

Field Notes

A newsletter of the Sociology and Anthropology Department, Middlebury College
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Editor: Michael Sheridan



SOAN grads at Commencement 2010, left to right: Alex Revelas, Heidi Schmidt, Todd Swisher, Elissa Bullion, Laurel Gray, Liz Sutcliffe, Liz Boles, Stone Conroy, Rachel Zakrasek

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Letter from the Chair

Some things never change, and these include our departmental digs in Munroe Hall. A few years ago the building was scheduled for renovation, until the college's fiscal crisis gave us a reprieve. So we have never had to shovel out our offices, figure out what do with decades of accumulation, and exile ourselves to a new location. If you're weary of all the newness afflicting American society, or if you'd just like to step into the past, come visit us on the second floor of Munroe Hall. Everything looks 1940s except for the metal office furnishings and

the computer equipment, which is distressingly up-to-date.

Also very 21st Century, this year we inaugurated our **new and improved senior program**. We decided to junk the designation of two-semester projects as senior theses and of one-semester projects as senior essays, along with the rule that only thesis writers can earn honors. In search of glory, some of our majors embarked on theses which they did not have time to complete. Instead of their "capstone experience," some sank like stones. From now on, students who earn an A- or A for their single-semester projects will also qualify for Honors. Moreover, students who wish to invest their entire senior year in a project will be able to do so over two regular semesters plus Winter Term, not just one regular semester plus Winter Term as before.

Other recent improvements include:

- A **new linguistics minor** long requested by our students. The majority of the staffing comes from the language departments but Mike Sheridan will contribute his Language and Power course every other year. We continue to ask the college for a linguistic anthropologist.
- A **new departmental website** thanks to Charlene Barrett and Mike Sheridan. If anyone asks you what's the use of a SOAN degree, check out our graduates' testimonials on just how useful sociology and anthropology are in any profession that requires contact with human beings. If you have something you would like to add in this regard, don't hesitate to let us know.
- A **new archaeology laboratory** in the basement of Munroe Hall complete with pots, skulls, and bones and presided over by our pots, skulls and bones guy, James Fitzsimmons.

David Stoll, SOAN Chair

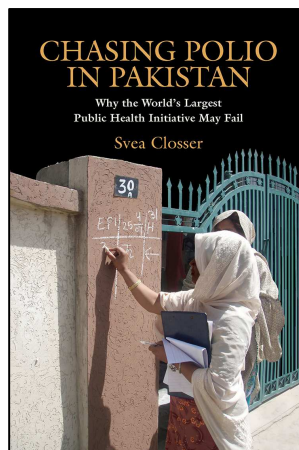
Faculty and Staff Updates

Charlene Barrett

It's amazing how this academic year flew by! We had the launch of our new website at beginning of the Spring semester, which is still a work in progress. The month of May was an extremely busy month for me. Not only did I have all the regular work and activities in the department, but one of my daughters got married on (take a guess? of course) Commencement weekend!

Svea Closser

This has been an exciting year for SOAN and global health at Middlebury. A new minor in global health, featuring many SOAN classes, has been approved by the college. Also, this fall's Clifford Symposium will be on global health, and will feature a number of anthropologists.



My book, *Chasing Polio in Pakistan: Why the World's Largest Public Health Initiative May Fail* (Vanderbilt University Press), is finally in print. I'm now working with some collaborators at Brown University on starting a major research project on community health worker pay. Also, in the past year I have started to rock climb, and I

love it although I'm still fairly awful. This summer I'll be spending time in Montreal and Evanston, Illinois to talk to Rotarians (Rotary is one of the country's major global health donors, and the driving force behind polio eradication; I'm interested in what motivates their giving). And then, I'll be spending two weeks in the Denali backcountry in Alaska, talking to no one at all.

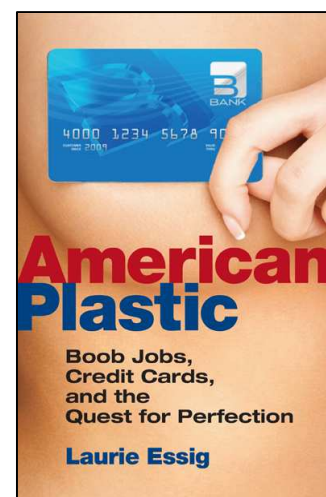
Laurie Essig

I spent my sabbatical year finishing my second book, *American Plastic: Boob Jobs, Credit Cards and Our Quest for Perfection*

(coming out in December

2010). The book is a critique of neoliberal economic policies through plastic money and plastic surgery. In other words, I argue that

boob jobs are the subprime mortgage crisis of the body. More about the book can be found at my website, <http://laurieessig.typepad.com/blog/>. I also continued blogging at True Slant, a fun gig that lets me apply a "sociological imagination" to the



news. Starting this September, I'll be leaving True/Slant to blog at Forbes. In addition to writing, I got to spend a couple of months as a visiting scholar at University College London. I also got started on my next book project, *Love, Inc.*, an examination of the relationship between consumer capitalism and romance. On a personal note, my daughters and I spent the sabbatical year studying French and living outside the country in Montreal and London and traveling quite a bit, from Volterra, Italy to Paris to Forks, WA.



