

# *Field Notes*

A newsletter of the Sociology and Anthropology Department  
Middlebury College

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Editor: James L. Fitzsimmons



**SOAN majors at the Department Picnic, May 10, 2009**

Left to Right: Molly Drane, Ellen Flanagan, Rebecca Tiger, Kate Bass, Kathryn Heath, Elizabeth Crane, Lynn Owens, Josie Keller, Rayna Rozowski, David Small, Megan Nesbeth, Todd Swisher, Amethyst Tate, Marina Pravdic, Ellen Oxfeld, Arthur Choo, Miranda Tsang, Ruby Bolster, Katie DiMercurio, Frank Nicosia, Amelia Magestrali, Stone Conroy, Hannah Rabinovitch, Laurie Essig, David Stoll, Alina Levina, Katie Hylas, Christine Bachman, Jed Poster, Peggy Nelson, and Todd French

## *A note from the Chair*

It's been a good year at Munroe Hall. Our newest faculty members, medical anthropologist **Svea Closser** and sociologist of deviance **Rebecca Tiger**, have been getting rave reviews from our students. So have our other junior faculty including

**Laurie Essig, James Fitzsimmons, and Lynn Owens.** Thanks to their pedagogical verve, the number of SOAN majors has surpassed one hundred for the first time in history.

Two changes at Middlebury College should make us even bigger and better in the future. The first is a new requirement that all

seniors will do senior projects. This is nothing new for SOAN, but it has made us think how we can improve our senior process. Henceforth students who earn an A- or A for their single-semester projects will earn Honors and students who do longer projects will be able to work on them for two regular semesters plus Winter Term, not just fall or spring semester plus Winter Term.

The second change is the college's plan to reduce class size. This will mean capping enrollment in our courses at 45 students, not the current 60, which requires us hire a sixth anthropologist and a sixth sociologist. We've already been able to hire our sixth sociologist, **Chong-suk Han**, who has been teaching at Temple University in Philadelphia and will join us in September 2009.

**Chong-suk Han's** scholarly interests focus on the sociology of race and gender. He is interested in examining the social factors that help to maintain racial, gendered, and sexual inequalities and how these inequalities impact the lives of racial and sexual minorities from a social psychological perspective. Chong-suk received his Ph.D. in 2007 from the University of Washington, where he wrote a dissertation entitled Geisha of a Different Kind: Negotiating Gay Asian Male Identities. He has taught at Temple University since 2005. This coming year, Chong-suk will be teaching *Society and the Individual* with **Lynn Owens**, as well as *Social Psychology in Sociology*, *The Continuing Significance of Race in the United States*, and *Politics of Identity*.

In April, our department co-sponsored a conference on race, gender and the economy. The conference, *Racing Capitalism/Sexing Money: A Conference*

on Race, Gender and the Economy was the result of collaboration between the college's newly formed Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE) and the Gensler Symposium of the Women and Gender Studies Program. The conference brought together scholars from a variety of fields (economics, sociology, anthropology, geography) to discuss how global capital is shaped by and shapes gender and race.

The keynote speakers were geographer David Harvey and anthropologist Jane Collins. Harvey gave a broad historical view of the inevitable crisis in global capitalism while Jane Collins located that crisis in her research on the brown and female bodies of temporary workers in the hospitality industry. The next day, a variety of issues were explored. Economist Stephanie Seguino discussed how economic collapse is, historically speaking, worse for women and children while Jose Garcia, an economist from Demos Institute showed how and why the subprime mortgage crisis was located in neighborhoods that were primarily Black and Latino. I myself spoke on the financialization of the indigenous peoples with whom I work and **Laurie Essig** explained the current economic crisis through cosmetic surgery. The result was what one participant called "the most intellectually stimulating conference I have ever been to."

The hiring of our sixth anthropologist is on hold at the moment, because of the college's fiscal situation. When approval comes, we've agreed to recruit a linguistic anthropologist. Ever since Prof. Mark Southern streaked across our firmament in 2004-06, dozens of students in SOAN and the language departments have clamored for independent majors and/or a minor in linguistics. The minor should come together in 2009-10 thanks to half a dozen language

profs with whom SOAN is enthusiastically collaborating. Best of all, a linguistic anthropologist will enable another historic first for Middlebury College—4-field anthropology with courses every year in, not just our mainstay of sociocultural anthropology, but also archaeology, physical anthropology and linguistics.

**David Stoll**  
SOAN Chair, 2008-2009

## *Faculty and Staff Updates*

### **Charlene Barrett**

We had another great academic year in the Sociology/Anthropology Department. I'm looking forward to another one, in which I'm already preparing for. As always, I'm looking forward to the warm summer months, the sunshine, and spending more time with my family!

### **Svea Closser**

I've really enjoyed getting to know Middlebury this year. My students are great, and Vermont is a nice change from Atlanta. My three-year-old son and I have already accumulated six pairs of skis. I'm currently finishing up a book on polio eradication in Pakistan that will be published by Vanderbilt University Press this year. (I need a good title—so if you have any suggestions, let me know.) I'm also working with some students and other faculty on developing an interdisciplinary series of courses on global public health at Middlebury.

### **Laurie Essig**

This year I was lucky to be involved in a variety of new and exciting projects and programs at Middlebury. I continued to sit on the steering committee for the newly formed Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE) as well as

Women and Gender Studies and the newly formed Queer Studies House (QSH). I was lucky enough to bring my interest in gender, sexuality, and race together in a variety of ways. For instance, in the fall the QSH and CCSRE brought Kenyon Farrow to campus to discuss disco as both a gay and a Black cultural phenomenon. In the Spring, I was able to combine my role in organizing the Gensler Symposium for women's studies and gender with CCSRE to help organize a conference on race, gender and the economy. The conference brought together a variety of scholars and activists to discuss how global capitalism plays out differently on different bodies. I myself got to explain the credit crisis through cosmetic surgery.

Which brings me to my book, *American Plastic: Boob Jobs, Credit Cards and the Spirit of Our Time*, which will be published by Beacon in 2010. Fortunately I am on sabbatical this coming year so I can get it done. As part of sabbatical, my girls and I will be living in Montreal in the Fall and then London in the Spring and generally having an adventure.



All the while I am hoping that I'll continue to have my gig as a blogger at [www.trueslant.com/laurieessig](http://www.trueslant.com/laurieessig) if anyone wants to know what I'm thinking.

