

Sociology News

Spring 2024 Edition

Department of Sociology, Case Western Reserve University

Letter from the Chair

Dear Sociology Friends,

We are closing another academic year with plenty of good news to share. Professor Haoming Song joined us this year, jumping straight into teaching and mentoring, all the while finding time to be awarded an Early Career Scholar Award from Work and Family Researchers Network. Take a moment to read all about Professor Song in his interview with Yuanchang Zhao on page 2. Professor Pittman Claytor won a national mentoring award from the Association of Black Sociologists, recognizing her dedication to advancing careers of underrepresented minority students.

Our undergraduate program continues to be very strong. In December, six students presented their Capstone projects, under the direction of Professor Erdmans. The titles of their talks are on page 7. The student organization WRAP, which formed out of Professor Black's course on mass incarceration, organized a major speaker event (see page 5) this spring on prisoner's rights. We also inducted six new members to our Iota chapter of Alpha Kappa Delta.

This academic year, we had a record-breaking SIX successful dissertation defenses! Please join me in congratulating Chengming Han, Colette Ngana, Lacey Caporale, E Phelps, Dawn Aliberti, and Polina Ermoshkina on this outstanding achievement. The titles of their dissertations are on page 11, as well as some graduation photos. We wish all of you well in your next endeavors! Many of our students presented original research at regional and national conferences this past year, as well. See the full list on pages 10-11. Finally, our Sociology Graduate Student Association has been busy with social and professional development activities this year. Check out their update!

As we look toward the next year, we are excited to be joined by Dr. Rebecca Schut, our new Assistant Professor with specializations in health disparities, immigration, work, and quantitative methods. We will be sharing more about her this fall. We wish Professor Pittman Claytor well as she takes an overdue sabbatical this fall semester. We also wish Professor Gran luck as he embarks on a two-year leave to work with the Army Research Office to help expand collaborative research among federal agencies, universities, and private partners.

We hope that you enjoy our Spring 2024 Sociology Newsletter. As always, we would love to hear from you! Drop us a line and tell us what you are up to!

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Cassi Pittman Claytor Earns National Mentoring Award



Dr. Cassi Pittman Claytor has been awarded the A. Wade Smith Award for Teaching, Mentorship, and Service from the Association of Black Sociologists. The A. Wade Smith Award for Teaching, Mentorship, and Service was established in 1998. The award recognizes an ABS member for outstanding teaching, mentoring, and service. The award recognizes the special and often unrecognized excellent performance in teaching and mentorship. It particularly targets members who have been dedicated and innovative teachers and those who have nurtured future scholars in the field. The award further acknowledges the crucial role played by many outstanding teachers in bringing young African-

American scholars into the trying and difficult world of academic achievement. Often lacking unavailable appropriate mentors and guides for their scholarship en route to undergraduate, graduate, and, particularly, Ph.D. degrees, unique dedicated individuals provide unusual support where there are few real rewards. This award recognizes this important, and invaluable, role and those who perform it well and with pride.

Q&A with Professor Haoming Song by Yuanchang Zhao

Dr. Haoming Song joined us as an Assistant Professor in Fall 2023. He earned his Ph.D. in Sociology from Brown University. Dr. Song teaches courses including Population Dynamics and Changing Societies, Family in the 21st Century, Social Statistics, and Advanced Statistical Analysis. Outside the classroom, Dr. Song is dedicated to helping graduate students succeed in their academic careers. In the spring semester of 2024, he delivered a comprehensive professional speech that provided students with valuable guidance on transforming class papers into publications, effectively communicating with journal editors, and strategically selecting appropriate journals for their research.

Q: What specific area are you currently researching?

A: I've always been interested in the role of family in the reproduction of social inequality. Aligned with this overarching theme, I explore the health and well-being of people in diverse families particularly those at the margins of societies. For example, my dissertation looked at queer families in the US. I also study families in sociopolitical contexts that differ quite a bit from the US particularly China. The ultimate goal is to think through that, in an era when family is changing quickly as an institution, whether and how family still has the power to reinforce or reduce intersecting inequality by gender, sexuality, race, class, and other axes of stratification.

Q: What initially sparked your interest in these topics?

A: I am always puzzled by the striking inequality in societies especially those based on gender and sexuality. I grew up in China where the dominant ideology was to promote social harmony and legitimize necessary inequality in the nation's developmental pathway toward prosperity. However, I witnessed so much inequality that I started to question the "slogan" and eventually decide to pursue sociology to help me explain inequality in more systemic and theoretical ways. As someone who mainly uses large-scale quantitative data, I think it's also very important to put myself in the shoes of the data points.

