local Dimension of Transnational Activity in Environmental Conflicts: Tambogrande, 1961-2004* on June 9, 2017.

Undergraduate Recognition Ceremony



Undergraduate Program



The Undergraduate Studies Committee had a busy and productive year! This year, we inducted an impressive number of students into the national sociological honors society (Alpha Kappa Delta) at our Recognition Ceremony (eight!). Emily Derrick and Ike Uri were co-winners of our Departmental Distinguished Achievement Award for 2017. **Tracey LaPierre** will continue as Director of Undergraduate Studies for 2017-2018. Other faculty members for 2017-2018 are **Lynn Davidman, Brian Donovan, Emily Rauscher, and Jarron M. Saint Onge.**

Undergraduate Awards

The following undergraduate students were recognized at our Sociology Undergraduate Recognition Ceremony this past May 13th at the Kansas Union:

Graduate with
Highest Distinction

Emily Derrick

Ike Uri

Distinguished Achievement
Award

Emily Derrick

Ike Uri

Honors in the Major

Taylor A. Bertelsman

Ike Uri



Alumni Notes

Dean Braa and Kathleen Stanley are doing well and enjoying life in the beautiful Willamette Valley. We have become wine enthusiasts and regularly do wine tours that include beautiful tasting rooms throughout the valley. We have come a long way since our Boone's Farm days in Lawrence! I am still teaching at Western Oregon University and Kathleen is busy at Oregon State. Retirement is likely on the agenda for me in a couple years. I may work a deal with the department and teach part time as Kathleen has strongly suggested that I need some form of structure to keep me out of trouble. Our son is a successful farmer and is part of the development of an industrial hemp crop in Oregon. Applications of the crop for paper, cloth, and various medicines could put hemp high in demand.

Kathleen is an officer in AAUP at Oregon State and she is part of an effort to create a local on campus in partnership with AFT. A card check and election is likely next year. Most state campuses in Oregon are

unionized, both staff and faculty. All the best to our Jayhawk comrades and we cordially invite you to come for a visit. We will drink fine wine and talk treason!!

Robert Futrell completed his fourth year as UNLV Sociology Department Chair. He co-authored "Political Extremism and Social Movements" for the forthcoming *Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. He also co-authored the essay "The [Un]Surprising Alt-Right" for Contexts' most recent issue. Additionally, he gave several media interviews on white supremacist activism, including a feature on National Public Radio's *Here & Now*.

Alumni Notes

Kevin Gotham is Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, Grants, and Research in the School of Liberal Arts (SLA) at Tulane University. In 2015-2016, he was chair of the Community and Urban Sociology Section (CUSS) of the American Sociological Association (ASA). His research interests include real estate and housing policy, political economy of tourism, the politics of coastal restoration, and forensic sociology/criminology. In the last year, he has published the following works:

- “Coastal Restoration as Contested Terrain: Climate Change and the Political Economy of Risk Reduction in Louisiana.” *Sociological Forum*. 31(S1): 787-806. September 2016. doi:10.1111/sof.12273.
- “Antinomies of Risk Reduction: Climate Change and the Contradictions of Coastal Restoration.” *Environmental Sociology*. 2016. 2 (2): 208-219.
- “Constructing and Contesting Resilience in Post-Disaster Urban Communities” (co-authored with Bradford Powers). 2017. *The Sage Handbook of New Urban Studies*. Edited by John Hannigan and Greg Richards. Sage Publications
- “Beyond Bread and Circuses: Mega-Events as Forces of Creative-Destruction.” *Mega Events and Globalization: Capital and Spectacle in a Changing World Order*. Pp. 31-47. Edited by Rick Gruneau and John Horne, Routledge, 2017.

Harland Prechel is continuing his research on organizational political economy, which examines the relationship among organizational and political-legal arrangements and (1) financialization and corporate financial wrongdoing, and (2) corporate environmental pollution. He published the following pieces last year:

- 2016. “Do Organizational and Political-Legal Arrangements Explain Financial Wrongdoing?” Harland Prechel and Lu Zheng. *British Journal of Sociology*, 67:655-677.
- 2016. “From Market Enablers to Market Participants: Redefining Organizational and Political-Legal Arrangements and Opportunities for Financial Wrongdoing, 1930s-2000.” Harland Prechel and Dadao Hou. Pp. 77-112 in *Organizational Wrongdoing*. Edited by Donald Palmer, Royston Greenwood, and Kristin Smith-Crowe. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- 2016. “Disproportionality of Corporations’ Environmental Pollution in the Electrical Energy Industry.” Harland Prechel and Alesha Istvan. *Sociological Perspectives*, 59:505-527. Editor’s Pick.
- 2016. “Organizational Political Economy and White-Collar Crime.” Pp. 294-325 in *The Oxford Handbook of White-Collar Crime*. Edited by Shanna R. Van Slyke, Michael L. Benson, and Francis Cullen. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press.

Bill Swart (PhD 1997) was promoted to Full Professor and appointed Director of the Civitas Honors Program at Augustana University (Sioux Falls, SD) in September 2015. His recent work on the economics of motor-sports spectacles (coauthored with **Dan Krier**) has been published in

Critical Sociology, Capitalism’s Future, and Current Perspectives in Social Theory. Their book, *NASCAR, Sturgis, and the New Economy of Spectacle*, is currently in production with Brill Publishing. Swart also remains active in study abroad teaching and research. In 2016 he taught a course on Catalan identity and politics in Barcelona, Spain and contributed a chapter entitled “Designing the Academic Course: Principles and Practicalities” to the National Association for Study Abroad’s *Guide to Successful Short-Term Programs Abroad*, 3rd ed.

Mark Worrell (PhD 2003) completed the long march to Full Professor, effective September 1st, 2016.

Tracy Xavia Karner (PhD 1994) is looking forward to completing her final year (2010-2017) as department chair at the University of Houston. With her upcoming administrative leave, she plans to complete her book manuscript, **Passion, Possibility, and Photography: Creating an Art World in Houston, Texas**. In this research, Karner seeks to answer the question of how an art world is created by closely examining the history of the Houston fine art photography community. How a place as seemingly unlikely as Houston became an internationally significant city for photography is an intriguing, sociologically rich story of charismatic individuals with vision, and of a city culture that encourages entrepreneurial possibilities, including in the arts.





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