James Fitzsimmons

I kicked off this year by co-chairing a conference on Maya political organization at Dumbarton Oaks, in Washington, D.C. Basically the idea was to talk about how the ancient Maya viewed their political world. In other words, did the Maya actually conceive of borders between their various kingdoms? What did those borders look like, and did people on the periphery really identify with one kingdom over another? After much fighting, the archaeologists at the conference finally came together and we are now working on an edited volume tentatively titled *Maya Politics of the Southern Lowlands: Integration, Interaction and Dissolution*. The lab in Munroe 111 is coming along nicely. This year we were loaned a ton of materials from Prof. Norman Hammond in the Archaeology Department at Boston University. The collection includes ancient Maya ceramics from the sites of Cuello and Nohmul. Students have been working with



these materials over the course of the year. As a teaching/research/thesis defense space, the lab has worked out really well and I look forward to its continued expansion. I will be going on leave this coming year, so if you can't find me in my office, I am probably working in the lab!

Chong-Suk Han

Moving to Middlebury was nothing like I had expected. Having lived in large (and relatively warm) cities my entire life, I didn't know what to expect. For some reason, my biggest fear was the dreaded Vermont winter. By the time November rolled around, I started having visions of ice planet Hoth and began bracing myself for an imagined winter far worse than I'm sure it could have ever been. I'm happy to report, however, that the dreaded winter never did come and there was a bit of satisfaction in knowing that Philadelphia, where my home is, was engulfed in record-breaking snow (how is that for irony?!). But getting used to a new place was a long process, new students, new expectations, new ways of doing things, etc. Although the town and school are both much smaller than what I am used to, I was delighted to find out that there was so much that both the town and the school offers. More importantly, I found out that I am, at heart, a small town person (who would have guessed?). This summer, I am working on a book proposal and re-working my classes for next year. While I have no major travel plans, I visited my family in San Francisco. Oddly enough as I write this, we are moving into the third day of triple digit temperatures in Philadelphia and I'm eagerly looking forward to the Vermont winter!

Peggy Nelson

I published a new book this year: *Parenting Out of Control: Anxious Parents in Uncertain Times*. I also wrote a paper on the racialization of the term, "fictive kin." I got significant help with both from discussions I had with several members of the Department; in fact, Laurie, Rebecca, and Linus (Lynn) collectively invented the title of the book. It's great to have such a lively group with which to share ideas. I enjoyed teaching my two larger courses, Families in Contemporary Society (Fall) and Sociology of Education (Spring). I also taught two different versions of a course on students in higher education, first to first-year students and then to a group of mostly advanced students. It was fascinating to see the very different responses of these two quite different collections of students. In

my spare time I race to Boston to play with my impossible, but charming, grandchildren.

Ellen Oxfeld

I spent part of June back in the same village where I have been returning for fieldwork since 1993 in Guangdong Province, Meixian, China. My book on moral discourse, based on fieldwork in that village, is being published this October by University of California Press (*Drink Water, But Remember the Source: Moral Discourse in a Chinese Village*). Now that that work is done, I've been continuing some new fieldwork on rural food culture in reform era China. I have been documenting the culture surrounding food in rural China which begins with agriculture, of course, but also embodies ritual, social exchange, and ideas about health and the body. Of course, I also take notes on all kinds of food events, including banquets and ordinary meals, and one of the things I would like to show is how multilayered the food culture of rural China is. While a portion of rural food culture has been commodified, there is still a rich symbolic and social element, and a substantial part of food production and exchange still takes place outside of the market economy, even in the heated up economy of China today. The only problem is that I get extremely hungry when I read my field notes!

Burke Rochford

Burke Rochford continues his writing on the Hare Krishna movement. In the fall, he also taught a new course, "Immigrant Religions in America." Burke is looking forward to his upcoming leave where he will write a chapter for an edited collection, *American Gurus*, on ISKCON's



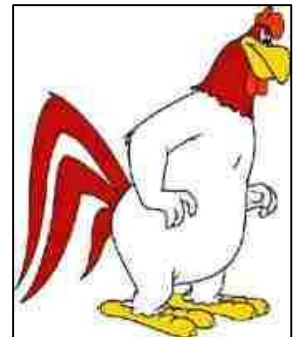
controversial guru Kirtanananda Swami (left), the founder of the New Vrindaban community in West Virginia. He also will be working on two papers dealing with religious authority and the development of the Hare Krishna in America. This

summer he begins a new project on the ongoing controversy surrounding changes made, or proposed, to the

original scriptural commentaries of ISKCON's founding guru.

Michael Sheridan

This was a big year for me. I received tenure in December, which has been my major goal for the past decade. Thanks to everyone who was part of it – and that includes you, alumni. You are the ones that taught me how to be an effective teacher. You pushed me to figure out how to put feelings front and center in teaching anthropology. You made me a risk-taker in class, and now I get you to take risks too. But most importantly, you pulled me toward teaching hope. Environmental anthro is a pretty gloomy subject these days, and I find pessimism all too easy. Midd students, however, demand a measure of hope in even the most depressing analysis. For getting me to find silver linings, I cannot thank you all enough. In other news, my family has joined the ranks of Addison County's many amateur chicken farmers. Anybody want to adopt a rooster?