Q: What theoretical framework do you use to conduct your research?

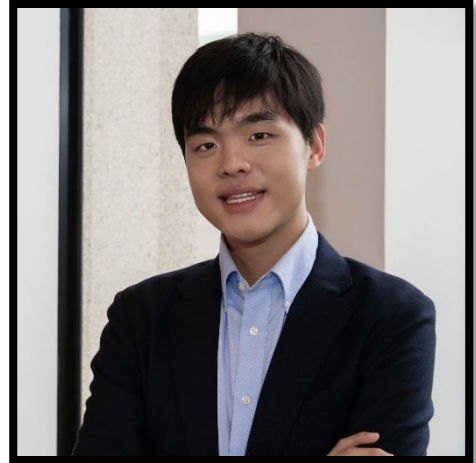
A: Good question. I aim to do quantitative work that has theoretical implications, that is, it could either provide rigorous empirical tests for existing theories or help inform new theorizing on the relations between micro-individual, meso-family, and macro social context. I cite much of what Robert Merton would call middle-range theory. For example, I am fascinated by Marital Search Theory that helps to explain the social exchanges in searching for future partners and the type of partner one ends up with (e.g., interracial, educational homogamy). Gender theories also inform my ongoing work, such as those that theorize gender as a multilevel structure or as a daily process that people actively perform, and work-family theories that use bargaining and power dynamics within their households. In my work on LGBTQ+ folks, I cite minority stress theory and intersectionality theory. Finally, as a demographer, I am deeply influenced by the Second Demographic Transition, a theory that explains the proliferation of unconventional family forms.

Q: How does your research interest manifest in your daily routines or habits?

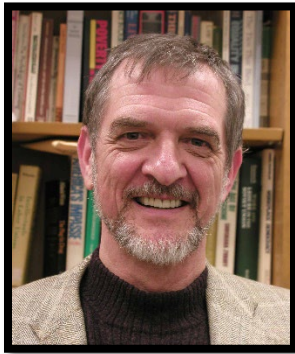
A: Interesting question. So, we're sociologists which basically means that our daily life is inseparable from professional life. Everything is in the interest of sociologists! This is particularly true for me as a family sociologist and demographer interested in issues of gender and sexuality. Say if I enter a coffee shop, I'll become instantly attentive to the age, race, and demographics in the space and any interactions that appear to be gendered. In general, I think my research affords me valuable chances to be more reflexive about my personal life and educate people I could reach. It also poses challenges, though, because there could be a blurred boundary between my work and family. I'm still thinking more about how to maintain a healthy balance between the two.

Q: What guidance would you offer to students or emerging scholars pursuing research in your field?

A: Sure! I am very passionate about mentoring the next generation. If I were to give my two cents, the first suggestion would be to treat academia as a job and maintain a serious attitude toward research. If one works hard and treats the job seriously, one will be rewarded, even if it takes a bit time. My second advice is to reach out for help when feeling stuck. You can talk to your mentor, your faculty, your peers. It's not necessarily that they'll give you the right answer, well oftentimes they will, but my experience is that people just need a chance to talk things through.



Dale Dannefer Elected President of SLLS



Dr. Dale Dannefer was elected incoming President of the Society for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies (SLLS). He will serve as President Elect next year, from 2024 to 2025, and then a two-year term as President until 2027. He currently serves as Section Editor for their journal, *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies*. SLLS is an international society that is home to scholars studying all aspects of the life course, from growing up to growing old using high quality cohort studies from countries around the world. Congratulations, Dale!

Haoming Song Selected for WFRN's Early Career Work and Family Fellowship Program

Dr. Haoming Song was selected for the Work and Family Researchers Network's Early Career Work and Family Fellowship Program, which provides support for recent doctoral recipients to advance their research, teaching, and long-term career prospects. The Work and Family Researchers Network's mission is to facilitate virtual and face-to-face interaction among academic work and family researchers from a broad range of fields as well as engage the next generation of work and family scholars. The WFRN also welcomes the participation of policy makers and workplace practitioners as it seeks to promote knowledge and understanding of work and family issues among the community of global stakeholders.

