

Sociology News

Case Western Reserve University Department of Sociology

Letter from the Chair

Dear friends and colleagues:

Welcome to the Winter 2016-17 edition of CWRU *Sociology News*!

For a number of reasons, this is the first edition of *Sociology News* published since last year. Thus, even if it had not been an event-packed year in the Department of Sociology, we would have much to catch up on! This newsletter contains updates on a wide array of accomplishments and honors of faculty, students and alumni, and on some new faculty appointments. It reports on the appointment of our alumna and colleague Karie Feldman as a full-time lecturer, our bumper crop of 2016 PhD graduates, and a star-studded list of visitors, beginning with our colleague and friend Gunhild Hagestad, who visited from Norway to deliver a typically scintillating lecture early last year. Gunhild, as many of you know, is an adjunct member of our faculty, and this fall we also added two more adjunct members, Professors Adam Perzynski and Ed Thompson.



As you will read in the pages that follow, numerous members of our faculty and students have been honored by special awards and by election and appointment to positions in prestigious national and international organizations. Clearly, we have a great deal to be proud of and to celebrate this year.

One noteworthy development over the past few months concerns the establishment and use of our departmental newsfeed. If you are interested in departmental news, no longer must you wait for the newsletter! News items are posted on the newsfeed on the department's web page as soon as it happens (<http://sociology.case.edu/category/news/>).

As always, we are eager to hear alumni news. Please keep us informed of any job openings that may be of interest to our recent graduates and students. And if you are in the area, stop by and visit the Department of Sociology!

-Dale Dannefer, Chair

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COLLEGE OF
ARTS AND SCIENCES
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UNIVERSITY

Eva Kahana awarded Frank and Dorothy Humel Hovorka Prize

Eva Kahana, Distinguished University Professor and Pierce T. and Elizabeth D. Robson Professor of Humanities, was awarded the **2016 Frank and Dorothy Humel Hovorka Prize** during last spring's commencement ceremony. The Hovorka Prize, one of the university's highest forms of recognition, is awarded for exceptional achievements in teaching, research and scholarly service that have benefited the community, the nation and the world. Eva Kahana's career in sociology of 50 years and counting has focused on exploring the resilience of people through stress and age. Eva has made contributions to theorizing person-environment fit, successful aging through proactivity and the role of communication in health care partnerships. In her NIH-funded studies, she explored coping strategies that mitigate ill effects of institutionalization, social losses and disablement and highlighted older adults' survival skills. Her forthcoming book, co-authored with her historian son Jeffrey Kahana (see p.5), considers the oft-neglected links between disability and aging.



Gunhild Hagestad delivers lecture on scholars' personal experiences of aging

Gunhild Hagestad, professor of sociology emeritus at Agder University in Norway, adjunct professor of sociology at CWRU and an internationally recognized leader in the sociology of age and the life course and related fields, delivered a lecture last January titled "How does a lifelong life-course researcher respond to a call for personal perspectives on aging?"

Drawing on classic sociological analyses of the stranger, Professor Hagestad observed that gerontology as a field has done little to redress the culture practice of treating older adults as "strangers." She argued that too often, scholars of age use an "othering" approach that alienates the aging experience from the agenda of exploring humanity.

During her visit, Gunhild also led a meeting with graduate students organized by the Sociology Graduate Student Association, and provided constructive suggestions about each participant's research interest. Although it was the first time she had met many current graduate students, her spirit of mentorship was evident through her open-mindedness and her willingness to facilitate young researchers' intellectual growth. Instead of examining the impossibilities in their research agendas, she highlighted the possibilities and extended the potential directions they can pursue in their future research.

Knowledge is not what distinguishes us, but what unites us. Professor Hagestad's presence reminds us how to use knowledge to foster communication between groups differentiated by age and how to dissolve the boundaries drawn in an age-segregated society.



Pamela Herd, director of Wisconsin Longitudinal Study, visits CWRU

Pamela Herd, professor of public affairs and sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and director of the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study (WLS), delivered a public lecture last spring titled "Promises and Pitfalls of Integrating Biological Data into Social Science Studies." Herd's visit was sponsored by the Provost's Office through the Academic Careers in Engineering & Science (ACES) program and the CWRU Department of Sociology, and was organized by Jessica Kelley-Moore.

One of the first and most well known of such studies, the WLS continues to follow a cohort of the state's high school graduating class of 1957. During recent waves of the study, Dr. Herd's research team has collected biological data from study participants. Given the increasing interest in integrating social and biological data in sociology and other basic sciences and in public health and epidemiology, Dr. Herd's lecture generated interest across academic disciplines.