David Stoll

The next time you run into me, ask me how my book is coming along. Since 2007 I have been interviewing Guatemalans on how their journeys to the U.S. in search of higher wages can have the paradoxical effect of increasing their indebtedness. Courtesy of the college's funding for faculty research, I have visited my perennial Guatemalan research site, the Ixil Maya town of Nebaj, on six occasions. Once again, I have been blessed by the willingness of the Nebajenses to share their thinking, their tribulations, their successes and failures. So where is the book that I've been talking about all this time? I dunno—this is why, if you're willing to do me a favor, you'll give me a poke. I need to have readable, connected chapters by the end of the year or acknowledge that the project is a washout. That would be quite a disservice to the all the Guatemalans who have helped me. For a title, what do you think of "The American Dream comes to the Cuchumatanes?"

Rebecca Tiger

Besides (re)watching *Project Runway* and *Intervention* (for research!), I've been spending a



lot of time teaching, finishing up old projects and beginning new ones. My book, *Force is the Best Medicine: Drug Courts and the Logic of Coerced Treatment*,

is under contract with New York University Press. It is about drug policy and the human cost of policies that insist on sobriety for certain drug users (through jail, coerced treatment or a combination of the two). I argue for a radically different approach that relies on neither the criminalization nor medicalization of habitual substance users. I also have an article coming out in *Sociological Forum* sometime in the near future about my drug court research. I've begun a new project (with the able research assistance of senior Jaimie Park) looking at how ideas about addiction, treatment and coercion filter through celebrity gossip blogs and reality television shows. So, I spend a lot of time on gossip blogs reading about drugs and sex (for research!). I'm also in the really early stages of a project looking at the construction of the "bullying epidemic" – I'm envisioning this as part of a larger project on the social control of young people. I tried snowboarding once, have taken up sewing, am getting better at chess, bowl whenever I can convince someone to go with me, continually search for decent places to play ping pong in Vermont, and still don't have a driver's license.

Senior Project Abstracts

Lizzy Auld

“Reframing men and masculinity in relation to HIV/AIDS in South Africa”

HIV/AIDS infects approximately six million South Africans, and understanding the intersections of gender ideology and epidemiology is critical for explaining these high rates. A strong gender-specific rhetoric is apparent in literature about HIV/AIDS in South Africa, often blaming men for the spread of the disease. I worked with the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation mobile testing clinic in Cape Town, and with an organization that arranges daily labor for unemployed men called Men at the Side of the Road. At both jobs, I interviewed South African men about their perceptions of HIV, and what motivates them from

to test for the virus – or not. I found that social structural factors – such as race-based inequality and oppression from the Apartheid era – rather than individual behavior determine the course of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in South Africa. Due to a strong social stigma blaming men for spreading the disease, they are less likely to seek help or prevention services, and this paired with the general lack of male-specific HIV/AIDS services puts all of South Africa at greater risk of infection.



Elizabeth Boles

“Performing the borderlands”

The border represents a prime site for exploring issues of cultural contact, communication and miscommunication. Drawing primarily upon the work of Mexican-American writers and performers, I reject the notion that borderlands are best “read” as a set of “texts.” Instead I propose a theoretical strategy for embodying the borderlands through dance and performance. The concept of the borderlands-as-text contributes to a dehumanized, desensitized approach to border issues which inhibits cross-cultural understanding. In contrast, the borderlands-as-performance approach offers a more radically humanitarian means of making sense of this intercultural space.

Rowan Braybrook

“From saving the world to saving yourself: Why the college institution encourages millennial generation students to engage in international service work for mutual benefit”

International service work is a high-profile and highly encouraged part of the modern undergraduate experience. But contemporary student motivation narratives for service work are not the traditional “let's save the world” explanations. The current Millennial Generation of

college students tends to engage in all types of service work differently than previous generations, using collaborative action that benefits students as well as the recipients of their service. Millennial students are more open about multiple motivation narratives, to which international service is particularly prone. In this essay I analyze theories about service work in the light of Middlebury-specific data from administrator interviews and students' post-service questionnaires. Using Bourdieu's model of capital transformation, I look at how colleges and students engage in service work to turn economic into social capital, and how their motivations and attitudes toward the work mirror a new generational form of engagement with service.

Elissa Bullion

“What we know of the living, we learned from the dead: A study of correlations between Moche mortuary practices and social continuity and change at San Jose de Moro”

This paper examines the mortuary practices of the pre-Columbian Moche culture at the San Jose de Moro site in Peru. Burials from four excavation areas uncovered over the past three summers are described and analyzed in an attempt to decipher data relating to Moche social functions and organization. I analyze a range of objects and spatial elements from the burials in the context of mortuary theory as well as the sociopolitical organization and functions of the Moche. The Late and Transitional periods were times of social,



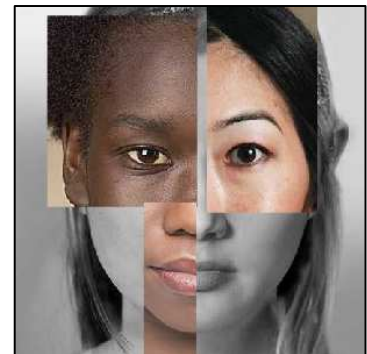
Elissa on a Moche fortress at the summit of Cerro Chepen, Peru

political, and environmental change for the Moche. These shifts would have affected political, social, and religious classes in various ways as each tried to maintain or reassert their roles within Moche society. The identities of the Moche were intimately connected to their status and socio-ideological roles. These identities would have been affected by shifts in the social climate, which in turn would be revealed when those identities were asserted in mortuary contexts. This study will show that changes in Moche society are reflected in mortuary practices during the Late and Transitional periods at San Jose de Moro.