### **James L. Fitzsimmons**

It's been a busy year. My book, *Death and the Classic Maya Kings*, was published by the University of Texas Press in 2009. I also published a co-authored encyclopedia on peoples of the Americas, titled *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Global*

Medieval Life and Culture, Vol. 1: Europe and the Americas. An edited volume I did with Izumi Shimada, an Andean archaeologist, was accepted for publication by the University of Arizona Press and has been sent to them for copyediting; it is titled Between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Mesoamerica. In the Spring semester, I was invited to chair an October 2009 conference on Maya political organization at Dumbarton Oaks, in Washington, D.C. I'm really looking forward to it!

Perhaps most notably, though, the archaeology lab was finally built in Munroe 111, and I have been busy filling it with equipment and materials over the past few months. We now have computers, scanners, drawing tables, and all kinds of excavation/lab equipment in there, in addition to the usual complement of bones and stones. This summer I will be working in there on material from my field site, Zapote Bobal, and getting the lab ready for classes in the fall; I will also be plugging away at papers (mostly for a companion to the Mesoamerican edited volume on the Andes) and particularly grants, as I will be going on leave in 2010-2011.

### **Peggy Nelson**



I have been happily back from leave this year, enjoying being in the classroom again. I have also completed a co-edited book, Who's Watching? Daily Practices of Surveillance Among Contemporary Families and, with little

success, have been trying to complete my manuscript, Parenting Out of Control: Child Rearing Among the Professional Middle

Class. This summer, once the book is done, I plan to take some leisurely vacation time with family and friends.

### **Lynn Owens**

I kicked off the fall semester with an elaborate flourish – while doing research at the Republican National Convention in St. Paul, MN, I found myself, along with hundreds of others, on the wrong side of the law. Luckily, I only suffered the inconvenience of a night in jail before having all my charges eventually dropped. Others, such as the organizers of the protest, were not so fortunate.



Wriggling free of my police captors was not my only

accomplishment this year; I also managed to have two books published. The first came out in the fall, a co-authored cookbook, featuring the favorite recipes of bands, of the obscure and even more obscure variety. The book, Lost in the Supermarket: An Indie Rock Cookbook, published by Soft Skull Press, allowed me to make the PR rounds, where I learned I like talking to music reporters a lot more than food reporters. My other book, Cracking under Pressure: Narrating the Decline of the Amsterdam Squatters' Movement, joint published by Amsterdam University and Penn State University Presses, comes out of my dissertation research. The work follows the rise and fall of the squatters' movement in Amsterdam during the 1970s and 80s, focusing on how activists used stories to construct new identities and strategies in the face of new constraints and setbacks. During J-Term, I managed to sneak away to Madrid, to meet with others researching European



squatters' movements, as we planned a larger trans-European research network and comparative project. And perhaps my biggest triumph of the year: I got a new cat, Gretl, to join the other two in the household, Candyflip and The Skunk.

### **Ellen Oxfeld**

I submitted the final draft of my book to the publisher (University of California Press) in April. The book now goes into the production phase. I hope these last details (copyediting, reading proofs and creating an index) will be complete within the next few months! If all goes well, the book will be out in 2010 ([When You Drink Water, Remember the Source: Moral Discourse in a Chinese Village](#)). This summer, I will be traveling to a conference in Taiwan for East Asian anthropologists and presenting a paper on food as embodied memory in post-Mao rural China. It's part of a larger project on the culture of food in rural China.

### **Burke Rochford**

This past Winter Term, I spent two weeks teaching in Belgium at Bhaktivedanta College, a small college for members of the Hare Krishna movement. My course

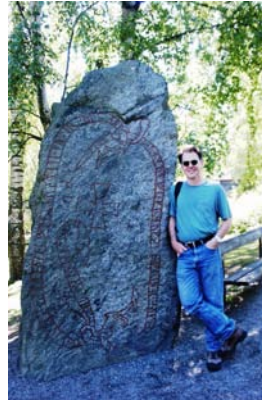


focused on the development of religious movements including the Hare Krishna. This spring my article,

"Succession, Religious Switching, and Schism in the Hare Krishna movement," appeared in [Sacred Schisms](#), edited by James Lewis and Sarah Lewis, published by Cambridge University Press.

### **Michael Sheridan**

I have been on sabbatical this year, and I recommend it highly. This spring I have been a Visiting Scholar in Human Ecology at Lund University in Sweden. I have given a series of lectures on 'Ecology and Power' in Lund and Stockholm. Lund is very much a medieval town wrapped inside of a university city, and my kids have learned more than they know



from being in such a vibrant place for 5 months. My next destination is Senegal, where I will be participating in a faculty seminar supported by a Fulbright grant for the month of July 2009. The overall goal is to enhance the West African content of SOAN 332, and I will also be able to do an independent fieldwork project on ethnobotany and property rights in Senegal's southern forests.

### **David Stoll**

I continue going to Guatemala every chance I get, to talk with the Ixil Mayas of Nebaj about their credit crisis. Having outstripped their very limited agricultural base, thousands of Ixils have borrowed money to invest in \$5,000 trips to the United States, where many fail to find enough work to pay off the loans. Since I reported on this situation in the 2008 newsletter, financial institutions have started to foreclose on houses and a new women's committee is asking aid organizations to pay their debts. Not coincidentally, I will be teaching a new course on Latin American migration in Fall 2009. One of the questions we'll be looking

at is whether migration of this sort operates like a pyramid scheme, in which migrants attempt to pay off their deficits by convincing peers to pay for a trip north, thus widening the circle of indebtedness.



It took ten years to find a publisher for the Spanish version of Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans but it's finally available, with a big thank-you to Unión Editorial of Madrid. Thanks as well to Westview Press for publishing a new

edition of the 1999 English version. The new edition has a foreword by Elizabeth Burgos, the anthropologist who elicited and published Rigoberta's 1982 life story, and my own afterword, which includes Rigoberta's efforts to indict Guatemalan generals for genocide and also her campaign to be elected president of her country.

### **Rebecca Tiger**

Having finished my PhD and moved to



Vermont, I spent this past year learning about life at Middlebury College.

I taught courses on punishment, deviance and social control, drugs and introductory social theory – I'm looking forward to teaching

these courses again next year. An article I co-authored with Barbara Katz Rothman, my advisor from the CUNY Graduate Center, was published in Fall 2008 in the Journal of Clinical Issues. In this

publication we argue against medical control of child abuse and neglect cases and for an expansion of non-punitive social services for families experiencing multiple economic and social stressors. After a vacation in Slovenia, Croatia and Montenegro, where I plan on reading fiction and swimming in the Adriatic Sea, I will be spending this summer working on two projects. First, I am revising my dissertation into a book manuscript, tentatively titled "Force is the Best Medicine": The Logic of Coerced Treatment, in which I examine historically and theoretically the rise of coerced drug treatment as strategy for controlling drug users in the criminal justice system, and suggest policy alternatives that remove drug users from coerced punitive and therapeutic oversight. Secondly, I am beginning a new project looking at the social control of young people in the criminal justice system, specifically investigating how designations such as "delinquent" and "at-risk youth" give rise to long-lasting forms of institutional control and surveillance for the young people so designated. I look forward to returning to Middlebury in September and to (finally) learning how to snow board this upcoming winter.