In addition to her ACES lecture, Dr. Herd participated in several other events sponsored by the Department of Sociology, including a workshop on how to use the WLS and a mentoring lunch with graduate students where she learned about their research plans and offered them career advice.



Visiting sociologist Mary Romero leads three panel discussions

Mary Romero, professor and head of Justice Studies and Social Inquiry at the School of Social Transformation at Arizona State University, visited last spring with the sponsorship of ACES, the Women's and Gender Studies Program, the Flora Stone Mather Center for Women, the Ethnic Studies Program, the Inamori International Center for Ethics and Excellence, the Social Justice Institute, the Center for Policy Studies, the CWRU School of Law and the Department of Sociology. Professor Romero is internationally recognized for her contributions to issues surrounding women's work and career, class, and race. During her visit to CWRU, she participated in three panels to discuss academic careers, law and social justice.



The first panel, "So You Want to be an Academic?", included Cheryl Toman, and Margaretmary Daley (both of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures), Lihong Shi (Anthropology), Gabrielle Parkin (English), and Ananya Dasgupta (History). Panelists discussed timelines and strategies of academic careers while also expressing their passion for teaching and research. This panel presaged a meeting in which Dr. Romero joined Sociology graduate students over coffee to continue the discussions.

In the second panel, "Law and Social Justice: Is there a Connection?", Professor Romero was joined by Ayesha Bell Hardaway (Law) and Camille Warner (Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing and PhD alumna of our Department). This panel discussed the challenges of social justice, including worker's rights, immigration and advocacy, and students and faculty members weighed in on the difficulty of fighting for social justice in a neoliberal era. The panelists stressed the significance and power of voice and collective advocacy.

The third panel, "Citizenship in a Divided America," included Joseph White (Political Science) and Renee Sentilles (History). During this panel, Dr. Romero discussed issues of immigration, particularly in Arizona. Further debate stimulated conversation regarding citizenship in the U.S.

Department welcomes Full-Time Lecturer Karie Feldman

This year, **Karie Feldman** (PhD 2010) joins the Department of Sociology as a full-time lecturer. Since completing her doctorate, she has held a number of academic and professional positions, and has taught multiple courses for the department, including large introductory lectures, social theory seminars and courses in the areas of health and illness, sociology of the family and methods.

Dr. Feldman's research interests lie at the intersection of family and individual health. In a recent paper, she explores the influence of public policy on well-being, providing a new way to analyze paternity leave policy. Further projects will utilize this method to explore outcomes in fertility, health, and other areas. These outcomes represent some of the different ways that social structures can be manipulated at the governmental level, with profound effects on individual decisions and well-being.



Department welcomes new adjunct and secondary faculty members

Welcome newest adjunct faculty member **Ed Thompson**, and newest secondary faculty member **Adam Perzynski**, to the department.



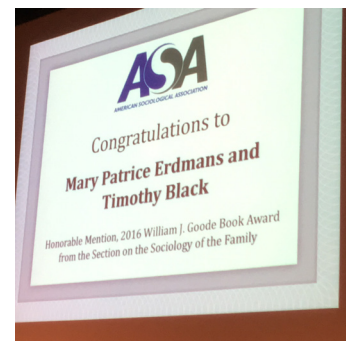
Adam Perzynski (PhD 2008) is an assistant professor at the CWRU School of Medicine and a member of the Bioscientific Medical Staff at MetroHealth Medical Center. Dr. Perzynski specializes in medical sociology, gerontology and research methods. He is interested in mixed methods research designs that combine diverse approaches from multiple disciplines. Dr. Perzynski also has an interest in social informatics and social theory. His current research includes studies of lay people's illness knowledge and of the connection between the social environment and health over the life course.

Edward Thompson (PhD 1980) is an emeritus professor of sociology from Holy Cross College. He has long been interested in matters of gender and family life, and he has taught courses on sociology of men, medical sociology, aging and society, sociology of mental health, men and violence, and families and societies. Thompson continues to study the social worlds of older men, and publishes on older men's experiences and family life masculinities. He edited the first collection of original articles examining elderly men (*Older Men's Lives*, 1994) and another on *Men as Caregivers* (2001), and published *A Man's Guide to Healthy Aging* (2013). He is active in the Gerontological Society of America, encourages researchers to study men's lives, and enjoys maintaining relations with his former students.