Amy Rebecca Chin

“What are you? A look at the contemporary discourse on multiracial identity development that shapes racial identity”

This paper explores contemporary discourse on multiracial identity development. The multiracial movement has become an increasingly strong social force in American society.



I discuss the evolution of models and theories on multiracial identity development, highlighting changes from the rule of hypodescent to rigid stage-based models for developing a multiracial identity. Finally, I examine theories that allow for multiple identity options, in which the processes for developing one's racial identity are both limitless and unique for each individual. I review the three factors I find most influential in shaping a racial identity; the socially perceived appearance of a mixed-race individual, the acceptance and rejection of a mixed-race individual's community, and a mixed-race individual's cultural exposure to his/her ethnic heritage. Finally, I explore the American civil rights movement that sparked the development of the new multiracial consciousness in recent decades. These changes reject the rigid federal classifications of race, and have validated mixed-race individuals' self-declared racial identities. I intend this paper to be a resource for multiracial individuals to understand the endless possibilities for how they can choose a racial identity.

Kenzie Chin

“Chinese youth culture’s covert resistance of hegemonic structures through language”

Classic anthropological theory from the early 20th century typically presented Chinese culture as backwards and unchanging. I use the example of



Chinese slang in new media to demonstrate that both Chinese culture and language are indeed changing with the help of a thriving Chinese youth culture. I examine particular slang words to argue that their use is propelled not only by pragmatic ease of use, but by another motivation: the creation and assertion of a new youth culture. I use three of Michael Brake’s characteristics of subcultures to show that Chinese youth culture does exist and is evidenced in the use of slang words. Furthermore, I argue that youth use the arena of new media in order to subvert existing power structures in China.

Stone Conroy

“The green sacrament: Christianity as a vehicle for ecological reformation in the United States”

This paper examines the ways in which Christian groups in America offer spiritual approaches to combating ecological crisis. Although historically viewed as oppositional to ecological concerns, a re-examination of Christian worldviews indicates ecologically sound traditions and values. Various traditions in the religion are now undergoing an ecological transformation, shifting toward a more



eco-centric position as Christian thinkers collaborate with scientists and other religious groups. A closer look at individual Christian activist groups locally

and nationally indicates that the structure, communication, organization, tradition, ritual, and value system frameworks provided by Christianity make it an ideal institution through which to pursue a resilient revitalization movement toward sustainability. Because of its ability to instill deep-seated ethics and utilize ritual and symbolism to increase the efficacy of the ecological message, a spiritual approach to developing new behaviors and practices that are sustainable is poised to be more effective than any other. Due to its unique attributes and its salient position and large following in the United States, Christianity may be the best option for an ecological revitalization.

Anjali Demers

“The Joint Sociology/Psychology major: A comparative analysis of the sociological and psychological approaches to childhood”

This essay compares sociological and psychological theory in an attempt to evaluate the intellectual foundations of the joint sociology/psychology major at Middlebury College. The joint major was evaluated in terms of its effectiveness of using both disciplines to provide a comprehensive perspective on human behavior. In order to ground this work, I focused on each the theoretical frameworks surrounding childhood, using primary works of literature that explicitly target the sociological and psychological understandings on childhood. I argue that strong underlying assumptions of each discipline pervade the theoretical frameworks of both academic fields and as a result, the disciplines cannot be considered truly complementary. The essay addresses the discrepancy in sociological and psychological perspectives on the definition of childhood through case studies of gender identity and social problems.

Laurel Gray

“Being Jewish in college: Identity, community, and change”

College is a time of great change when Jewish students are faced with the challenge of presenting their identities to a new community. Often, that experience, combined with a different population against which individuals



understand themselves, results in students engaging in identity work. This is significant for Jewish identity and the Jewish community. Unlike the general perception that young adults lose their religious identity during college, Jews, a minority group whose identity is partially ethnic and cultural, are at a very low risk of that happening. College is a highly transformative moment in the life course of individuals and their religious identity. While individuals do not stop “being Jewish” in college, their decision to participate in the community and activate that Jewish identity can be more complicated. This decision seems to be determined by their attachment to the Jewish community, and their perceived sense of legitimacy and competency as Jews. Both are dependent on students’ experiences before college and may result in a process of retraining oneself and reasserting one’s Jewish identity as a means of becoming engaged in the Jewish community at college. Individuals’ projections about the future offer further insight into their attachment to their Jewish identity and help frame college as a moment at the beginning of adulthood.