Susan Hinze, Brian Gran, Anne Bryden and Kim Anderson Continue Research on Spinal Cord Injury

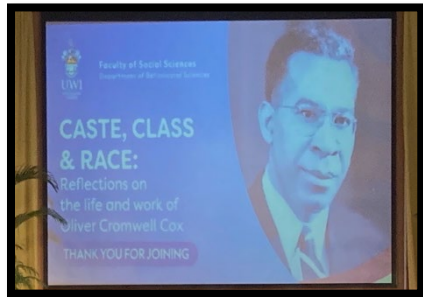


Professors Anderson, Bryden, Gran, and Hinze have their first publication from their Spinal Cord Injury project, titled "Definitions of Recovery and Reintegration Across the First Year: A Qualitative Study of Perspectives of Persons with SCI and Caregivers." You can read it now at *Spinal Cord* 62: 156-163.

In August, the team presented the article "How Race, Gender, and Class Influence Spinal Cord Injury Recovery: An Intersectional Approach Employing fsQCA" at the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA (August 2023). In October,

Professors Hinze, Gran, and Bryden traveled to Edinburgh, Scotland to present a workshop at the International Spinal Cord Society Annual Meeting titled: Recovery and Reintegration Across the First Year of Spinal Cord Injury (SCI): The Lived Experiences of People with SCI and their Caregivers.

Dannefer Attends Conference on Oliver Cromwell Cox



In April, Dale Dannefer attended and participated in *Caste, Class & Race: Reflections on the Life and Work of Oliver Cromwell Cox* held at the University of West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago. The program was co-sponsored by The Program in Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

One of the significant recent developments in sociological theory has concerned the relation between economics (especially capitalism) and race. The attendant questions are of more than abstract academic interest because they bear upon the understandings of race in current discourse in the US and beyond. An example of this is the vigorous debate over Isabel Wilkerson's recent book, *Caste*, which interprets race in the US as a form of caste system. Despite the book's commercial success, many scholars regard this as a dangerously misleading claim because it obscures the decisive role of economic interests in the construction of racial inequality and its perpetuation.

As a result of growing interest in the intersection of race and economics, the pioneering scholarship of 20th century Trinidadian sociologist Oliver Cromwell Cox is gaining broad and renewed attention, including in our own department. His works have been added to our undergraduate and graduate theory courses. We have also hosted colloquium speakers concerned with these issues, including Zophia Edwards (2023), Charisse Burden-Stelly (2022), and Michael Burawoy (2021).

WRAP Hosts Prisoner Rights Advocacy Event



On March 21st, the Western Reserve Abolitionist Project (WRAP) brought two dynamic speakers to campus to discuss the topic, 'Building Freedom on the Road to Abolitionism.' The event occurred in a packed room in the Leutner Commons where **Amani Sawari**, a Detroit Abolitionist, media organizer of the 2018 National Prison Strike, and editor of *Prisonality Magazine*, spoke about her work in bridging the gap between incarcerated people and their legislators to bring needed

resources into prisons

and in divesting in what she refers to as "human warehouses" that do not meet human rights standards. **Fred Ward**, a formerly incarcerated local leader and organizing director of Building Freedom Ohio, then spoke about his current work to organize a statewide campaign, called the Felony Impacted Liberation Movement (FILM), to reduce collateral consequences for reentering citizens. Instead of a second chance, Ward described the circumstances that incarcerated men and women return to



in the state as a form of civil death.

WRAP also made spaces for local community groups it partners with to provide information and engage attendees, including Food Not Bombs, the Jail Coalition, and Building Freedom Ohio. The membership of WRAP has expanded considerably this past year as it continues to educate the campus about the dehumanization of the prison industrial complex and to promote strategies for dismantling it and pursuing alternatives. In the next year, it will continue its work both on campus and through its community collaborations.

New Class on Environmental Justice and Race Organizes a Community Event

With support from a Nord UCITE grant, Professor Pittman Claytor developed a new course titled “Race, Climate Change, & Environmental Justice.” A component of the course was engagement around issues of environmental justice with minority communities who are often left out of the discourse on climate change. The class invited **Crystal M.C. Davis**, newly appointed Regional Director for the National Parks Conservation Association to speak about participatory action and empowerment on environmental issues. The event took place at the Third Space Action Lab on E. 105th street and was open to the surrounding neighborhoods including Glenville, Hough, and East Cleveland.



2024 AKD Initiates and Undergraduate Award Recipients

On April 19, 2024, six students were initiated into the Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD) International Sociology Honor Society and sixteen students were recipients of Undergraduate Awards.

This year's AKD initiates were Jeri' Avery, Kaylee Boney, Mikaela Elliott, Ellin Kim, Amanda Myles, and Sabrina Wicker.