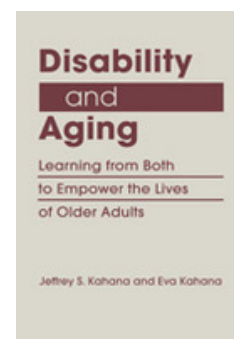
Erdmans and Black receive recognition for recent book

On Becoming a Teen Mom: Life before Pregnancy, co-authored by **Mary Patrice Erdmans** and **Timothy Black**, received the Betty and Alfred McClung Lee 2015 Book Award of the Association for Humanist Sociology. The awards committee unanimously selected *On Becoming a Teen Mom* out of 70 submissions for its comprehensive methodology, humanist perspective, and demonstration of the relationships between, gender, power, race, and class on outcomes for teen moms. The committee also noted that the book is rigorously written and offers a compelling argument for social activists. The book also received honorable mention for the William J. Goode 2016 Book Award of the American Sociological Association.



Eva Kahana and Jeffrey Kahana's new book available April 2017

What is the lived experience of previously healthy older adults as they face disability in late life, and how is disability assimilated in their identity? How do prevailing practices facilitate—or limit—options for elders living with new disabilities? In their forthcoming book, *Disability and Aging: Learning from Both to Empower the Lives of Older Adults*, **Jeffrey Kahana** and **Eva Kahana** synthesize disability and gerontological perspectives to explore both the unfolding challenges of aging and the practices and policies that can enhance the lives of older adults. The book will be available from Lynne Rienner Publishers in April 2017.



Two faculty members receive prestigious appointments

Brian Gran was invited to serve on the National Conference of Lawyers and Scientists (NCLS). The NCLS is a joint effort on the part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Bar Association's Science and Technology Law Section to explore policy issues of interest to scientists, lawyers and judges, and to improve communication among them. Recent work by the committee includes an examination of the legal issues associated with mobile health technologies; a series of seminars for judges on the legal implications of advances in neuroscience; an assessment of the scientific reliability of several forensic science fields; and a range of activities related to research integrity and the social responsibility of scientists and engineers. The committee has recently become more engaged in considering the human rights implications of science and its applications. Gran will be one of fourteen committee members. For more information, visit <http://www.aaas.org/page/national-conference-lawyers-and-scientists>.

Brian was also invited to serve as a Discipline Reviewer for the Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program and as an Advisory Board member of the Ohio Consortium of Crime Sciences.

Jessica Kelley-Moore has been invited to join the Advisory Board for the Resource Center for Minority Data (RCMD). RCMD is an initiative of the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), located at the University of Michigan. Its mission is to provide educators, researchers and students with data resources to analyze issues affecting racial and ethnic minority populations in the United States. RCMD provides access and analytic tools for researchers seeking to utilize the vast array of data from ICPSR on underrepresented minorities. For more information on data and training, see: <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/files/RCMD/brochure.pdf>.

Three sociology faculty members elected to ASA and SLLS offices

Dale Dannefer was elected to the Executive Council of the Society for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies (SLLS).

Eva Kahana was elected to the Council of ASA's Section on Disability in Society. This follows on her recent term as chair of the Nominating Committee for this Section.

Jessica Kelley-Moore was elected chair of ASA's Section on Aging and the Life Course. She is serving as chair of the section during the 2016-17 year. Jessica's election to this important office continues a long tradition of Section leadership from CWRU faculty, several of whom have previously served as chair and in other leadership roles.

Hinze and Pittman receive prestigious university teaching fellowships

In Spring 2016, **Sue Hinze** was awarded an Information Technology Services Active Learning Fellowship, allowing her to redesign her popular undergraduate course, SOCI275, Lives in Medicine: Becoming and Being a Physician. **Cassi Pittman** was one of five faculty members awarded Glennan Fellowships this year by UCITE, the University Center for Innovation in Teaching and Education. Congratulations, Sue and Cassi !

Sociology doctoral candidate Alicia Smith-Tran receives Woodrow

Wilson Dissertation Grant

Alicia Smith-Tran, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology, was named a recipient of the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) Dissertation Grant through the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation for the 2017-18 school year. Her dissertation is titled "Racialized Runners: Life Stories of Black Women Who Run." The selection panel noted that they were "impressed by the strength of [her] application and the outstanding scholarship demonstrated in [her] dissertation chapter."

Gran and Flatt nominated for mentoring and teaching awards

Brian Gran was nominated for the **J. Bruce Jackson, MD, Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Mentoring**, awarded in recognition of the positive impact CWRU faculty and staff have on the lives of students. **Michael Flatt** was nominated for the **Carl F. Wittke Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching**.

2016 Inclusion and Diversity Achievement Award Winners

Graduate sociology student **Tirth Bhatta** and undergraduate sociology major **Makela Hayford** were among the annual Inclusion and Diversity Achievement Award winners for 2016. Tirth received the **Graduate/Professional Student Achievement Award**, and Makela received the **Undergraduate Student Achievement Award**. The awards are given in recognition of demonstrated leadership and commitment toward diversity, inclusion and multiculturalism through academic excellence, service, volunteerism and/or research.