Edwin Mitchell

“Selling health and body image ideals: Students’ warped perception of body image and health through advertising”

The health and fitness industries make billions of dollars a year in revenues. Almost all of this revenue must be attributed to successful advertising. Models in advertisements on both television and in magazines are idealized bodies. These idealized bodies in all their “beauty” pressure people to strive to attain these ideals. Unfortunately the ideal being sold is largely unattainable. I examined the effects that these body image ideals have on the exercise motivations of Middlebury College students. A questionnaire and focus group interviews answered the following questions. What are the reasons for the recent increase in health and fitness interests in America? What are student’s motivations for



working out? Do students idealize the bodies that are advertised as “fit” bodies? Do students feel that these advertised bodies are attainable by them? Do the advertised bodies change

students’ feelings about their own body image? What do students consider as “ideal” bodies? Do advertisements affect students’ eating habits? I used Higgins’ self-discrepancy theory and Ryan and Deci’s self-determination theory to analyze my findings.

Alex Revelas

“On the precipice: An analysis of the Brazilian Immigrant Center in Boston, MA”

In this essay, I explore the changing institutional form of the Brazilian Immigrant Center, a worker center in Boston, Massachusetts, from 1995 through 2009. I emphasize the relationship among the three main elements of the Center – its charismatic leadership, its working class membership, and the history and structure of the organization. I trace how these dynamics have molded the current incarnation of the BIC. Essentially, this allows us to ask “What has changed within and in relation to this worker center? How can it continue to improve?”



Celia Rothschild

“Livers: The nonsick role in the social construction of illness”

Illness is a lived experience, universal in that it touches everyone, and unique because no one experiences the same illness. From a sociological perspective, "disease" is a biomedical phenomenon, while illness is the repercussions of the disease. In this essay, I explore the distinction between illness and disease through theories of labeling, stigma, and the sick role. Medicalizing illness binds experience into a clinical framework. Consequently, the experience of the individual who is not sick is unspeakable and often confusing. I explore the ways in which a family navigates chronic illness through the perspective of a “nonsick” relative.

Heidi Schmidt

“I have to be mindful’: Public and private transcripts in the discourse of gifted education”

This paper examines the discourse of gifted education in elementary schools within the “Central County” School District in Vermont. Interviews were conducted with a district-level administrator, two school-level administrators, and an Enrichment Program teacher. Contradictions were found between the opinions of the district-level

administrator and those of the other subjects as to the best way to educate gifted students. The administrator preferred to use only differentiated instruction (separate tracks), while the other three subjects did not support the exclusive use of this method. One school-level administrator, a principal, generally supported differentiated instruction, but maintained that pull-out programs are sometimes necessary. The other school-level administrator, an assistant principal at a different elementary school, believed that pull-out programs were the best method and that differentiated instruction should be used sparingly. The Enrichment Program teacher supported the use of pull-out programs as well. This paper uses James Scott's theory of public and hidden transcripts to analyze the ease with which each subject presented his or her views. This analysis concluded that subjects whose views were similar to those of the public transcript (as determined by their immediate superiors) were at ease, while subjects who held dissenting views were uneasy. The paper also concludes that pull-out programs persist in the face of district opposition because of the dissenting views of the school-level administrators, who publicly support the district's position but resist the district's educational techniques within their schools.

Tenzing Sherpa

“Tibetan exodus: Adaptation and alteration of a tradition in New York City”

Ever since the Chinese occupation, Tibetans have been a migratory population who have strategically asserted their cultural continuity in new lands and social contexts. New York City has a large population of Tibetan refugees. Tibetans in New York have adapted fairly well culturally because of the large presence of South Asians. While Tibetans haven't forgotten their culture and traditions, they have managed to adapt new western traditions in their own manner to accustom themselves with the American society. My project analyzes how Tibetans came to adopt a particularly American tradition, birthday parties for one-year-olds. This is completely new for Tibetans, so how did it become a tradition? More



importantly, how has it become a Tibetan tradition even though its form is largely American?

What does it mean that Tibetans have reinvented and reinterpreted an American coming of age ritual?

David Small

“They were burst asunder: Private piracy on the internet”

This project explores the ways in which piracy, the illegal sharing of copyright materials, manifests itself within private communities on the Internet. These communities use BitTorrent technology to transfer digital information en masse and at incredible speeds. The community known as Gazelle is the focus of this project. To maintain security one can only join Gazelle with the invitation from a current user and once a member



the user must maintain a strict ratio of uploaded to downloaded material in order to not lose the account. The user has access to hundreds of thousands of digital files ranging from music to software and books, as well as forums,

discussions, and a greater torrent community. However, in order to fully reap the benefits of the site, a user must abide by strict rules and regulations and have a substantial amount of what I refer to as user capital. I argue the structure and rules of the site create a disciplined user who is able to morally assuage the purported negative effects of piracy. Despite the communal claims of free information and an online utopia, tensions exist within the community that shed light on the difficulties of maintaining a social movement committed to rebellion, anonymity, and freedom of information.