### ***Senior Essay and Thesis Abstracts***

#### **Christine Bachman**

#### **"Grabbing Madonna's Crotch: Queering Gender, Sexuality, Race, Class and Age"**

Humping the Radio City Music Hall stage in a wedding dress in 1984, grabbing her crotch in a pinstripe suit in 1989, offering her open crotch to sexual "deviants" in 1995, and shoving her hands down her pants in 2008, Madonna has thrust herself—and her crotch—into the mainstream music market for twenty-five years. What is the

significance of Madonna's hyper-visible crotch? My primary interest in Madonna revolves around her "crotch grab," or in other words, her use of the Phallus and phallic power. In order to explore the importance of the crotch grab, I have



conducted a content analysis of several of Madonna's most significant music videos, live performances and tours throughout the past two and a half decades. In these performances, the crotch grab becomes an important intersection of meaning, as Madonna uses gender, sexuality, race, class *and* age to communicate an ever-changing message to the audience. To think through the significance of the crotch grab, I draw primarily on the theories of Judith Butler, Judith Halberstam, Pierre Bourdieu, Anne McClintock, Lee Edelman, Michel Foucault, and Donna Haraway. In my analysis of Madonna's crotch grab, I seek to discover whether or not Madonna *queers* gender, sexuality, race, class and age.

### **Kara E. Brown**

#### **"The Construction of Social Problems: A Comparison of the Construction of Binge Drinking and Illicit Prescription Drug Use on the Middlebury College Campus"**

This essay investigates the construction of certain social problems on the Middlebury College campus by using the work hard, play hard nature of Middlebury College students as a case study. By examining various modes of discourse, I explore how binge drinking is understood and constructed as a social problem in comparison to the illicit use of prescription drugs. I do this by deconstructing claims

made about binge drinking in President Liebowitz's 2008 Baccalaureate speech and by drawing on a series of interviews with Middlebury students regarding illicit prescription drug use. I framed my research using the sociology of social problems, which primarily deals with how social phenomena become constructed as social problems. I conclude that binge drinking has been constructed as the dominant social problem on campus. Despite its widespread use among Middlebury students and construction as being problematic in other discourses, the illicit prescription drug use on the Middlebury College campus has not been constructed as a social problem in the same way that binge drinking has. Finally, I make several informal speculations as to why this may be the case. While it is important to unveil the ways in which certain phenomena become constructed as social problems, this essay also demonstrates the value in considering conditions that have not been constructed as social problems.

### **Emily Coles**

#### **"Knowledge and Economic Systems of Legitimizing Information of Maya Healers in Guatemala"**

My project is an investigation into the lives of traditional Maya herbalists, spiritual guides, midwives, and Maya priestesses in the Lake Atitlán region of western



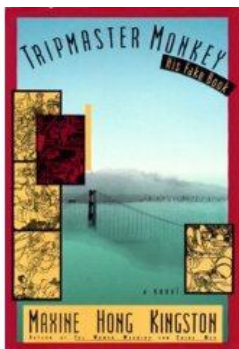
Guatemala and the impact that their methods of care-giving have on rural communities. Such communities tend to be geographically and economically isolated from the 'Western' medicine available in hospitals' maternity wards and operating rooms. I seek a better understanding of the health

concerns in the region and how knowledge is gained, exchanged, utilized, transferred and legitimized. In their speech, many traditional Maya healers describe their relationship with Western medicine as being in complete conflict with and opposition to traditional healing. They also express a complete rejection of this binary opposition when asked directly. Many healers will in fact bring patients to a hospital for emergency care as a last resort; this act demonstrates that they are a lot more willing to share knowledge by their actions than they will often verbally admit to.

**Elizabeth H. Crane**

**“Intimacy with an Other: Imaginings of 中美跨国婚姻 and White-Chinese Interracial Marriages”**

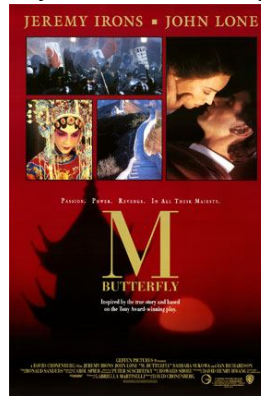
This thesis looks at imaginings of Chinese-American cross-cultural marriages and white Chinese interracial marriages as symbols representing the relationship between Self and Other from an American and a Chinese point of view. This symbol is examined from the perspectives of Chinese young adults in Hangzhou, who were interviewed about how they imagined *Zhongmei Kuaguo Hunyin* (Chinese-American cross-cultural



*Fake Book*. The perspectives of those interviewed in Hangzhou as well as of these Chinese American works of literature all serve to question the dominant Orientalist concept of masculine West married to

marriages), as well as within the context of David Henry Hwang’s *M. Butterfly* and Maxine Hong Kingston’s *Tripmaster Monkey: His*

feminine East, though in different ways. The Chinese people interviewed describe a marriage that in many ways reflects Western Orientalist conceptions of the relationship between America and China, but there are qualifications of this vision that suggest a possibility for change in the balance of power between the two nations. The two sets of couples central to *M. Butterfly* and *Tripmaster Monkey* both serve to deconstruct the Orientalist fantasy of Western man with Eastern woman, exposing and thus de-legitimizing the white American male claim to power.



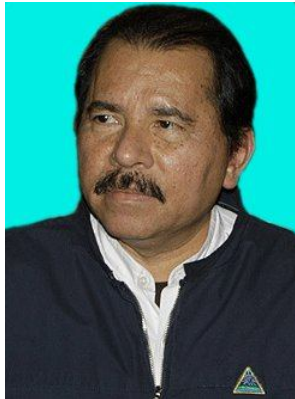
**Katherine DiMercurio**  
**“National NGOs in Nicaragua and International Funders: Power Structures and Global Influence”**

In the developing and developed worlds, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is taking on ever deeper meanings. What used to be seen as a short-term solution to the limitations of struggling Third World governments has transformed into a long-term global solution to the widespread failings of such governments. As part of this solution NGOs have had a tendency to replace government in the provision of public services and national development. Especially in the case of Nicaragua, where NGOs have stepped in and multiplied over the past few decades, the role of the government continues to shrink and its responsibilities to the Nicaraguan people have shifted on to the shoulders of civil society. If non-governmental organizations are meant to advance the development of countries such



as Nicaragua, it would follow that the objective of such organizations should be to put themselves out of business. That is to say that if their goals are met, their very existence should become unnecessary.