Sue Hinze completes term as Chair of College's Executive Committee, joins new NSF study of salary equity

Susan Hinze spent a great deal of her time this past year on administrative duties for the College, including as a Faculty Senator and as Chair of the Executive Committee for the College of Arts and Sciences, completing her terms in June. Sue recently joined a multi-year NSF funded program titled: Institutions Developing Excellence in Academic Leadership-National (IDEAL-N). Working with the Associate Provost, and in partnership with 9 other universities, she is one of three faculty members seeding institutional transformation projects at Case.

Eva Kahana named one of *Cleveland Jewish News* Difference Makers

Eva Kahana has been named one of the *Cleveland Jewish News'* 18 Difference Makers for 2016. This class of honorees represents remarkable individuals who make a difference and help better Northeast Ohio's Jewish community by being active through nonprofit organizations, volunteer groups or professional endeavors, and who demonstrate the "mensch-like" characteristics of honor and integrity. An event was held on November 2 honoring the Difference Makers, and award winners were featured in a commemorative section of the October 28 issue of *CJN* and on cjh.org.

Karie Feldman and Brian Gran featured on *Cleveland.com*

Karie Feldman and **Brian Gran** were featured in a Guest Columnist article on *Cleveland.com* titled "With paid parental leave on both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump's agendas, it's time to adopt it." Read the full article here: http://www.cleveland.com/opinion/index.ssf/2016/11/with_some_aspect_of_paid_paren.html



Second Annual Bowling Competition at the Corner Alley



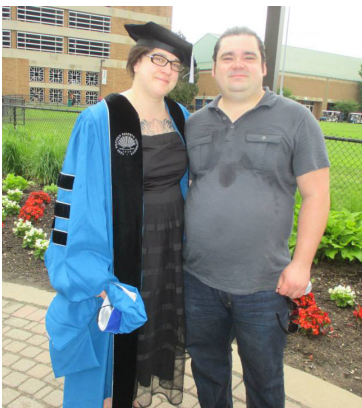
Congratulations, Sociology Doctoral Graduates

Congratulations to **Cory Cronin**, **Michael Flatt**, **Relebohile Morojele**, **Robert Peterson**, **Casey Schroeder**, **Rebecca Siders** and **Margaret Waltz** for successfully defending their dissertations!

- Cory Cronin, *Hospitals' Choices and the Institutional Environment: the Role of Community Benefit in the Health Care Sector*.
- Michael Flatt, *"I'm sorry to have to ask you this"...Heterosexism and Institutionalized Homophobia in Tissue Donation*.
- Relebohile Morojele, *Pregnant Women's Experience of Provider Initiated HIV Testing in Lesotho*.
- Robert Peterson, *Organization & Community Deficits: Examining the Roles and Responses of Community-Based Organizations to HIV*.
- Casey Schroeder, *Let's Talk about Sex...or Not: Doctor-Patient Communication about Sexual Health*.
- Rebecca Siders, *Voices from the Inside: Gender & the Meaning of Care*.
- Margaret Waltz, *(Im)Patient Patients: An Ethnography of Medical Waiting Rooms*.



Margaret Waltz and Michael Flatt



Casey Schroeder and partner,
Justin Jenkinson, PhD

Cory Cronin joined the Department of Social and Public Health at Ohio University as an assistant professor. In addition to teaching and advising undergraduate students, he is continuing his research on hospital community benefit and population health efforts.

Michael Flatt is an assistant professor of Sociology at the Western Campus of Cuyahoga Community College.

Relebohile Morojele is a professor at the National University of Lesotho, Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work.

Robert Peterson will continue his role as assistant professor in the Department of Sociology at Morehouse College.

Casey Schroeder is an assistant professor and director of IPE, Simulation and Outcomes at CWRU School of Medicine. She volunteers as a patient escort at Preterm, a local clinic that provides abortions and other reproductive health care. She also volunteers as a dog walker at the Cleveland Animal Protective League (APL).

Rebecca Siders will continue working at the Navy Cyber Defense Operations Command in Suffolk, VA, as an Information Technology Specialist (ITS) Project Manager with plans to search and apply for post-doctoral positions and/or fellowships this year.

Margaret Waltz joined the University of North Carolina as a postdoctoral fellow with the Center for Genomics and Society.



Cory Cronin



Relebohile Morojele



Rebecca Siders and Robert
Peterson

CWRU Sociology enlivens 2016 GSA, NCSA, and SSSP annual meetings

Once again, CWRU's Department of Sociology had a strong presence at the 2016 annual meetings of the American Sociological Association (ASA), Gerontological Society of America (GSA), the North Central Sociological Association (NCSA) and the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP). The following faculty members, adjunct faculty members and graduate students participated in the meetings.