Todd Swisher

“A ‘creative sport’ for ‘imaginative athletes’: The contested meanings of collegiate Quidditch”

This project represents the first (and quite possibly last) thorough academic treatment of collegiate Quidditch, a game originally adapted at Middlebury College in 2005 from the Harry Potter series of books and now played on over 200 American campuses. In a case study of sorts based on player interviews, an online survey, and media coverage, the game's ascent from marginal origins to national prominence is tracked. Collegiate Quidditch has a number of features that distinguish it from established sports, including its origins in a fantasy

world and its emphases on creativity, child-like fun, and gender-inclusiveness. Objections from more



traditional athletes, derived from the analysis of two anti-Quidditch web forums open to the public, reveal that what qualifies as a sport typically depends on gendered, exclusionary assumptions. Inspired by symbolic interactionist studies of deviance (i.e. labeling theory), my research shows how Quidditch players have sought to counter a stigmatized definition of their game as nerdy and unathletic. Acting collectively as a kind of social movement challenging the dominant cultural norms of hypermasculine athletics, Quidditch's key actors have skillfully leveraged normalizing frames in mass media and have pursued forms of organization that have enabled the game both to expand and to gain legitimacy. However, the progressive institutionalization of the game, in tandem with the increased physicality and competitiveness that have come to characterize game play have altered the Quidditch community's collective identity. Basically the game has become more like other institutionalized sports, potentially compromising its distinctive identity, especially the blend of play, theatre, and athletics that captured the imaginations of early players. In sum, the case of Quidditch offers insight into the nature of organized sport and the framing efforts of challenger groups.

June Trinos

“A new wave of discontent: Why sexual harassment cases continue to rise in Egyptian urban centers”

Reports of sexual harassment have plagued the Egyptian city streets for centuries. Women could find solace and protection by simply dressing more conservatively or wearing the veil. Recent studies, however, have shown that the incidence of sexual harassment in Egyptian urban centers is on the rise, having increased exponentially in just the past few years. What makes today's sexual harassment so different from the past? My project looks into how the economic factors, globalization, a new ideology, and social pressures stemming from deeply embedded patriarchal societal structures have all contributed to this increase. More Egyptian women are becoming more vocal about their negative experiences in the streets and have aided NGOs in

their work to criminalize sexual harassment. A new sort of feminist discourse is emerging in response to these changes, and is giving Egyptian women more power to change how their society views gender equality.

Chelsea Utterback

“Queens of the wild frontier: The evolving role of women in Chinese rock music”

By interviewing six women from eight different Chinese rock bands, I argue that, although during Chinese rock music's inception in the late 1980s women were discriminated against, contemporary China instead promotes gender equality and the pursuit of one's desires while renegotiating what the genre dubs as authentic. This shift can be attributed to China's growing market economy and it is because of the normalizing of this development that female rockers are able to challenge previous ideals held in the genre. In this essay, I propose that the talent capital of today's rock generation has the same dynamic as that of the gender binary of the past, but by advocating the acquisition of



any form of capital, however, both male and female rockers now have an uneasy relationship with the economy: they want to oppose the selfish attitudes of capitalism but are abiding by the basic principle of it by honoring talent as capital. Furthermore, when viewing capitalism from a communist stance, a system that destroys tradition and social norms, it can be said that the basic authenticating principle of rock music, rebellion, shares very similar qualities with it. Rebellion's aim in rock is to be contrary to society, but if society does the same, Chinese rockers could be said to be rebelling against rebellion itself. Female rockers negotiate this tension by replacing rebellion with conflict that does not oppose, but furthers a more harmonious promotion of the market. Because of these changes,

Chinese rock music has evolved into what it is today.

Rachel Zakrasek

“Vulnerability and adaptation in Vermont: Agriculture, society and ecology in the face of climate change”

The vulnerability of Vermont farms to climate change affects food systems and the many livelihoods dependent on agriculture in the state. By redefining Vermont farms and networks of farms as social-ecological systems, this project explores and assesses this vulnerability using concepts such as physical exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity. I organize the factors that affect adaptive capacity based on their contribution to two types of adaptability: strategic and reactive. These factors include awareness of risk and cultural constraints (which affect strategic adaptability),

practice/know-how and involvement in networks (which affect reactive adaptability), and economic stability (which affects both). Designing policies and action plans for reducing the vulnerability of Vermont’s social-ecological systems requires a three-step approach. First, activists, policymakers, scientists and farmers should identify likely scenarios of climate change impact for different parts of the Vermont agricultural system. Second, this social network should consider practical ways to build adaptive capacity as well as tactical ways to facilitate and motivate participation and action. Tactics include the use of systems of meaning to frame practical actions. Third, they must design and match holistic support plans to the scenarios. Two models of holistic support plans are support for local food initiatives and grassroots-level farmers’ network development.



Faculty and students at the SOAN Senior Reception, May 2010.

Left to right: Michael Sheridan, Rachel Zakrasek, Alex Revelas, David Stoll, Liz Sutcliffe, Heidi Schmidt, Chong-suk Han, Elissa Bullion, Linus Owens, Todd Swisher, Keith Grogg, Laurel Gray, Rebecca Tiger, Kenzie Chin. Hidden behind Keith: Svea Closser.

Senior Prizewinners

The SOAN Department gives out two prizes each year. Todd Swisher was the winner of the **Blum & Company, Inc. Award**, which was established in 1984 by Albert L. Blum '72. It is awarded to a graduating SOAN senior for high academic achievement or leadership in student and community activities. Elissa Bullion won the **Lank Prize in Sociology and Anthropology**, which was established in 1984 by Dr. Alden G. Lank '55, Professor Emeritus of Organizational Behavior, and Stephan Schmidheiny, Professor Emeritus of Family Enterprises of the International Management Development Institute in Lausanne, Switzerland. It is awarded to a graduating SOAN

senior for academic excellence and, where appropriate, contributions to international understanding.