In looking at the development and presence of NGOs in Nicaragua, it becomes clear that the ability of national as well as international NGOs to accomplish their



development goals has been inhibited by a number of factors. As a result their capacity to generate lasting improvement is being questioned.

My exploration of this topic focuses on some of the major stumbling blocks that impede effective working relationships between national NGOs in Nicaragua and their international funders. This relates directly to the ultimate success of their development projects and programs.

### **Cassidy Edwards** **“Female Endurance Athletes and Nutrition at Middlebury College”**

In my four years of being a collegiate athlete I have observed many of my teammates, friends and competitors struggle with disordered eating and nutrition. Many times the health and performance of these athletes was sacrificed. My own experience with endurance sports was what inspired me to conduct a study of why these athletes were so prone to eating disorders. Through a case study of the female cross country running and Nordic ski teams, including participant observation, surveys and interviews, I found that the culture of endurance sports is what

influences an athlete’s actions. Female athletes endure the pressure of competition, performance thinness, competitive thinness and very distinct controlling and driven personalities. Eating disorders among these athletes are a complex illness that affects the physical and psychological health. The complexity of this illness makes it difficult to diagnose and treat, but just like many other nonmedical problems it is being subjected to medicalization. This concept refers to the act of treating nonmedical problems as medical. The medical repercussions of an eating disorder are vast, but without addressing the psychological and social variables the illness will not be cured. Middlebury College, in their attempts to prevent and help athletes with eating disorders, has adhered to the medicalization of the disease. The current school policies, aimed to restore the physical health, are blind to the other psychological and social elements of this disease, leaving many female athletes undiagnosed and uncured.

### **Ellen Flanagan** **“Asado and Machismo in Argentine Society”**



This study investigates the role of women in the asado, the Argentine version of the

American barbeque. It also explores the underlying machismo of Argentine culture, and how it all relates to the growing empowerment of women. I focus the investigation on families of the middle to upper class of Buenos Aires through the perspective of women. The people I became familiar with, through my own experiences

as well as through informants' accounts, all came from the wealthier barrios of Buenos Aires: Recoleta, Palermo, and Belgrano. The demographic of this region is white-European—Argentines from these areas are extremely proud of their European heritage. Social class in Buenos Aires clearly shows in ethnicity and spatial segregation. Despite the recent empowerment of women in Argentina, the asado provide an opportunity for men to play a dominant position. Breaking out of traditional boundaries, in the past few decades women have achieved a growing role in Argentine society as they become more independent and autonomous. Women becoming more active in the workforce rupture classic gender ideals. Yet there remains some degree of tolerance for the underlying machista mind-set. The asado is a cultural practice that reinforces classic, hegemonic masculine identity in homes where women are becoming not only economically viable but even in some cases economically dominant.

**Hillary Gerardi**  
**“Constructing Rurality and Rural Gentrification in Vermont: Looking Toward the Future”**

Despite the popular depiction of Vermont as throw back to American heritage, the reality is that the state is currently in an important time of transition and witnessing big changes to its demographics, economy, environment, and as many Vermonters would insist, character. One major factor that plays into the changes that the state is experiencing is the influx of in-migrants that arrive in Vermont set both to escape the difficulties of their urban lives and embrace what they perceive to be the ‘Vermont lifestyle.’ The image of the rural idyll that so many visitors and migrants to Vermont have come to embrace is one that has been carefully constructed over the years and may

not reflect the reality of the experience of many residents. While there has long been an important distinction made between native and non-native Vermonters, there is growing discussion of the effect that these



in-migrants and their static view of the state's character are having on the state.

Gentrification is a term often used in discussion of changing urban areas and it is beginning to be more widely used in rural geography. The operating definition of gentrification is the process in which an area's working class population is replaced by a middle or upper class group of residents. The intention of this paper is to explore both the use of the concept of gentrification in rural areas and particularly its application to the state of Vermont. Because rurality is a hazily defined and highly contested term, I also investigate the creation of rurality, and the construction of Vermont's image as a rural idyll. Finally, I reflect on gentrification in Vermont and its implications for the future.

**Megan Giuliano**  
**“Reflections on the Emergence of Creativity Through Cycles of Disruption and Repair”**

This paper focuses on students' perceptions surrounding the emergence of creativity and its varied forms. This author's initial hypothesis ventured to present blogs as an advantageous tool for encouraging social learning, an emphasis on process learning through reflection, and finally, their accessibility over time and space. This research shows that there are several advantages to using blogs in the classroom including increased peer collaboration,

archived access of work sometimes resulting in deepened student reflection, encouragement of communication by writing, and potential for social intimacy. Drawbacks included time and effort needed to keep up with blogs and considering the implications of 'published' work available to the general public.

In addition to focusing on students' perceptions surrounding blogging, other important issues concerning the nature of creativity and its role in education were mentioned. These included questioning the role of teacher as coach, class atmosphere (physical and theoretical), the nature of predictability and unpredictability, and also how social learning played in other spaces within the class (workshops settings and large group class setting).



This author concluded that while the liberal arts school as an institution proclaims *valuing* creativity, practice is limited. Students are often overcommitted and their academic classes provide only the preview of how others write about their discovery; however, what if courses depended upon the varied knowledge their students bring? What kinds of intelligence are encouraged within the classrooms? How do disciplines dictate the way courses are taught and who decides? Why is the classroom limited to a room with four walls? Why don't more of the classes at Middlebury College work with the community of Middlebury? When a professor—like the one who taught this particular creative writing class—resigns from an 'elite' liberal arts institution, what

does her leaving say about the atmosphere of the school?