Participation

Should I Retire? Late Career Decision Making
Eva Kahana; GSA

Graduates and Dropouts: Explaining School Outcomes for Teen Mothers
Mary Erdmans, Elizabeth Nalepa; ASA

The Illness Experience in Context: Provider Initiated HIV Testing for Pregnant Women in Lesotho
Relebohile Morojele, Susan Hinze; ASA

Elderly Cancer Survivors Reflect on the Treatment Phase of their Journey
Eva Kahana, Boaz Kahana, Alicia Smith-Tran, Kaitlyn Langendoerfer; GSA

Social Cascade of Mortality: Capturing Changes in Social Activities and Engagement in Final Years
Jiao Yu, Jessica Kelley-Moore, Eva Kahana, Boaz Kahana; GSA

Cancer Disclosure, Life Outlook and Continuity of Social Relationships Among Long-Term Survivors
Gary Deimling, Spencier Ciaralli, Minzhi Ye, Elizabeth Nalepa; GSA

Valuation of Life Among Cuban Hispanics: Racial Differences in Perceived Disability in Later Life
Tirth Bhatta, Eva Kahana, Boaz Kahana; GSA

The Intersection of Race and Gender: Religiosity and Psychological Well-Being in Late Life
Timothy Goler, Tirth Bhatta, Nirmala Lekhak, Eva Kahana; GSA

New Dimensions of Inequality: Inter-Individual Variability in Functional Limitations by Race/ Gender
Jielu Lin, Jessica Kelley-Moore; GSA

Beyond Ageist Attitudes: Researchers Call for Discrimination Against Older Academics
Eva Kahana; Michael Slone, Boaz Kahana, Kaitlyn Langendoerfer; GSA

Age Differences in Stress and Coping: Differential Pathways to Positive and Negative Affect
Minzhi Ye, et al.; GSA

Age-Friendliness, Environmental Gerontology, and the Social Organization of Age
Jessica Kelley-Moore, Dale Dannefer, Luma al Masarweh; GSA

"Why Are You Asking Her to Participate?": Coproduction of Social Reality and Data in Long-Term Care
Robin Shura, Dale Dannefer, Rebecca Siders; GSA

Quality of Life Among U.S. Chinese Older Adults: Acculturation and Family Relationships
Minzhi Ye; GSA

Who Plans for Future Care Among Older Adults Who are Aging in Place?
Boaz Kahana, Eva Kahana, Tirth Bhatta, Kaitlyn Langendoerfer; GSA

Process vs. Structure: Service Recommendation in a Community-Based Elderly Meal Service in Shanghai
Minzhi Ye, et al.; GSA

How Transportation Plays a Role in Care of Epilepsy Patients
Sara E. Kennedy; NCSA

Growing Up or Transitioning Out? The Effects of Continued Foster Care Status & Adulthood Markers on Educational Attainment
Casey L. Albitz; SSSP

Comparing Perceptions of LGBTQ Campus Climate: Students, Faculty, and Staff
Bradley Powell, Mary Erdmans; SSSP

SGSA News

It was a fun and productive year for the Sociology Graduate Student Association (SGSA)! We had the pleasure of meeting with visiting scholars Dr. Pamela Herd and Dr. Gunhild Hagestad, discussed the process of navigating the job market with our graduating colleague Maggie Waltz, chatted about classes and exams, went apple picking, enjoyed happy hour at The Jolly Scholar, and re-crowned Mike Slone as the bowling champion at the 2nd annual SGSA competition at The Corner Alley. Congratulations to the officers for the 2016-17 school year:

President: Delia Su
Vice President: Brian Polk
Secretary/Treasurer: Lacey Caporale

This year, Liz Nalepa is serving as graduate student representative, and Mike Slone is student representative to the colloquium committee.

Alicia Smith-Tran, Kaitlyn Langendoerfer and Cherry Huang



Graduate Student Updates

Danielle Bernat was elected president of the Women in Doctoral Studies (WiDS) graduate organization.

Elizabeth Nalepa received a Graduate Student Fellowship from CWRU's Social Justice Institute for the 2016-17 academic year. The working title of her project is "The Effects of State Level Policy on Individual Health: The Case of TRAP Laws."

Minzhi Ye co-authored two articles with Eva Kahana and L. Chen this past semester. The first, "Mealtime interactions and life satisfaction among older adults in Shanghai," was published in the *Journal of Aging and Health*. The second, "'Their today is our future': Direct careers' work experience and formal caring relationships in a community-based eldercare program in Shanghai," has been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Applied Gerontology*.