**How to Win at (Studying) Sports
By Todd Swisher '10**

Hello to the SOAN community! I've been asked to write a little something on how to go about studying sport. It's an interesting request given that the object of my senior research, collegiate Quidditch, is only ambiguously a sport. Nevertheless, in analyzing how Quidditch simultaneously inhabits and deviates from the domain of athletics I did learn



quite a bit about this singular form of social interaction. Academics have long treated organized sport as a ritualized expression of the norms and values of human communities. Therefore to study a particular sport, or more likely, a group of players of said sport, is to gain access to insight into broader patterns. All games are regulated by rules, some explicit, others implicit. In order to understand a sport it behooves us to familiarize ourselves with the first category (i.e. read the rulebook), but more interesting for our purposes are those unspoken guides to conduct that make up the bulk of a sport's culture. Another way to put this is that the meaning of a sport far exceeds its representation on paper, hence the need to put that basic framework into context.

Despite what I've said above there is a danger in treating sport as a simple manifestation of wider social values. Radical and feminist theorists have pegged sport as a means of socialization into a militarist, sexist, and profoundly violent culture. While these criticisms hold water and certainly illuminate our understanding of sport, they all too easily turn into facile political tracts. Historically the modern variety of sport has indeed been a conservative, even reactionary, institution in a lot of respects, conceived in part as a means of disciplining an unruly labor force and of preserving male privilege as it began to wane. Yet sport has



other dimensions, including the kinetic, aesthetic, and relational, that ought not to be

reduced to a functional reading. Sport has a multiplicity of meanings in tension with one another. This is very important to keep in mind when approaching members of an athletic community. They aren't likely to respond well to the implication that they are dupes in a political agenda or the embodiment of dubious values. Better to let them label their own experiences and to learn from their perceptions. Bringing a prejudicial attitude to the study of sport will result in your missing key nuances and arriving at unsatisfying conclusions.

Above all a sporting community is just that, a community. Consequently we must approach it as we would any other community, intensely conscious that we are outsiders intruding on a space constructed by individuals deserving of our respect.



Moreover, the type of bonding that occurs within teams can be very strong, meaning that the boundaries around them may be enforced. Identifying and endearing one's self to leaders of an athletic community is a great way of gaining entry. As with any group there will be a disjuncture between the representation given to outsiders, the public frame, and the private thoughts and feelings of players. Penetrating layers of ideology becomes possible when one flatters players with curiosity, establishes trust, and pays careful attention to what's being said. I seem to be veering off into a "SOAN 101" sort of lesson, but perhaps that's only natural. Sport has unique features with respect to social life broadly and yet all the usual methodological rules apply. I hope future students see fit to explore the topic. Although sport is ubiquitous in the era of 24 hour cable news and ESPN, I wonder how well we understand its place in our society.

Studying archaeology at Middlebury

By Elissa Bullion '10

Editor's note: Elissa's senior thesis was, to our knowledge, the first archaeological senior thesis that the SOAN Department has produced.

On a dark night in June 2008 I found myself getting out of a cab in Lima, Peru, tired, excited, and a little bit nervous. I knew almost no Spanish and had no idea what to expect from the other field school students or the project in general. The only thing I was sure of at that point was that I was there to do archaeology. That thought was enough to send me across the globe into what was a completely new situation, which I honestly wasn't sure I was prepared for. Over the course of the next month I was sick, dirty, exhausted 90% of the time. But the project was still the most amazing experience I have ever had. My passion for archaeology and the encouragement of my professors led me to take advantage of this opportunity, which set me on a path which continues to take me amazing places. Archaeology is a fascinating, diverse discipline, and one I believe is well worth exploring for more students at Middlebury.

My experience with archaeology at Middlebury began with my freshman seminar, which focused on the artifacts from Ur which were at that time on display in the Middlebury art museum. This class sparked my interest in archaeology, but I didn't consider making it my focus until taking a class on human origins with Prof. Fitzsimmons. I asked him to be my advisor, and before I really realized what was happening, he had convinced me to explore my interest and sign up for a field school in Peru. Together we worked on cataloging projectile points,



surveying the shores of Lake Champlain, and creating a senior thesis around my work in Peru. I wrote a year-long senior project on the mortuary practices of the Moche of Peru, examining whether social and political events affected what was found in the funerary remains. It was the first senior thesis based on archaeological field work at Middlebury, but my professors supported me all the way through, making it a successful, albeit intensive, endeavor. Now that I have finished my career at Middlebury, I am beginning to apply to graduate programs for archaeology. Again, I have had tremendous support from everyone at Middlebury. Through everything, Middlebury helped me find ways to get the resources, knowledge, and support I needed, despite my unconventional path.



Elissa excavating a Transitional Moche burial at San Jose de Moro, Peru. Left, Elissa writes up field notes and sketches a Moche tomb.