**Benjamin Soule Grimmnitz**  
**"You Cannot Understand My Health Unless You Understand What I Do: Farming, Masculinity and Health in Addison County, Vermont"**

While health is often viewed in purely biological terms, this thesis situates the common farming definition of health as one's ability to produce within a social and



historical framework. It delves into several case studies and explores access to and utilization of health care

services by the dairy farmers of Addison County. While initially issues of insurance presented themselves as the central barrier to utilization, farmers' relationships were even more important. Farmers often felt that they would be wasting their time seeking help from a doctor when they could just as easily continue work and simply ignore the pain or illness. Beyond the more proximal issues of time, this stoicism is central to performances of farming masculinity. Farm masculinity has been produced over generations as hard working, self-reliant, and stoic. With such tightly knit communities, farmers chose to police their own behaviors rather than risk getting caught stepping out of line. These men define themselves by their work, their ability to endure pain, and their stubbornness, thus choosing to go to the doctor is often not viewed as an option regardless of cost. This thesis draws on Foucault's conceptualization of power through the Panopticon, but with the added twist of reciprocity, turning each individual into both guard and guarded. It also draws

upon Butler's theory of performative gender. The conclusion suggests that social marketing campaigns aimed at improving men's health behaviors in Vermont would benefit from connecting health to improved productivity, masculinity, and use of time.

**Kathryn H. Heath**  
**“Reshooting the Past? Colonial Discourse in the Representations of the Safari Tourism Industry of Botswana”**



In this thesis, I look at representations produced by the safari industry of Botswana to see how they

portray themselves in light of their imperial hunting origins. I became interested in this subject after perceiving links between colonialism and the safari industry while studying abroad in Botswana. I wanted to explore these connections and see to what extent the safari industry sold a ‘colonial fantasy’ vacation to tourists through its portrayal of the landscape and people of Botswana. After providing a theoretical framework, I give a history of the safari industry, tracking its evolution from a hunting leisure pursuit for the wealthy upper class to a popular form of nature tourism for Westerners, noting the changing perceptions of the African and the landscape along the way. I then examine safari tourism advertisements, noting the way the African landscape is conceived of as an accessible Eden and the aesthetic of the safari recalls previous expeditions. After this I shift my focus to the representation of the people of Botswana in advertisements, showing how Botswana are cast as low-level service employees while the San are portrayed as ‘noble savages’ and as tourist attractions. I

connect these current portrayals to both past perceptions and current roles these groups hold within the industry. I find that although the nature of the relationship between the safari-goer and the African continent has changed, shifting from one of domination to appreciation, the safari industry retains symbolic links to its more destructive origins through their advertisements.

**Catherine Joan Hylas**  
**“The Celtic Tigress: An Exploration of the New Irish Physical Ideal since the onset of the Celtic Tiger Economic Boom”**

The rapid Celtic Tiger economic boom happened in less than ten years and provided a totally unique sociological laboratory for studying the relationship between economic prosperity, the media and women's identities. Consumerism developed seemingly overnight in Ireland and so did women's new standards of beauty. The most unusual aspect of the rapid change in Irish woman's physical ideals is a taste for orange artificial tanning solutions. They also wear incredibly feminine clothes. My objective was to research the the new standards of beauty through the lense of women's fashion magazines and women's words. Because of the large size of the topic the research is exploratory and invites more rigorous research to follow.



The following analysis uses two research approaches: (1) Interviews with seventeen individuals who lived in Dublin during the Celtic Tiger, mostly young woman but some men, regarding the impact

of the Celtic Tiger on woman's physical ideals and woman's self image; (2) Selected



review of two key woman's fashion magazines to attempt to correlate the beauty norms promoted, mostly in advertising, with the reality of what these norms have become. The bulk of the paper provides background, commentary and analysis based upon the research. I succeeded in isolating elements of the physical ideal and established that it influences young women's self esteem.

**Josannah Keller**  
**“Re-creating the Exotic: China’s Changing Representation in *The New York Times* and *National Geographic*”**

In this thesis, I analyze *The New York Times* and *National Geographic* to discuss China's changing representation in the West. The 2008 Beijing Olympics sparked my interest in this project. The Games were China's opportunity to show the world the country's new, modern face; I wondered if they had also transformed representations of China from 'exotic other' to 'modern world power.'

After providing a theoretical and historical framework, I discuss the themes 'Creating the Exotic,' 'Comfort of Home versus Exploration of the Unknown,'

and 'Luxury versus Budget travel' as found in *New York Times* Travel and review the binary 'East versus West' representing China in *National Geographic* from 1980 to the present. Finally, I compare and contrast China's representation within these two publications, reflect on patterns of change in China's image in the West, and review how those changes differed from my original expectations. In light of my data, I then



reevaluate theorists discussed in the introduction and argue future implications of my research.

I discovered a multi-faceted representation of China that reflects real change within the country. Many representations of issues in China were originally Western constructs, later re-interpreted by the Chinese to fit the Chinese context, and finally relayed back to the West in their new form. Further research in this subject could help to determine differences between how we see others and how they see themselves. By exploring these discrepancies, we can bridge gaps and build a more accurate representation of China in the West.

**Alina Levina**  
**“College “Choice”’: Russian Jewish Immigrant Youths’ Negotiation of the American College Selection Process”**

The college selection process is one of the most stressful times in a young person's life. However, this process becomes even more overwhelming for immigrants in this country. My project focuses specifically on the college choice of high-achieving Russian Jewish immigrants. In the year 2000, there were approximately half a million Soviet immigrants and their American born children in New York alone. This growing immigrant population, which came to the United States seeking refuge from anti-Semitism is unique in that many describe themselves as academics, scientists, professionals, or technical workers. Education is highly valued in this community, and it is for this reason that I, as an insider, chose to interview about 20 members of the community about their college choice. My use of in-depth interviews with counselors, mothers, fathers, and students reveals the various family, community, and personal pressures that

these immigrant children experience during the college selection process. The purpose of this study is to assess the barriers to higher education for immigrant children. Through personal narratives, my study identified patterns of decision-making and the role of the family, community, guidance counselors, and peers in those decisions. The study adds to education and immigration literature by using this large and growing ethnic community as a case study, as well as distinguishing between college choice, not just college attendance.

**Louis Lee Lobel**  
**“The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down: A Struggle for Power and the Confederate Battle Flag”**

This thesis uses Georgia’s state flag as a case study to explore the struggle for power between collective identity groups; these groups fight over interpretations of symbols like the Confederate Battle Flag in their pursuit of power. Collective identity groups interpret symbols differently, each trying to make their own understandings legitimate. The ability to control the meaning of a symbol is seen as a reflection of holding economic, political and social power, even though no one holds exclusive control over symbols. Interpretations as sponsored by the state change as the institutional relations between these groups fluctuate. With the rising influence of globalization and the interdependent global economy, relations between groups become increasingly equal, forcing the state to adapt globally acceptable interpretations and uses that exclude no one.