Graduate Student Awards

The *College of Arts and Sciences Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship* was given to **Tirth Bhatta** and **Alicia Smith-Tran**. The *Graduate Dean's Instructional Excellence Award* was given to **Christine Schneider** and **Alicia Smith-Tran**. The *Ruth Barber Moon Award* was given to **Tirth Bhatta**. The *Eva L. Pancoast Memorial Fellowship* was given to **Elizabeth Nalepa**. The *Marie Haug Award* was given to **Wenxuan Huang** and **Minzhi Ye**.



From left to right: Dr. Eva Kahana, Wenxuan Huang, Dr. Timothy Black, Tirth Bhatta, Elizabeth Nalepa, Dr. Mary Erdmans, Alicia Smith-Tran, Minzhi Ye, Dr. Jessica Kelley-Moore, Dr. Dale Dannefer

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 sociology.case.edu/support-us/

Undergraduate Student Achievement Ceremony and Awards

At the 2016 Sociology Student Achievement Ceremony, nine students were initiated into the Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD) Sociology Honor Society, three students became members of Phi Beta Kappa, and six students were recipients of Undergraduate Awards. Guest alumni speaker Indigo Bishop (BA 2008) spoke about her work in a talk entitled "Power, Identity and the Politics of Belonging."

The three students inducted into Phi Beta Kappa were Lauren Auster, Holly Johnson and Rachel Sosnowchik. The nine students inducted into the AKD were Lauren Sylvia Auster, Shannon Chua, Connor F. Collins, McCoy Trotter Edmonds, Elise Martin Elston, MaryTherese Escueta, Stephanie Dawn Popil, Chakira Janine Regina Smith, and Kelvin Jiayu Zheng.



2016 AKD Initiation Ceremony



Undergraduate Co-Directors, Professor Susan Hinze and Professor Mary Erdmans, lead the ceremony



Kelvin Jiayu Zheng lighting AKD initiation candle

Recipient of the Schermerhorn Award for outstanding student(s) in sociology was Jiali (Jerry) Dong

Meghan Gibbons and Steven Reynolds received the Mark Lefton Award for excellence in sociological studies.

The Stella Berkeley-Friedman Award went to graduating senior Holly Johnson for the highest academic achievement in the study of sociology.

The Robert C. Davis Award went to Elise Elston and Stephanie Popil for demonstrated commitment to sociological studies.



Jiali (Jerry) Dong



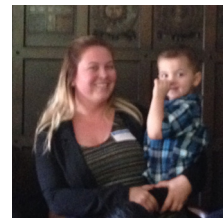
Meghan Gibbons



Holly Johnson



Elise Elston



Stephanie Popil



Lauren Auster

Alumni Spotlight by Noah Webster (PhD 2011)

My graduate studies in the CWRU Department of Sociology have had and continue to have a profound impact on my career. My research experiences, coursework and dissertation research provided me with both a theoretical and methodological foundation which I draw from regularly. Also, exposure to aging and the life course scholarship has altered the direction and focus of my work in ways I never anticipated when I first enrolled at CWRU in 2001.

I begin with where I am now, and then trace back how my experiences at CWRU helped bring me here. I moved to Ann Arbor, MI, in 2007 with my now wife, Rebecca Cohen (also an alum of the Department of Sociology), who was pursuing a graduate degree at the University of Michigan. Once in Ann Arbor, I was fortunate to obtain a position as a research associate working with Toni Antonucci in the Life Course Development Program at the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research (ISR). After many trips on the Ohio turnpike back to Cleveland to meet with Gary Deimling (my dissertation committee chair), I completed and defended my dissertation in 2011. Following this, I continued working at ISR, transitioning into a three-year postdoctoral fellowship and then into my current position in 2014 as an assistant research scientist. My current research focuses on the interrelated themes of: 1) the bidirectional influences of health, health-related behaviors and social relationships; and 2) the role of environmental and social contexts in shaping health disparities across the life course. In 2015 I had the opportunity to attend the National Institute on Aging's Butler-Williams Scholars Program and was also honored to receive the Society for the Study of Human Development's Early Career Award.

