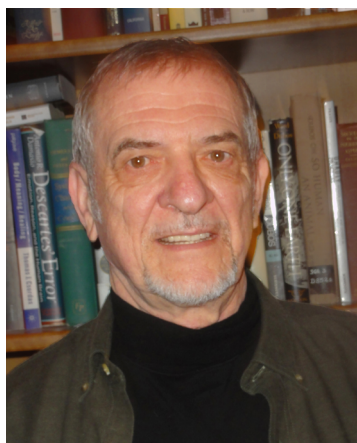


Letter from the Chair

Dear friends and colleagues:

Greetings and welcome to our Winter 2013-14 Newsletter!

It has been an eventful fall and winter in the Department of Sociology. As the academic year began, we welcomed our new colleague, Jennifer Karas Montez, who joined our faculty as an assistant professor. As you may recall, Jennifer was appointed in 2011, but her arrival was delayed by an opportunity to participate in the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health & Society Scholars Program at Harvard University. See page 2 for a story about Jennifer and remarkable accomplishment of winning the GSA Senior Service America Junior Scholar Award two years running!



This fall, we also welcomed a cohort of six graduate students who are already immersed not only in their courses, but also in the exciting process of working with faculty on research projects.

In addition to participating in two annual meetings, the American Sociological Association (ASA) and Gerontological Society of America (GSA), our faculty has been busy this season conducting a faculty search process to replace Professor Emilia McGucken who retired last year. As many of you know, Professor McGucken established and for the past decade led the undergraduate program in Crime and Delinquency. We hope to have some positive news about our search in the very near future.

This issue of *Sociology News* again contains news from alumni of the Department of Sociology (p. 10). As we expand our efforts to keep up with alumni, we are interested in learning about what you are doing and how your sociological background has impacted your career experiences and choices. Please let us hear from you! Send your news to kar98@case.edu. Of course, we also welcome news of any job openings that may be of interest to our recent graduates and graduate students. And if you are in the area, please stop by and visit the Department of Sociology!

-Dale Dannefer, Chair

INSIDE

Letter from the Chair	1
Jennifer Karas Montez receives the 2013 Senior Service America Junior Scholar Award at GSA	2
Congratulations Stefano Cavalli	3
Brian Gran co-edits <i>The Handbook of Sociology and Human Rights</i>	4
Department of Sociology at ASA	6
Sociology Department takes GSA annual meeting by storm	7
Graduate Student Updates	9
Faculty Updates	10
Alumni Updates	11

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Jennifer Karas Montez receives the 2013 Senior Service America Junior Scholar Award at GSA by Cory Cronin

For an unprecedented second year in a row, Jennifer Karas Montez was awarded the Senior Service America Junior Scholar Award at the annual meeting of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) in November, in recognition of her outstanding applied research on the challenges and concerns of disadvantaged older adults. The newest faculty member in the Department of Sociology, Professor Montez received the 2013 award for her paper, “The Socioeconomic Origins of Physical Functioning Among Older U.S. Adults,” published in the December 2013 issue of *Advances in Life Course Research*.



*Left to right: Jennifer Karas Montez and Bob Harootyan, Research Manager, Senior Service America, Inc.
Photograph courtesy of Gerontological Society of America*

Jennifer’s interest in issues surrounding disadvantaged populations was her initial inspiration for entering the field of sociology. Her early educational training in statistics led her to industry work as a research statistician, but reading news stories on topics such as inequalities in life expectancy and infant mortality encouraged her to seek a master’s degree in sociology while working full-time. Finding sociological research to be a strong interest, she then pursued a doctoral degree at the University of Texas at Austin before furthering her work as a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health & Society Scholar at Harvard University.

Early in her academic career, Jennifer worked with Mark Hayward and Robert Hummer at the University of Texas at Austin on the impact of differences in education levels on adult mortality in the U.S.; this experience served as the foundation for her recent research on disadvantaged older adults. This year’s award-winning article tested four hypotheses about how the health effects of early-life socioeconomic conditions combine with the health effects of adult socioeconomic conditions to shape physical functioning in later life. (*continued*)

Jennifer Karas Montez (continued)

2013 Senior Service America Junior Scholar Award

What sets Jennifer's research apart from other work in this area is its emphasis on differences between men and women in life course processes, as well as its focus on both father's and mother's education in the early-life origins of later-life health. By considering these factors, she found that a mother's education level is likely to play a more substantial role in later-life health for women than for men, particularly in the risk of obesity; this finding emphasizes the importance of a mother's education level in an individual's adult health.