**Amelia Magistrali**  
**“We Didn’t Start The Fire: The Fire Problem in Western Madagascar”**

Protecting the biodiversity of Madagascar is one of the global conservation movement’s most important goals. Human land-use practices have altered the natural landscape of the island, contributing to deforestation,



especially through the use of slash-and-burn agriculture. The Central Menabe forest of

western Madagascar is an ecosystem threatened by deforestation at the hands of anthropogenic fire-use. Malagasy farmers in the region rely on slash-and-burn to obtain land and improve crop yields, but this livelihood has become unsustainable and destructive. Current regulation of forest resources in the Menabe does not effectively reduce deforestation, criminalizing fire without accounting for local subsistence needs. An anti-fire narrative—established by Western assumptions of original forest-cover and outsider perceptions of fire—drives fire repression regulations on the island. Although slash-and-burn is illegal and contributes to deforestation in the Menabe, indigenous farmers continue to burn the forest for subsistence. In the Fall of 2007, I went to Madagascar with the School for International Training (SIT), where I studied slash-and-burn agriculture in Central Menabe during a month-long independent study project. After speaking extensively with farmers in the region, I came to understand that addressing the fire problem in Madagascar requires a compromise between regulators and villagers to develop

a community-level resource management program. The government must legalize slash-and-burn cultivation, allowing local-access to part of the forest in order to protect the rest.

**Tiffany Y. Orlowski**  
**“Stripped Down and Laid Out: A Study of Self-Perceptions and Social Portrayals of Erotic Dancers”**

Stemming off of the heated Sex Wars debate of the 1980s, erotic dancers in American society have proven to fulfill a taboo occupation. Many women in this culture have mixed feelings regarding their sexuality, let alone the public presentation of others' sexuality. Therefore, it is easy to comprehend how stigmatized stripping is. This thesis aims to examine the ways in which feminist history has influenced how erotic dancers regard their work in comparison to how society portrays them. Through analyzing both erotic dancers' memoirs and films that included representations of strippers, I was able to explore this distinction. I concluded that female strippers with higher social and economic capital (suggesting that they are white, middle-class and educated women) tend to enjoy erotic dancing more than other erotic dancers because they enter the field out of interest rather than necessity. Furthermore, movies that I consider “entertainment” movies suggest a more surface-level and stereotypical image of erotic dancers that fits in accordance with the heterosexual male fantasy, than documentaries or what I call “bridge” movies do. Finally, I recognize that in a society where sexuality is consistently reiterated, it becomes easy for not only erotic dancers, but also women of this society in general, to be socialized to believe the need and desire to express their sexuality

in public.

**Hannah Rabinovitch**  
**“A Good Death: How Hospice Cultivates and Teaches Emotion Management”**

Each day hospice staff across the United States work with the dying, their families and the bereaved. A major component of hospice staff's work is in dealing with the emotions of the dying and their family and friends. This study investigates how hospice staff cope with the emotion work required of them within the institutional evolution of hospice.

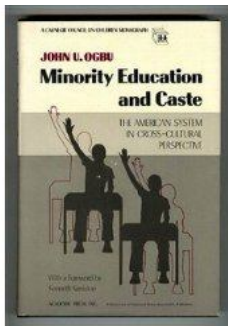


Data were collected through two months of participant observation at Rockbridge Area Hospice in Virginia, through a ten week volunteer training class at Hospice Volunteer Services in Middlebury, and through a dozen interviews with hospice staff and those who have faced the death of a loved one through hospice. Observations and interviews demonstrate that staff conceptualized their work through hospice-specific frames and intuitively used a variety of techniques to manage their emotions. Similar emotion management techniques were taught to volunteers as part of their hospice training. Staff utilized a number of conceptual frames to understand and derive meaning from their work, expression and feeling rules to manage their feelings and their expression, and acting and non-acting techniques to cope with the emotional demands of working with dying patients.

These frame and techniques are considered within the ongoing standardization of hospice as an institution.

**Sarah Tucker**  
**“Concerning Culture: Parent Perspectives on Schools as Sites of Cultural Transmission”**

This study explores what parents want from their children’s education and what they see as their role at their children’s school. It focuses on cultural transmission in schools, namely the passing down of cultural beliefs, values and practices, and parent perspectives on this process. It compares cultural outsiders (refugees) and cultural insiders (non-refugees), and explores how status influences what parents want from schools and how they go about getting it. I use Pierre Bourdieu’s framework of cultural analysis, emphasizing the role of *capital* and *habitus* as I analyze parent relationships with

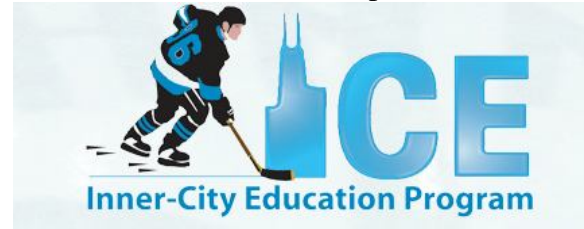


schools. And John Ogbu’s work on resistance theory and minority performance in education establishes the foundation for my analysis of

the refugee experience. I found that parent status (as an insider or outsider) guided parent perspectives about schools, and influenced what they expected, what they hoped for, and what stood in their way.

**Molly Vitt**  
**“The Effects of Sports on Inner-City Children: A Study of How the Inner City Education Program Utilizes Sports to Place Children in Better Schools”**

This essay examines the impact of sports on inner-city youth. Through the Chicago based, non-profit organization, Inner City Education, I examine how sports offer



underprivileged children an opportunity of attaining a better education, which in turn can result in escaping the cycle of poverty. While demonstrating this claim, I acknowledge the insignificance of this program in solving the educational disparities in the United States. I use two major research strategies: interviews and literary research. Robert Putnam accounts for the theoretical framework on which I base this essay. His statements on social capital pertain to the reality of life in the inner-city. In applying his theories to the Dimas family, overarching conclusions can be drawn on the affects of sports on social capital and the affects social capital have on a family. I also apply Jonathan Kozol’s theories on education as an un-level playing field. This essay demonstrates the importance of education on a child’s life and how sports can act as a mean to attain it. In conjunction with Inner City Education, I analyze the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street YMCA in New York and Arthur Ashe’s developmental programs incorporating tennis into education. I also reference Dr. Stuart Brown and his study of play as essential for human survival. The focus of my study is how sports helped 16-year-old Christian Dimas escape the inner-city schooling system to attend a highly ranked Catholic school outside the city of Chicago. Sports created a network for Christian and by taking advantage of his resources he joined with I.C.E. to better his education and, in turn, his future.