CWRU Sociology Focus on Aging and the Life Course: When I started graduate studies at CWRU, I did not have plans to focus on aging or the life course. I applied to the department due to its focus and expertise in medical sociology. At the time, I was working for an infant mortality prevention project at a local health department in New York and was looking for greater understanding of factors leading to disparities at this early stage in the life course. With an undergraduate sociology degree, I was excited by the opportunity to better understand disparities through a sociological lens. Little did I know my experiences at CWRU would alter the direction of my career. In my first year I was exposed to gerontological theories and research. I had the opportunity to learn about stress and aging from Eva Kahana, aging in America from Eleanor Stoller, classical and contemporary sociological theory from Richard Settersten and Gary Deimling, and research methods from Kyle Kercher. I also had the opportunity to actively help in the conduct of research at the Elderly Care Research Center focused on successful aging. This work served as a foundation that I drew upon when I had the recent opportunity to work with Toni Antonucci and Bob Kahn on a project to implement and evaluate a successful aging intervention in low-income senior housing communities. Through all these experiences at CWRU, I began to wonder how the lives of older adults that I was learning about are impacted by their earlier life experiences, which I had observed in my earlier studies. My coursework and research assistantships helped transform these ideas into research questions, hypotheses and an understanding of how they could be examined through empirical research. Subsequent coursework, including Medical Sociology with Sue Hinze and Healthcare Policy with Brain Gran, helped me to further bridge my early interests with my new interest in aging and the life course.

During my first semester at CWRU, I had the opportunity to attend the annual scientific meeting of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA). Still new to gerontology at this point, I was encouraged by faculty in the department to attend. This meeting helped accelerate my interest and academic transition to focus on aging and the life course. Most memorable from this first meeting was the mentorship from CWRU faculty. This included invitations to dinner with their colleagues and alumni or suggestions of key talks to attend. I continue to attend GSA every year and in many ways consider the society to be my academic home.

Alumni Spotlight by Noah Webster (Ph.D. 2011) continued

Since this meeting, GSA has provided multiple opportunities for me to serve in leadership roles (opportunities I encourage current graduate students to seek out through ESPO), including two-year terms on the GSA Publications and Membership Committees and most recently as Chair-Elect of the GSA Publications Committee. These experiences not only provided wonderful networking opportunities, but also provided me with a deeper understanding of how a society such as GSA operates. All this I can trace back to the meeting in 2001, which I would not have attended and benefited from without the encouragement and mentorship of the CWRU faculty.

Dissertation work with Gary Deimling: The dissertation process for me was the experience that enabled me to connect all the dots, beginning with choosing a topic, drawing upon theories and prior literature, developing research questions and hypotheses, conducting analyses to examine them, and then creating a compelling story through writing of the implications and conclusions. In my current work, I continually draw on lessons learned while going through these steps. I began this process with Eleanor, to whom I am thankful for the many research experiences and the guidance she provided, which helped inform my decision to focus on exploring diabetes self-management. I then continued the process with Gary, who instilled in me a responsibility to be diligent throughout the research process. Gary's constant encouragement and reinforcement I found essential when the process became intimidating. In addition, Gary's mentorship was essential in helping me develop a style of writing and process of examining data and results in order to weave together a compelling story. I continue to apply these lessons today as I write results and discussion sections of manuscripts. Lastly, Gary's encouragement to write for multiple interdisciplinary audiences continues to help me in my work at ISR, where I regularly work on interdisciplinary research teams with psychologists, physicians, architects, urban planners, engineers, etc. Also, this mindset helps me in grant writing, knowing that the proposal will be read by scientists from multiple disciplinary backgrounds.

This all leads to my conclusion and a piece of advice for current graduate students, which is to be open to new perspectives and opportunities in your academic endeavors. You never know what you will learn and how these experiences will shape your later life outcomes. Being open to aging research opened up many exciting opportunities for me. I still try to adhere to this advice as a junior faculty member, and it continues to lead to new and exciting research collaborations.



David Henry Feldman, President-Elect of the Society for the Study of Human Development (left) and Noah Webster (right) receiving the Society for the Study of Human Development's (SSHD) Early Career Award in October 2015 at the SSHD biennial meeting in Austin, TX.

Alumni Updates

Gerhard Falk (PhD 1948) published his twenty- fifth book, *End of the Patriarchy*, with Rowman and Littlefield Publishing Company this past December. The book reviews the achievements of American economy, education, government, religion, the military, law enforcement and communications.

Bradley Paramore (BA 2010) published "A Positive Psychology Approach to Consultation" in *The Ohio School Psychologist* (vol. 60, no.2).

Robin Shura (PhD 2010) was promoted to associate professor and awarded tenure at Hiram College. She was also named chair of Hiram's Department of Sociology. Dr. Shura published a peer-reviewed article with Rebecca Meehan (PhD 1997) in the *Journal of Nursing Home Research* titled "Residents' Perspectives on Living with Vision Impairment in Long Term Care: An Unseen Factor in Quality of Life and Appropriateness of Care." She also co-authored a peer-reviewed article with Brian Gran and Elle Rochford in the *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* titled "Children for Sale? The Blurred Boundary between Intercountry Adoption and Sale of Children in the USA."