Jennifer notes that her study points to the importance of education policy for improving population health and reducing health inequalities. Improving education levels among today's cohorts may have health benefits that compound generationally—an effect, she says, that should be factored into cost benefit calculations about policy options. Jennifer intends to continue research in this area, seeking a better understanding of the reasons why mother's education is particularly important for women's health and exploring additional health measures.

Congratulations, Stefano Cavalli!

Stefano Cavalli, a visiting postdoctoral fellow in the department in Fall 2012 and a continuing research collaborator, was recently appointed to a new position as Head of the Center of Competence on Aging at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland (SUPSI) in Manno-Lugano.



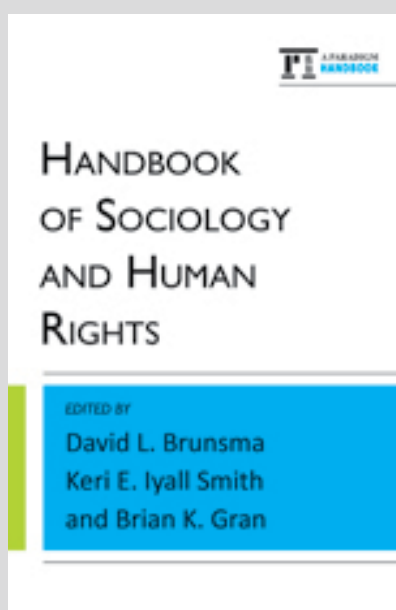
Photograph by Anna Pittaluga Piatti - Stefano Cavalli on right

Send us your news

We are continuing our efforts to expand our relationships with alumni of the Department of Sociology. We are interested in learning about what you are doing and how your sociological background has impacted your career experiences and choices. You can send news to kar98@case.edu; please let us hear from you.

Brian Gran co-edits *The Handbook of Sociology and Human Rights* by Bradley Powell

Professor Brian Gran's work often takes him across the globe; just last year he completed a Fulbright exchange in Reykjavik, Iceland. This year he will be off to Yokohama, Japan for the 18th World Congress of Sociology, an event hosted by the International Sociological Association (ISA). Brian is president of that organization's TG03, the thematic group on human rights and global justice. TG03 fosters intellectual debate and professional exchange among international human rights scholars. He has also been involved with the American Sociological Association (ASA) Section on Human Rights since its inception. Given this busy schedule, it may come as a surprise that he found time to co-edit the *Handbook of Sociology and Human Rights*, published earlier this year.



“One of the most important questions to consider is how human rights matter across the life course, because it can really change depending upon where you are in the life course.”

“Human rights in sociology goes all the way back to Weber and Durkheim,” he says. “More recently, human rights scholarship has been the province of legal studies. The *Handbook* is more an attempt to inform sociological work than plant a stake in the ground.” Professor Gran says that he and his co-editors organized the *Handbook* by considering each ASA section in existence at the time and their linkages to human rights scholarship. “One of the most important questions to consider is how human rights matter across the life course,” Brian says, “because it can really change depending upon where you are in the life course.”

If you think the study of human rights is not applicable to your own work, consider that chapter 2 of the *Handbook* explores their significance from a life course perspective. Other chapters explore topics as varied as mental health, sexualities, disability, and religion. Our own Susan Hinze co-authored (with Heidi Taylor) the chapter on medical sociology; they note that while medical sociologists have not traditionally invoked human rights language, the human rights frame heavily informs their work on health disparities. *(continued)*

Brian Gran (continued)

“What we hoped about the *Handbook of Sociology and Human Rights*,” Brian says, “is that it would be a first step.” The goal is that sociologists will pick up the handbook and “zoom in on” a particular area, like their own area of focus, to learn more about the relevance of human rights.

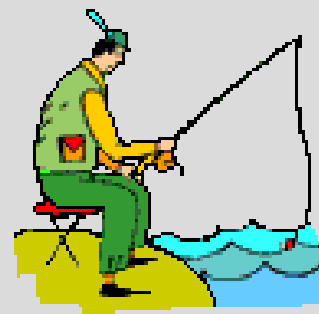
The *Handbook* offers a great introduction to the field for students interested in learning more about how their own work can be better informed by human rights considerations. Brian says that both ISA and the ASA Sections on Human Rights actively encourage graduate student work. One venue for scholarship is the group Sociologists Without Borders and their journal *Societies Without Borders*. Human rights scholarship also appears in all the major journals. Brian’s Historical and Comparative Methods course is another option for graduate students in our department. Although it does not focus directly on human rights, the tools that students’ learn in the class are well-suited to the complicated issues that arise from studying global phenomena, and they are free to create a project related to human rights. The university’s Social Justice Institute offers funding for students and faculty to pursue such projects.