## *Departmental Awards 2009*

Thanks to the generosity of Alden Lank and Albert Blum, every year the SOAN faculty give awards in their name to seniors who have written outstanding theses and served the Middlebury community.

The winner of the Blum award this year is Hannah Rabinovitch. Hannah is eager, enthusiastic, and whip-smart. She has been a near ubiquitous presence in the department since she declared for Sociology and Anthropology. Hannah did her thesis on



hospice, the burgeoning industry to help the dying and their families get through the emotionally difficult process. She did two months of participant observation at Rockbridge Area Hospice in Virginia, as well as a volunteer training class in Middlebury and interviews with hospice staff and family members. Her work looked at the variety of techniques that hospice workers use to cope with and understand emotionally traumatic situations. It also demonstrated that both staff and volunteers of these institutions view their work through hospice-specific frames which inform not only how they conceptualize death and dying but also how they perform their difficult tasks.

Sometimes we have no choice but to split awards between equally worth candidates.

This year the Lank Award is shared by Christine Bachman and Ben Grimmnitz. Christine Bachman has been an excellent citizen of Middlebury, struggling throughout her four years here to leave it a better, more vibrant institution than the one she entered. As a joint Sociology/Anthropology and WAGS major, Christine worked

tirelessly to create the Queer Studies House. As a leader of MOQA and resident of the Queer Studies House, Christine has worked to create opportunities inside and outside the classroom to discuss how power operates inside and outside the body. Her thesis is titled *Grabbing Madonna's Crotch: Queering Gender, Sexuality, Race, Class and Age*. It's a content analysis of 25 years of the pop star's music and videos that started with a basic fact: the more Madonna grabs her crotch, the more popular she is. What, Christine asked, is behind Madonna's crotch grab? How is this gesture, appropriated from Black male pop stars, queer? What does it say about gender drag? What does it say about the color line and class appropriation? Finally, what does Madonna's recent return to the top of the charts and the reinvention of the crotch grab as a 50 year old woman say about the possibility of queering age? Through her thesis and her career here at Middlebury, Christine has shown us that you can take queer culture and pop culture seriously as a site of power and subjectivity and then apply what you learn to make the world around you a better one.

Ben Grimmnitz has always wanted to be an M.D. and will begin medical school at Albert Einstein in New York City this summer. But Ben wanted to be the best doctor he could be, which is why he majored in Sociology/Anthropology. He wanted to understand not just how the body works, but



how the body works in a particular culture, gender, class, and racial formation. Ben made the most of his SOAN major, traveling with James on an archaeological adventure that apparently involved really huge spiders as well as spending a semester in Vietnam learning about more traditional forms of

healing. When Ben started to write his thesis, he knew he wanted to look at medical care here in Addison County, especially since he himself has worked at the hospital here for years. Ben's thesis, "You cannot understand my health unless you understand what I do: Farming, masculinity and health in Addison County, Vermont" ended up being about gender, something that he wasn't expecting. What Ben found was that a certain notion of being a "real man," of always being productive and always working, stopped many of the farmers he interviewed from seeking medical attention. That Ben was able to figure out why local farmers do and do not access health care by thinking carefully about how race, gender, class, sexuality, and nationality shaped them, shows what an excellent SOAN student Ben was. It also shows what an amazing doctor he will become.

***Notes from a Midd Kid' Ph.D.***  
**By Bill Alexander '65**

Peter Allen may have been the first Midd Kid to get a PhD in anthropology, but I followed along, in 1976. Graduating in 1965, I went to work for the Bell System in New York City. After several years of being bored, I contacted Margaret Mead at the



American Museum of Natural History, and began working for her on weekends. She convinced me

to go for a PhD in anthropology. I was by this time married (to a Midd Kid, just to keep the myth going), and could not afford graduate school full time, so I continued to work, and went to the New School for 7 years of night classes, until I was ready for fieldwork

I had been working on the contract that the US Army had with the Bell System to build and test an anti-ballistic missile system, the Nike-X, which was being tested in the Pacific islands. So I decided to explore the impact of the US presence there. Since WWII, the US had been trustee of these islands, with responsibility under the UN Charter for "promoting to the utmost, the



well-being of the inhabitants." These are the islands which the US had then used to test

atomic and hydrogen bombs (Remember Bikini and Enewetak?) as well as testing ICBM's by shooting them from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California at Kwajalein Atoll, and testing anti-ballistic missiles by shooting them up to intercept the ICBM's.

Several wonderful anthropologists had worked in this area, and all helped me prepare. Armed with a letter from the US Secretary of the Interior and the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory, my wife Wendy ('68) and I arrived on Kwajalein, only to be relieved of our credentials by the US Army, put on a boat, and told not to come back.

We lived primarily on a 64 acre island three miles from the base, an island with 7000 Marshallese natives. During our research, we were periodically removed from the Missile Base (we dared to return), and also spent comparative time on a very remote island with no electricity, plumbing or means of contact except a ship that came every 3-4 months to collect coconut.

Back on Kwajalein Atoll, I uncovered suicide (They have no word for this act, which is inconceivable to them, but which I found had claimed 21 young people in about 15 years on this one island.); malnutrition, including kwashiorkor that killed the young (unknown in the outer islands); alcohol abuse (750,000 cans of beer consumed in one year on this one island, costing more



han the entire gross national product of the nation), crime (also unknown elsewhere in the islands); and prostitution, with the youngest prostitute I interviewed being 11 years old. I also uncovered the fact that the US contractor discriminated against the Marshallese in employment practices, violating applicable US law. While still there I testified before a US congressional committee, which made me more popular with the army, as you may imagine.

Returning home, I accepted an anthropology position at a small college in New Jersey, eventually becoming associate academic dean as well. During this period I also worked with a coalition of concerned citizens, testifying on a number of occasions at the UN Trusteeship Council and the UN General Assembly Decolonization Committee.

Years later I left the college to become FEMA Regional Training Manager, responsible for preparing all disaster workers in NY, NJ, Puerto Rico and the

Virgin Islands for anything that might happen. (!) The duties were mundane, but working outside the box produced some interesting results, several of which helped to ameliorate the 911 attack on NYC. By the time of the attack I had taken a position as Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs at another NJ college. Years later, having acquired high blood pressure, I moved to the College of Saint Elizabeth, where I am a tenured Associate Professor, design new academic programs and relationships with other colleges, as well as deal with accreditation and assessment issues for the College.

I took up painting about a decade ago, have two grown boys, one an MIT grad who is doing a PhD in biomathematics at UCLA, the other being a Pratt grad who is industrial design manager for Method Home Products in San Francisco. My beloved wife of 42 years continues to renew my contract, and I may retire to paint full time, and maybe write the screenplay.