I would encourage any student with an interest in archaeology, no matter what level, to pursue their curiosity while at Middlebury. There are few classes at Middlebury that focus exclusively on archaeology, but an incredible amount can be learned from these classes. By taking these classes, students learn about culture, history, and material culture, giving them the opportunity to examine societies through a new lens. More importantly, perhaps, I have found professors in a range of departments embrace and encourage projects relating to archaeology. Archaeology can be approached from so many different disciplines and perspectives that it is actually quite easy to find ways of making it applicable in almost any context. I did my final project in my Biology of Plants class about the archaeology of plant domestication in Papua New Guinea and my professor loved it. Students should also not hesitate to work on

independent studies involving archaeology. These projects are another opportunity to research cultures and materials for which Middlebury otherwise may not have related resources. Beyond the resources at Middlebury, students who want to pursue archaeology should take advantage of the many field school programs abroad and within the U.S. Working in the field is really the only way to experience archaeology hands on, and is also the only way to find out if you are really cut out for archaeology. There are many grants at Middlebury students can apply for to help them fund these trips, and work abroad can be used back at Midd for thesis work or independent projects. While it was not the easiest path to pursue, I found that by following my passion, I had the most gratifying and fulfilling experience I could ask for.

Faculty Publications, 2009-2010

Svea Closser

2010 "Chasing polio," *Anthropology Now* 2(1): 32-39.

2010 *Chasing Polio in Pakistan: Why the World's Largest Public Health Initiative May Fail*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

Laurie Essig

2009 "What if marriage is bad for us?" with Lynn Owens, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 9.

2009 "Ordinary ugliness: The hidden cost of the credit crunch," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 30.

James Fitzsimmons

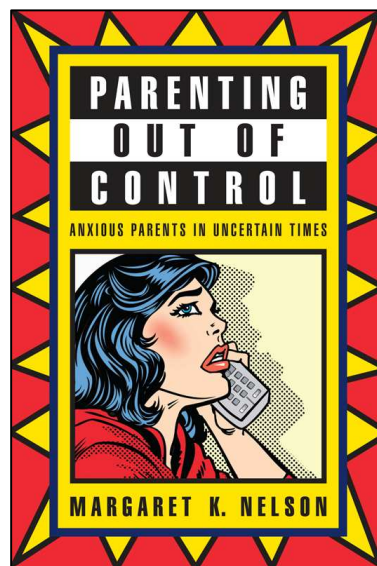
2010 "The End Game: Teaching the collapse of complex societies," in *Strategies in Teaching Anthropology*, 6e, Patricia Rice and David McCurdy, eds. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Chong-suk Han

2010 "Magic Johnson doesn't worry about how to pay for medicine: Experiences of black men who have sex with men living with HIV," with Jennifer Lauby, Lisa Bond, Archana Bodas LaPollo, and Scott Edward Rutledge, *Culture, Health, & Sexuality*, 12(4):387-399.

2010 "One gay Asian body: A personal narrative for examining human behavior in the social environment," *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 20(1):74-87.

2009 "Chopsticks don't make it culturally competent: Addressing larger issues for HIV prevention among gay, bisexual, and queer Asian Pacific Islander men," *Health & Social Work*, 34(4):273-281).



Peggy Nelson

2010 *Parenting Out of Control: Anxious Parents in Uncertain Times*. New York: New York University Press.

Burke Rochford

2009 "Succession, religious switching, and schism in the Hare Krishna Movement," in *Sacred Schisms*, James Lewis and Sarah Lewis, eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 265-286.

Michael Sheridan

2009 "Stigmatized property, clams, and community in coastal Ecuador," with **Laura Kuhl '07**. *Ecological and Environmental Anthropology* 5(1).

David Stoll

2010 "Tomás Gusaro in historical context," Afterword to *Escaping the Fire: How an Ixil Maya Pastor Led His People out of a Holocaust during Guatemala's Civil War*, Tomás Gusaro and Terri McComb, Austin: University of Texas Press.

2010 "From wage-migration to debt-migration? Easy credit, failure in El Norte, and foreclosure in a bubble economy of the Western Guatemalan Highlands," *Latin American Perspectives*, 37(1):123-142.

2009 "Which American Dream do you mean?" *Society* 46(5):398-402.

Alumni News

Carolyn Barnwell '06.5 is becoming a documentary filmmaker at the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies in Portland, Maine.

Rowan Braybrook '09.5 is a Peace Corps Volunteer in Madagascar. You can see what she's doing at <http://rowaninpc.blogspot.com/>



Rowan helping to prepare dinner

Lila Buckley '04 is finishing up her master's degree at Oxford and will soon start a new job with the International Institute for the Environment and Development.

Emily Coles '09 will be starting medical school at Columbia this fall.

Lisa A. Gerstenberger '07.5 is starting a SUNY graduate program in land use planning.

Andrea Hamre '05 is getting her master's degree in Agricultural and Applied Economics from Virginia Tech, and is specializing in sustainable transportation, which means bicycles.

Dan Kelley '08 is getting a degree in translation from the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

Chris Murton '03 has been accepted to a graduate program in landscape architecture at the University of Texas at Austin.

Danielle Naugle '06.5 was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Togo, and will soon start a Ph.D. program at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. You can read about her postgraduate experiences at <http://amanicorps.blogspot.com/>.

Future Issues

Got a story to tell about how you're applying SOAN in the so-called post-graduate "real life"? Tell us at msherida@middlebury.edu. We'd love to hear from you.

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