Brian notes that comparative research, and opportunities such as the Fulbright program, are excellent vehicles for studying human rights. Often, he says, it takes getting out of your own element to be able to see the human rights issues occurring in your own backyard. “I think it’s unfair, political, and quite humorous to assume that human rights violations are only occurring elsewhere.”

Brian adds that students interested in doing something locally about human rights have plenty of opportunities for direct involvement. The Free Clinic is working to expand the availability of health care, the issue of educational disparities in the area raises the question of human rights violations. “There are definitely places near here where not just one kid, but bunches of kids are not having their rights to an adequate education honored.”

Brian himself has been active in the local community’s battle to end human trafficking. Organizations such as Bellefaire JCB, the Renee Jones Empowerment Center, and the Collaborative Initiative to End Human Trafficking are “out on the streets every night” working on these problems. But Brian believes that more institutions should be involved. “You can drive just a mile from campus and see human rights violations,” he says. “It doesn’t surprise me, but it bothers me that there are so many situations where people need help and institutions are not helping them.” Sociologists can help answer the riddle of why social institutions are not providing the help these people so desperately need.

Professors Eva Kahana
and Jessica Kelley-Moore
are on sabbatical this
semester



Department of Sociology at ASA

Faculty and students of the Department of Sociology made a diverse array of contributions at the American Sociological Association (ASA) annual meeting in August. The meeting was held in New York City.

Corporate Social Responsibility or Masking Corporate Guilt?

Casey Albitz

Understanding the Intersections of Race/Ethnicity, Gender and Education: Within - and Between - Group Heterogeneity in C-Reactive Protein

Susan Hinze, Jieliu Lin

Violence Against Women: The Backstory to Adolescent Mothers and School Failure

Mary Erdmans

Understanding Online Video Narratives of Diabetes

Adam Perzynski

The Effect of Parent's Perception of Child's Health and the Influence of Resources on Utilization

Cory Cronin, Jessica Kelley-Moore

The Negative Evolution of Corner Stores and their Contribution to Neighborhood 'Food Desert'

Melinda Laroco Boehm

Rights in a Vacuum? International and National Factors Strengthening and Weakening Children's Rights

Brian Gran

Birthing a Profession: What Can Workplace Coaching Learn from Midwifery?

Susan Hinze, Margaret Waltz

Understanding What it Means to be "Us" through Content Analysis of Zombie Films

Margaret Waltz

Aging in the Face of Serial Trauma: Holocaust Survivors Living in Hungary Reflect on History

Eva Kahana, Boaz Kahana, Jeong Lee, Tirth Bhatta

A Children's Right to Enjoy Benefits of Scientific Progress and its Applications

Brian Gran, Holly Renzhofer, Margaret Waltz

Real Men Don't Cry: Masculinity, Mental Health, and the Illness Experience of Men

Danielle Bernat

The Rising Visibility of the Work Disabled Population

Mary Ellen Stone, Jessica Kelley-Moore

Attitudes toward Homosexuals and Social Network Composition

Bradley Powell

Grandparental Support and Advocacy Address Stress in Families Coping with Autism

Eva Kahana, Jeong Lee, Jeffrey Steven Kahana, Boaz Kahana, Sarah Shick, Erin Burk



Graduate students Bradley Powell and Alicia Smith presented at the Annual Conference of the Society for the Study of Social Problems held in New York this past August. Their paper, co-authored with Mary Erdmans, was entitled "Moral Narrative, Stigma, and Shame on 16 and Pregnant."

Sociology Department takes GSA annual meeting by storm

Once again in 2013, CWRU's Department of Sociology was well represented at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA). The 66th annual meeting was held this past November in New Orleans, Louisiana. Jennifer Karas Montez was presented with the 2013 Senior Service America Junior Scholar Award (see p. 2). Two alumni, John Schumacher (PhD 2000) and Julian Montoro-Rodriguez (PhD 1976), featured in the photograph below, were elected as GSA Fellows.