### ***Faculty Publications 2008-2009***

#### **Laurie Essig**

2009 "Ordinary Ugliness: the Hidden Cost of the Credit Crunch," The Chronicle of Higher Education (January 30, 2009).

2008 "My Detachable Phallus," Journal of Lesbian Studies 12:1.

2008 Foreword (in Russian) to Love with Four Arms, a collection of queer erotica by Lida Yusopova and Margarita Meklina. Moskow: Kver.

#### **James L. Fitzsimmons**

2009 Death and the Classic Maya Kings. University of Texas Press, Austin.

2009 The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Global Medieval Life and Culture Vol. 1: Europe and the Americas (with Joyce E. Salisbury). Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut.

2009 “Monuments, Caches, and the Lords of Jaguar Hill: Creating the Sacred from the Mundane.” Mexicon 31: 43-49.

2008 Review of Days of Death, Days of Life, by Kristin Norget. American Anthropologist 110 (1): 133.

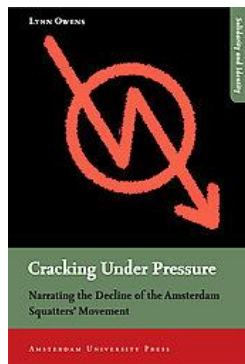
### **Peggy Nelson**

2009 Who’s Watching?: Daily Practices of Surveillance Among Contemporary Families (with Anita Ilta Garey). Vanderbilt University Press, Nashville.

2008 “Watching Babies: Accounting for Baby Monitors on Epinions.com,” Journal of Family Issues 29(4): 516-538.

### **Lynn Owens**

2009 Lost in the Supermarket: An Indie Rock Cookbook (with Kay Bozich Owens). Soft Skull Press, New York.



2009 Cracking Under Pressure: Narrating the Decline of the Amsterdam Squatters' Movement. Amsterdam University Press and Penn State University, Amsterdam.

2008 “From Tourists to Anti-Tourists to Tourist Attractions: The Transformation of a Social Movement,” Social Movement Studies 7(1): 43-59.

2008 “What We Talk About When We Talk About Decline: Competing Narratives

in the Amsterdam Squatters’ Movement,” Research in Social Movements, Conflict, and Change 28: 241-273.

### **Michael Sheridan**



2009 “The environmental and social history of African sacred groves: A Tanzanian case study,” African Studies Review 52(1):73-98.

2008 “Tanzanian ritual perimetrics and African landscapes: The case of *Dracaena*,” International Journal of African Historical Studies 41(3):491-521.

2008 Guest co-editor (with Celia Nyamweru), “African sacred ecologies,” special theme issue, Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture 2(3):285-407.

2008 “Introduction: African sacred ecologies,” co-authored with Celia Nyamweru, special theme issue, Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture 2(3):285-291.

### **David Stoll**

2009 “Harvest of Conviction: Solidarity in Guatemalan Scholarship, 1988-2008” in Mayas in Postwar Guatemala: Harvest of Violence Revisited, eds. Walter Little and Timothy Smith, pp.167-180, University of Alabama Press.

2008 “Human Rights, Land Conflict and Memories of the Violence in the Ixil Country of Northern Quiché,” in Human Rights in the Maya Region: Global Politics, Cultural Contentions, and Moral Engagements, eds. Pedro Pitarch, Shannon



Speed and Xochitl Leyva Solano, pp.187-204, Duke University Press.

2008 "Creating Moral Authority in Latin American Studies: John Beverley's 'Neoconservative Turn' and Priesthood," Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies 17(3):349-356, December.

2008 "Romantic Primitivism and Moral Economy," for "Symposium: The Culture Cult," Society 45(3):267-69, May-June.

### **Rebecca Tiger**

2008 "Social Problem or Medical Condition? A Response to Krugman's Proposal," Journal of Clinical Ethics 19(4): 350-352.

2007 Bioethical Issues, Sociological Perspectives: Vol. 9 (co-edited with Barbara Katz Rothman and Elizabeth Armstrong). St. Louis: Elsevier Press, JAI.

## ***Alumni News***

In September, 2008, **Peter Allen '66** was named the winner of the Patrick J. O'Regan Distinguished Service Award by Rhode Island College. This is an award given each year to one faculty member who has an outstanding record in service to the college and community. In his case, they singled out his many years of service on a variety of college committees, including several stints chairing the College Faculty Research Committee, his Presidency of the 'Friends of the Library,' and many years chairing my department's advisory committee. Service outside the college included his membership and leadership roles on the boards of several not-for-profit organizations including the American Anthropological Association, the Society for the Anthropology of Europe, the Society for Visual Anthropology, the Northeastern Anthropological Association,

the Modern Greek Studies Association, Semester at Sea, the Providence Branch of the English Speaking Union, the Narragansett Chapter of the Archaeological Institute of America, College Year in Athens, Anatolia College, the Rhode Island Committee for the Humanities, the Public Archaeology Laboratory, Historic Harrisville, Inc., and the Silver Lake Land Trust.

**Katie Edwards '90** and her wife Katherine Lemon welcomed son Gavin in December '08, joining daughter Emma, 10. Katie is a stay-at-home mom who can't wait to start teaching her son about "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism," as soon as she's sure that he's understood the whole "correlation does not imply causation" thing.

**Kelsey Eichhorn '08** was accepted to a M.A. program in Film Aesthetics at Oxford University. She will be attending Oxford in the Fall.

**Ashley Elicker '01** has lived in France and India, has worked in consulting for USAID, and has received an MBA from UVA. She recently attended the French Culinary Institute in NYC, and is now working as a manager to about 70 people at a restaurant out at Citi-field, the new Mets stadium in Queens.

**Jenny Harris '07** is the program director for a St. Louis based non-profit called Cultural Leadership. It has a year long training program for Black and Jewish high school students that teaches them about their own and each other's history and culture, as a foundation for learning about issues of social justice and equipping them with the skills to become agents of change in their own communities.

**Jasmin Johnson '05** just finished her first year at the Kennedy School at Harvard. She is doing an internship at the World Bank this summer on access issues in higher education in the Middle East and North Africa. She will be using the results of this summer's research for her Masters' thesis next year.



Thanks to all of the contributors and for making this a great year in SOAN. The next time you're in Munroe Hall, please check out the new archaeology lab in Room 111!

-James

This newsletter is available online, in glorious color, and with image credits, on the SOAN Dept. website: <http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/ump/majors/soca/>

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