Bradley Paramore

Samantha Sterns Cole (PhD 2007) received a team Bronze Medal Award for Superior Federal Service from the United States Department of Commerce for work on the Standard Occupation Classification Manual revision December 2015.



Samantha Sterns Cole receives team Bronze Medal Award for Superior Federal Service from the U.S. Dept. of Commerce

Alumni Updates continued

Julia Wolf (BA 2015) was co-author on two posters at the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America (PAA) held in Washington D.C. The first poster was titled "Race and Rural: An Investigation of the Rural Mortality Penalty and the Role of Public Health Infrastructure." The second was a **poster session winner** and titled "An Exploration of Woodard's 'American Nations' for Predicting Cause-Specific Mortality."

Julia was also co-author of an article published with the CWRU Elderly Care Research Center (ECRC) titled "Trauma and the Life Course in a Cross National Perspective: Focus on Holocaust Survivors Living in Hungary." The article was published in *Traumatology* and co-authored with Eva Kahana, Boaz Kahana, Jeong Eun Lee and Tirth Bhatta.



PAA Poster Session Winner - Julia Kay Wolf

Erika Trapl (BA 2000) was awarded the Public Health Policy Award from the Ohio Public Health Association this May. The award is given to an individual, group, agency, or organization that contributed significantly to public health through the crafting and/or promotion of public health policy during the previous year. Dr. Trapl is assistant professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the CWRU School of Medicine and associate director of the Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods (PRCHN). Professor Trapl has also committed to assisting the Department of Public Health and the Healthy Cleveland initiative in the realm of tobacco prevention/cessation by co-chairing the "Breathe Free" committee.

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.

In Memory of...

We have learned the sad news that **Andrew Hund (PhD 2010)** passed away in April 2015, at age 44, of complications from diabetes. Andrew, who was teaching in the United Arab Emirates, had written 25 articles published in medical and educational periodicals and edited *Antarctica and the Arctic Circle: A Geographic Encyclopedia on the Earth's Polar Regions*, which was published in 2014. Many will remember Andrew's critical intellect and wit and his interests in a wide range of topics from politics to nature photography and hunting, which reflected his love of Alaska. A memorial mass was held on May 19, 2015, at Corpus Christi Catholic Church.

Eugene S. Uyeki, who was professor emeritus and former chair of the Department of Sociology, and Provost for Social and Behavioral Sciences during a 44-year career, died on September 5, 2014, at the age of 88. Professor Uyeki's scholarly interests and contributions centered on three important areas of scientific inquiry: ethnic identification, social stratification and sociology of science. Professor Uyeki was born in Seattle, Wash., and graduated from high school in a Japanese-American internment camp. He served in the U.S. Army for 22 months during 1954-1955. During 1985, he was a Fulbright Scholar at Hokkaido University in Sapporo, Japan. Gene, as he was known in the department, was a congenial and scholarly person who cared deeply about colleagues and students alike. He continued to follow scholarly developments in the field and attended ASA meetings long after his retirement. Gene was highly respected throughout his career at CWRU for his wisdom, good character, gentle manner and goodwill toward colleagues and students alike.

George Rosenberg, emeritus professor of sociology, passed away April 22, 2014, at the age of 84. He earned his PhD from Columbia University in 1960. He was a student of Paul Lazarsfeld, a foundational figure in scientific survey research. Professor Rosenberg had an abiding interest in the sociology of aging and in family sociology. He published two books relevant to these subjects. His first book, *The Worker Grows Old: Poverty and Isolation in the City*, published in 1970, has been viewed as a classic in the field. George was a highly committed and excellent teacher, earning a student following for his favorite course: classical sociological theory. After retiring, George started a new career as a talented painter of acrylics and oils. George Rosenberg was a gracious man and good colleague. He left behind many students enriched by his teaching, a close family that values intellectual pursuits.

Elaine Dannefer, professor of medicine, completed her earthly life in May 2016 after a brief, valiant battle with pancreatic cancer. A sociologist (PhD, University of Rochester 1989) who applied her disciplinary training to the real world, Elaine was widely recognized as a national and international leader in innovative approaches to curriculum and student assessment in medical education. She was known for her work at the University of Rochester and especially at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine of Case Western Reserve University and she served as president of the Society of Directors of Research in Medical Education. Elaine is also remembered by many faculty, students and alumnae of the Department of Sociology as a gracious hostess at many departmental parties and other events. Dale, daughter Rachel and family thank the many students and faculty who supported them during Elaine's illness and who sent gifts and condolences and attended the celebration of Elaine's life held at Forest Hill Church in July.