The Schermerhorn Award for a outstanding students in sociology went to Max Brown, Emma Mitchell, Feyi Rufai, and Paola Van der Linden. The Mark Lefton Award for excellence in sociological studies went to John Brewster, Alex Flores, Amanda Myles, Jaela Robinson, and Sabrina Wicker. The Stella Berkeley-Friedman Award to seniors for the highest academic achievement in the study of sociology went to Annabell Faircloth, Isaac Opoku, and Sonali Ray.

The Robert C. Davis Award for demonstrated commitment to sociological studies went to



Aila Saucedo, Dalene Mendoza, Max Wild, and Sierra Williams. On behalf of the Department of Sociology, congratulations on all of your outstanding accomplishments!

Sociology Senior Capstone Presentations

On December 13, 6 sociology majors presented their Senior Capstone Experience (SOCI 392). Each of these independent projects reflected the student's emerging intellectual interests and strengths. The topics presented address a diversity of sociological issues using various methods, such as quantitative analyses in the areas of aging and school discipline, an ethnographic narrative of the Torah, a questionnaire with children of undocumented migrants, and surveys on knowledge of HIV across racial and ethnic groups and reasons for gun ownership among men.

2023 Senior Capstone Project Presentations

"Aging in the United States: Assessing Quality of Life in Long-Term Care Facilities"

Max Brown

"Uncovering the Script of Silence: The Mental Health Crisis in Mixed-Status Families"

Dalene Kasey Mendoza

"Reconstructing Gender Through the Torah: The Symbolic Interactions of Jewish Feminism"

Victor Cicero Moyer

"HIV Knowledge and Awareness Across Ethnic and Racial Minorities"

Emely Lizbeth Tacuri

"The Gun's Purpose: Hegemonic Masculinity or White Frailty?"

Rose Kelly

"Expelled From Learning: Disciplined By Race in Greater Cleveland Schools"

Ailady Saucedo

Congratulations to our Graduate Award Winners!



Each spring, faculty and staff from each department nominate students for awards offered through the School of Graduate Studies. Abolade Oladimeji was awarded the Graduate Dean's Instructional Excellence Award, recognizing outstanding achievement in undergraduate instruction and recognizing their exceptional skill and dedication. Polina Ermoshkina was awarded the Graduate Student Appreciation award from The School of Nursing for her contributions. Kate Freeman was

also awarded a Graduate Student Appreciation award from the Department of Sociology.

Zachary Milko was awarded the Lenore A. Kola Award recognizing exemplary leadership in graduate student organizations on campus. Zachary has served on Sociology Graduate Student Association (SGSA) and College of Arts and Sciences Graduate Student Council. Reema Sen was awarded the received the Richard Zdanis Research Scholarship Award, for scholarly promise. The award includes a research stipend for her dissertation. Finally, congratulations to Poshan Dahal, who was awarded a competitive position as a Teaching Assistant in the University of Michigan ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods.

President of SGSA Discusses 2023-2024 Highlights

Dear Department of Sociology,

My name is Kate Freeman and I am proud to have been the President of SGSA for the past year. Over the 2023-2024 school year, the Sociology Graduate Student Association has held several successful social and academic events/initiatives. These would not have been possible without the support of our officers Yuanchang Zhao, Zach Milko, and Kaylee Boney as well as the students in all cohorts who engaged with us! Our most notable programming includes:

Graduate Peer Mentorship Program: For the second year in a row, the SGSA facilitated a Peer Mentorship Program to enable connections between first/second-year PhD students and more advanced students, continuing throughout the program. This year, we also allowed undergraduate students to take part. This served as a relatively informal way to connect with other students and create community within the department!

Office and Bulletin Board Redesign: SGSA received funds to upgrade our graduate student office spaces in Mather Memorial and the old Hillel building. We hope that the décor, rugs, posters, and electronic device chargers make these cozier and more fun places to work! Also, check out graduate student bulletin board located in Mather Memorial featuring our students and inspirational messages.



Social Activities: Throughout the year, we planned a series of social activities. These included a Fall Celebration, with a delightful evening with fall-themed snacks, games, and a giveaway. The best part of the celebration was the pumpkin carving, especially for those students who had never carved before! We also had a Valentine's Day Party, and End of Semester Game Night.

End of Semester Study Session and Book Exchange: We served coffee and snacks for this group study session right before fall finals! Students were invited to bring a used book for a white elephant exchange.