*Photograph courtesy of the Gerontological Society of America.
Julian Montoro-Rodriguez top row far left and John Schumacher top row far right.*

Eva Kahana, along with other GSA Fellows, hosted a mentoring breakfast. A total of 15 faculty members, graduate students and alumni from our department presented at the annual meeting.

Gender Differences in the Life Course Origins of Physical Functioning among U.S. Adults

Jennifer Montez

Racial Differences in Experiences and Appraisals of Stressful Life Events Among Urban Elders

Timothy Goler, Tirth Bhatta, Boaz Kahana, Eva Kahana

Contextualizing Health Appraisal Among Older Adults in India: Examination of Gender and Educational Differences

Tirth Bhatta, Nirmala Lekhak, Eva Kahana

Age and Cumulative Dis/Advantage: New Issues, New Questions, New Findings

Dale Dannefer, Stephen Crystal

The Age Patterning of Intraindividual Variability in Late-Life Health and Its Relevance to Cumulative Dis/advantage Theory

Jielu Lin, Jessica Kelley-Moore

Cumulative Dis/advantage in Wealth Trajectories: Comparative Data from the United States and England
Jessica Kelley-Moore, James Nazroo, Dale Dannefer, Tirth Bhatta

International Perspectives on Aging in Urban Context: Commonalities and Contrasts

Jessica Kelley-Moore, Chris Phillipson

Public Housing Policy Priorities and Structural Ageism: How Hope VI Contributed to the Hyper-Segregation of the Very Old and Very Poor

Jessica Kelley-Moore, Melinda L. Boehm

Functional Health: Historical Context, Present Inequalities, and Relationships with other Health Dimensions

Stefano Cavalli, Jessica Kelley-Moore

(continued)

GSA (continued)

Trends and Socioeconomic Inequalities of Functional Health over 30 Years in Switzerland

Stefano Cavalli, Jessica Kelley-Moore, Tirth Bhatta, Aude Tholomier, Michel Oris

Perceived Disability in Older Adult Cancer Survivors

Holly T. Renzhofer, Jessica Kelley-Moore, Gary Deimling, Sherri Brown

Successful Aging: Perspectives from Emerging Scholars

Nancy P Kropf, Katherine S Hall, Eva Kahana

Trajectories of Successful Aging using Typological Approach

Jeong Eun Lee

Predictors of Discrepancy Between Care Recipients with Early-Stage Dementia and Their Family Caregivers on

Perceptions of the Care Recipients' Quality of Life

Heehyul Moon, Aloen L. Townsend, Carol J. Whitlatch, Mee Hye Kim, Peggye Dilworth-Anderson

Happily Aging: Elderly Users' Satisfaction with a Community-Based Social Support Service Program in Shanghai

Minzhi Ye, Lin Chen

Unexpected Consequences of Early-Life Trauma on Late-Life Well-Being

May Aydin, Eva Kahana, Timothy Goler (Co-Discussant)

Development of the "Gold Standard" Health Risk Assessment for the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit

Joseph Sudano, Adam T. Perzynski, Edwin B Hutchins

Gerontology and Social Theory: Advancing Optimal Aging Through Reflexive Theorizing

Chris Phillipson, Dale Dannefer

Life Course Frameworks for Understanding Health

Disparities: Articulating the Distinction Between Weathering and Cumulative Dis/Advantage

Roland Thorpe, Jessica Kelley-Moore

Physical Function and African Americans: The Role of Psychosocial and Health-Related Factors

Roland Thorpe, Jessica Kelley-Moore

Aligning Research Methodologies with Values: Participatory Research and the Culture Change Movement

Dale Dannefer, Rebecca Siders

Cancer Disclosure and Communication Among Older Adult, Cancer Survivors

Holly T. Renzhofer, Casey Albitz, Gary Deimling, Cory Cronin, Sherri Brown

Support Service Preferences of Older Adult Cancer Survivors in Transition: Then and Now

Cory Cronin, Gary Deimling, Sherri Brown, Holly T. Renzhofer

The Effects of Marital Quality and Mastery on Depressive Symptoms after Widowhood

Minzhi Ye

Life Course Trajectories of Self-Esteem: Does Education Matter?

Tirth Bhatta, Jessica Kelley-Moore, Nirmala Lekhak

Support the Department of Sociology

Please consider supporting the Department of Sociology as we continue building on our achievements. You can contribute to our success by making a tax-deductible gift to the department. Your gift allows us to continue to offer opportunities for our students to excel academically and to conduct important research. You can give online at giving.case.edu.