Building Knowledge Series: These sessions allowed our students to deepen their knowledge of sociological knowledge that we might not have had time to dig into on our own. We offered two events this year: Data with a Purpose (centered on sociology for social justice) and

Non-Western Sociology.

Writing Momentum Mondays: SGSA reserved the first Monday of the month for writing in community with each other. We have convened three times in total, usually providing snacks or lunch. This wonderful event has helped make students feel less isolated as they work through their individual projects. We are also so grateful to the faculty members that have stopped by to check in on our students!

Peer-Reviewed Journal Publishing Workshops:

We hosted Dr. Barber, co-editor of the *Men & Masculinities*, for an insightful virtual workshop focused on the tips and tricks of publishing in peer-reviewed journals. Later, Dr. Song gave an incredible presentation about his own publishing experiences. Thank you to these fantastic scholars!

Finally, congratulations to our SGSA officers for next year: Kate Freeman (President), Zach Milko (Vice President), Jeri' Avery (Student Representative), and Kaylee Boney (Treasurer)! We look forward to continuing our knowledge-building sessions, writing retreat days, social events, opportunities for professional development, and again generally good vibes in the 2024-2025 school year!



2023-2024 Student & Faculty Conference Presentations

American Sociological Association

- Black, Timothy. "From Policy to Politics: Centering Marginal Fatherhood," American Sociological Association Special Session, Philadelphia, PA
- Czarnecki, Danielle. "Contested Conception: Comparing Evangelical and Catholic Women's Experiences with ARTs." Paper session, Reproduction section.

Eastern Sociological Society

- Cassi Pittman Claytor: "Culture Change for Climate Change: Attitudes, Perceptions, and Experiences with Climate Change among University Members and Neighbors."

Gerontological Society of America

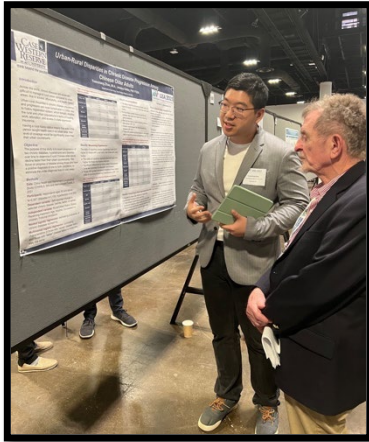
- Polina Ermoshkina: "'I Will Not Live Long Enough to Collect My Pension' – Attitudes Towards Pension Reform in Provincial Russia."
- Yuanchang Zhao and Jessica Kelley. "Urban-Rural Disparities in Chronic Disease Progression among Chinese Older Adults."



North Central Sociological Association (NCSA)



- Jeri' Avery: "Unveiling the Shadows: Redlining, Environmental Injustice, and Health Disparities in Cleveland's Neighborhoods."
- Mary Erdmans and Kaylee Boney: "Defining a Situation as Unjust: Cognitive Liberation in 20th Century Poland."
- Kate Freeman: "Never Give In, Never Back Down: Men's Experiences with Feminized Illness on TikTok" and "Defining Masculinity Behind Bars: Perspectives of Incarcerated Men in Cleveland."
- Zachary Milko: "The Stain of Gender Essentialism in Reproductive Healthcare." and "Fluidity Unleashed: Examining New Frontiers of Gender Expression on TikTok."



Population Association of America (PAA)

- Haoming Song: "Revisiting the Mental Health Disadvantage of Sexual Minorities in Family and State Contexts." and "Unequal Housework Time at the Intersection of Gender and Class, 2019-2021."
- John Whesu: "Fertility Intentions and Contraception Use among Sexually Active Women in Nigeria."
- Nan Zhou: "Changes in Dental Care Utilization and Barriers among Mexican Americans: Evidence from NHANES III and 2011-2020."

Celebrating Successful Dissertation Defenses!

The Department of Sociology saw six separate dissertation defenses successfully defended in the 2023-2024 academic year.

- "Burned in Cuyahoga County: Fundamental Cause and the Geography of Vulnerability" – Colette Ngana
- "Displaced and Situated in Place: A Critical Study of Relational Space in a Gentrifying Neighborhood" – Lacey Caporale
- "Policy-Driven Life: Education, Work, and Health in The Context of Institutional Change" – Chengming Han



- "Living in the Dark: Social Barriers to Vision" – Dawn Aliberti
- "'Besides Me, My Mother Has No One': Caregiving Experiences and Expectations of Only Daughters of Single Mothers in Ufa, Russia During the COVID-19 Pandemic" – Polina Ermoshkina
- "Instrumentation of Queer Graduate Students of Color Persistence: An Exploratory Analysis" – E Phelps



Department Publications and Faculty Updates

Publications

Timothy Black and Lacey Caporale. "Doomed from the Let-Go: Post-Incarceration Strategies for Managing Monetary Debt." *Sociological Forum* 38(3): 730-751.