Graduate Student Updates

Tirth Bhatta presented at two conferences this past semester. The first was the 10th International Conference on Health Policy Statistics held in Chicago this past October. He co-authored a poster presentation with **Jessica Kelley-Moore** titled “Gender Differential in Active Life Expectancy in Nepal: Does Education Matter?” The second conference was the Gerontological Society of America 66th Annual Scientific Meeting held in New Orleans, Louisiana this past November, where he gave two co-authored poster presentations. (see p. 6)

Michael Flatt recently published an article titled “Are ‘Anti-Aging Medicine’ and ‘Successful Aging’ Two Sides of the Same Coin? Views of Anti-Aging Practitioners” in *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*. The article was co-authored with Richard A. Settersten Jr., Roselle Ponsara and Jennifer R. Fishman.

Sara Kennedy presented at the 3rd Annual Public Sociology Conference in Arlington, Virginia this past October. The conference, which is held by graduate students, took place at George Mason University. All of the presenters, except the keynote speaker, were graduate or undergraduate students who have a mission to further the idea and rhetoric of public sociology. Sara’s paper was titled “Does Social Capital Influence Desistance from Criminal Behavior?”

Bradley Powell will present a paper, “Understanding ‘Stigma’ and HIV/AIDS: A Social Scientist’s Challenge,” at the XVIII International Sociological Association (ISA) World Congress of Sociology conference in Yokohama, Japan this coming July. We look forward to following up on his conference experience in another issue.

Rebecca Siders served as co-discussant for the session “Aligning Research Methodologies with Values: Participatory Research and the Culture Change Movement” at the Gerontological Society of America (GSA)- meeting in New Orleans, November. She also coauthored (with Dale Dannefer) “Social Change, Social Structure and the Cycle of Induced Solidarity” in *Kinship and Cohort in an Aging Society*, edited by Merrill Silverstein and Roseann Giarrusso and published by Johns Hopkins.

Alicia Smith recently received a Mellon Mays Predoctoral Graduate Studies Enhancement Grant from the Social Science Research Council to pursue preliminary research on exercise among African American women. She also participated as a roundtable moderator and alumni panel participant at the Midwest Regional Conference for the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program this past October.

Margaret Waltz was a National Finalist in the inaugural American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Human Rights Coalition Student Poster Competition. The competition took place in Washington D.C. and her poster was titled “Reframing the Assumptions of Scientific Research through Participatory Action.”

Faculty Updates

Tim Black gave this year's Butler A. Jones Endowed Lecture at Cleveland State University. The lecture series presents sociological scholarship on race and ethnicity. Other scholars and activists who have given the lecture include Elijah Anderson, Patricia Hill Collins, Ruth Peterson, and Morris Dees. Black also gave an invited lecture at Western Michigan State University on his book, *When a Heart Turns Rock Solid*.

Dale Dannefer published "Age and Sociological Explanation: Explaining Horizons in the Study of Aging and the Life Course" in *Contemporary Sociology's* series of invited reflective essays covering the most important books in Aging and the Life Course since 2000. Together with Ph.D. student **Rebecca Siders**, he also published "Social Change, Social Structure and the Cycle of Induced Solidarity" in *Kinship and Cohort in an Aging Society*, edited by Merrill Silverstein and Roseann Giarrusso and published by Johns Hopkins.

Sue Hinze continues working on her new project on professional coaching, and presented early findings with **Maggie Waltz** at the American Sociological Association (ASA) meetings in New York City in a paper titled "Birthing a Profession: What Can Workplace Coaching Learn from Midwifery?" She also presented, with **Jielu Lin**, an extension of earlier work on the importance of understanding intersections of race/ethnicity, gender and education for health outcomes. She is especially pleased to be included in Gran's Handbook (p. 4), co-authoring a chapter with former student (now Associate Professor at Bates College), **Heidi Taylor**. Hinze recently gave two Grand Rounds, one for the Cleveland Clinic and the other for University Hospitals. The talks were titled "Lean In, Fall Over, Kick Back or Step Out? A Sociological Take on the Life Trajectories of Women Physicians."