Bryden, A, French, J. & Gran, B. 2023. Disability and Human Rights: The Right to Benefit from Scientific Progress. Chapter for the book, *Edgar Handbook on Disability Policy*.

Chen, L. Mao, X., Kahana, E. Zhao, W. 2024. "Self-Reliance First, Children's Caregiving Second: Older Adults' Experience and Conceptualization of Aging-in-Place in Rural China." *Ageing and Society*. 1-21.

Dahal, Poshan & Eva Kahana (2024) Following Physician's Advice in Late Life: The Roles of Health Beliefs and Health Status, *Patient Preference and Adherence*, 217-226.

Czarnecki, Danielle. Forthcoming. Book Review. "Conceiving Christian America: Embryo Adoption and Reproductive Politics," by Risa Cromer. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*.

Czarnecki, Danielle et al. 2023. Policy Brief. "State of Confusion: Ohio's restrictive abortion landscape and the production of uncertainty in reproductive healthcare." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*.

Erdmans, Mary Patrice. 2023. "Jewish Threads in a Polish Life Story." *Polish American Studies*. 80 (2): 36-59.

Gran, Brian. 2023. "The International Framework of Children's Rights Fosters Discrimination against Young People." *Harvard Human Rights Journal*. Volume 36, Issue 2: 315-325.

Gran, Brian & Ngana, Colette. 2023. Researching Children's Rights in Pursuit of Social Change. Invited chapter for the book, *Research Handbook on Intersectionality*. Elgar Publishing.

Kahana, Eva. 2023. "Innovative Uses of Technology to Benefit Older Adults." Introduction to special issue of *Journal of Elder Policy* 2(3): 1-18.

Kelley, Jessica & Roland J. Thorpe. 2023. "Increasing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Quantitative and Secondary Studies of Age and the Life Course." *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences* 78(10): 1702-1706.

Kelley, Jessica A., Zoya Gubernskaya, & Joseph Saenz. 2024. "Lives in Motion: New Frontiers in Research on Immigration and Aging." *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*.

Kelley, Jessica, Dale Dannefer and Abolade Oladimeji. (2023). "Cumulative Dis/Advantage Processes, Nutrition Transition, and Global Metabolic Disparities: Interrogating the Cohort-Policy Linkage." Chapter 3 in Rasmus Hoffman (Ed.), *Handbook of Health Inequalities Across the Life Course*. Edward Elgar Publishers.

Settersten, Richard, Dale Dannefer, Glen Elder, Jr., Jeylan Mortimer, and Jessica Kelley. 2023. "Studying Social Change in Human Lives: A Conversation." *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies*. December.

Slone, Michael, Timothy Black, and Alicia Smith-Tran. "On the Job, Off the Books: Organizing Against Worker Misclassification in the Neoliberal Era" *Critical Sociology* 49(1): 39-57.

Other Professional Activities and Honors

Black, Timothy. "Ethnographic Café Special Panel: Emotions in Fieldwork" Invited panel, University of California-Berkeley

Black, Timothy. "Author-Reader Panel on *Prisons of Debt*" Invited Panelist, Law and Society Association, Puerto Rico

Erdmans, Mary. Guest Speaker at the "Day of Dialogue" regarding the Polish exhibit at the Chicago History Museum. March 2023.

Gran, Brian. Global Citizen Award, Case Western Reserve University. 2023.

Hinze, Susan. Invited talk: "A Sociological Frame: Is Academic Medical Culture Healthy?" for the Dean's Significant Conversations Series on April 10 at the CWRU Medical School Biomedical Research Building.

Kahana, Eva. Serves on the Executive Committee for CWRU University Distinguished Professors.

Kahana, Eva. Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of Elder Policy*. Now published by Wiley.

Kelley, Jessica. "Population Aging and Social Change in Low- and Middle-Income Countries." Invited Distinguished Scholar Visit, Chinese University of Hong Kong. November 13 – 16, 2023.

Kelley, Jessica. Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*. Oxford University Press.

Pittman Claytor, Cassi. 2024. Nord Grant, UCITE, Case Western Reserve University, "Building Awareness and Inspiring Action: Race, Climate Change and Environmental Justice." Principal Investigator.

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.