Eva Kahana is continuing her study of interventions in Cleveland, New York and Miami to help older adults be better-prepared and more assertive health care consumers. This research, funded by the National Cancer Institute, focuses on consumer-initiated conversations about cancer prevention in late life. A poster based on the study was presented at the American Psychosocial Oncology Society (APOS) meetings this past February in Tampa, Florida. Kahana and her Elderly Care Research Center (ECRC) team recently initiated a new research project exploring interests and needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) elderly who retire to Florida. This research constitutes a follow-up to her long-term studies of older adults who retire to the Sun Belt. An article that appeared in July in *The Blade*, Toledo's newspaper, featured her comments on "informal assistance moves," a topic she has studied extensively over the years. Read the full article at <http://www.toledoblade.com/local/2013/07/30/Retirees-shake-off-sun-sand-for-home-Copy.html>.

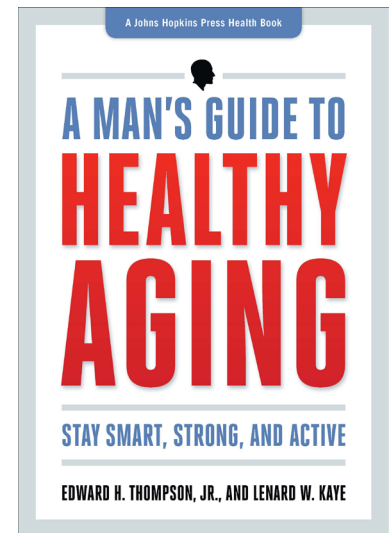
Jessica Kelley-Moore published "Age in Place and Place in Age: Advancing the Inquiry on Neighborhoods and Minority Older Adults" in the *Handbook on Minority Aging*, edited by Keith Whitfield and Tamara Baker and published by Springer.

Faculty Updates (continued)

Jennifer Karas Montez was presented with the 2013 Senior Service American Junior Scholar Award at the 66th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America. The society-wide award recognizes outstanding applied research that advances knowledge and understanding of the capabilities, contributions, challenges and concerns of disadvantaged older adults, especially those who are low-income and minority group members. (See p. 2 for more information.) She also recently co-hosted an exploratory workshop titled “Under What Conditions is Educational Attainment Causally Related to Health/Mortality?” with Esther Friedman of RAND Corporation and David Cutler of Harvard University. The workshop, held on November 8 at the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies, brought together 30 scholars from across the nation to present research on the education-health relationship.

PhD Alumni Updates

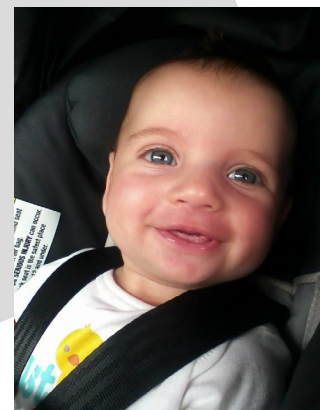
Edward Thompson, Jr. (PhD 1980), recently published *A Man's Guide to Healthy Aging*, co-authored with Lenard W. Kaye. The book, an authoritative resource for middle-aged and older men, provides a comprehensive guide to healthy aging from a man's perspective. Part I, “Managing Our Lives,” describes the actions men can take to stay healthy. Part II, “Mind and Body,” considers how physical health and state of mind are connected. Part III, “Bodily Health,” examines how body systems function and what changes may occur as men age. Part IV, “Living with Others,” shows the importance of interacting with friends and family. Refuting the ageist stereotype that men spend their later years “winding down,” this book will help men reinvent themselves once, twice, or more—by managing their health, creating new careers, and contributing their skills and experiences to their communities.



Gerhard Falk (PhD 1948), professor of sociology at Buffalo State College, published his twenty-second book, *The Jews in Christian Theology*, in November 2013. The book includes his translation (the first ever in English) of Martin Luther's 1543 pamphlet “Vom Schem Hamphoarsh.” Gerhard will publish his twenty-third book, *The German Jews in America: A Minority Within a Minority*, in April 2014. Currently he is working on a manuscript titled *Drinking Alcohol: The Alcohol Culture in America*.

Tanetta Andersson (PhD 2012), has been appointed visiting assistant professor of sociology at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. She has been teaching introductory and upper-level courses and supervising the senior thesis project for the department's Presidential Fellow.

Congratulations to **Robin Shura (PhD '10)** and John Merrin on the birth of their daughter, Helene Estelle Merrin. She was born on June 27, 2013 at 1:09 pm, and weighed in at 7 pounds, 1 ounce.



Helene Estelle Merrin