

# *Field Notes*

A newsletter of the Sociology and Anthropology Department, Middlebury College

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Editor: Michael Sheridan



*Nadine Nasr, Maggie Nazer, and Hye-Jin Kim at the SOAN Senior Reception, May 27, 2016*

## *A Note from the Chair...*

Chairing a department is mostly about signing forms, fielding inquiries, and being the go-between for faculty, staff, students, and the administration in order to keep the whole thing running. And if all that sounds zesty and replete with Durkheimian collective effervescence, it only gets even more exciting when you get to the seemingly endless series of Chairs Meetings. Sometimes there's lemonade and brownies. But only sometimes.

This year was pretty busy on the administrative part of SOAN-land, as usual. In the Fall of 2016 we set up the new SOAN Student Advisory Council (and a big thanks to all the students serving on it!) to give majors a bigger voice in the Department (Hey alumni – you can contact them at [SOAN\\_SAC@middlebury.edu](mailto:SOAN_SAC@middlebury.edu) if you like. Note that it's "SOAN[underscore]SAC"). There was also a lot of behind-the-scenes organizing to create the Peggy Nelson Award in Critical Sociology and Anthropology. **Peggy Nelson** retired (from teaching, not from scholarship) last year, and we wanted to honor her 40+

years building the Sociology and Anthropology Department. We got enough support from you alumni (THANK YOU!) to establish the fund for this prize, and the 2017 Peggy Nelson Award went to **Aliza Cohen** (see below). If you are interested in supporting and strengthening the Peggy Nelson Award, go to <http://go.middlebury.edu/give> and check the box for “other” gift designation. A box will pop up asking for a fund description, you check “other fund” and then in the blank box put “SOAN Award.”

This year was also very important for comings and goings. We welcomed C3 Postdoctoral Fellow **Erica Morrell**, a food sociologist who taught “Sociology of Food” and “Environmental (In)Justice in America” in the spring. We sadly said goodbye to Visiting Assistant Professor **Diego Thompson**, who had trained a cohort of SOAN students in environmental sociology. He has recently accepted a tenure-track position in the Sociology Department at Mississippi State University. We wish him the best and are hoping that he’ll visit Vermont now and then. You can contact him at [dthompson@soc.msstate.edu](mailto:dthompson@soc.msstate.edu) to congratulate him on his new position.

The Really Big News however is about staffing. For a while the Department had six anthropologists and five sociologists, and this led us to submit annual requests for an additional sociologist. I am delighted to report that this quest for parity is over, and that C3 Postdoctoral Fellow **Trinh Tran** has accepted a tenure-track position as an Assistant Professor of Sociology, starting in the Fall of 2017. She has inherited Peggy Nelson’s sociology of education courses, and also offers our students much-welcomed courses in urban sociology, immigration, and adolescence.

The big (and unexpected) event of spring 2017 was the March 2 Charles Murray protest, which started loud and ended with violence. As you’ll see in the Faculty and Staff Updates section, SOAN faculty and majors were strongly represented in the aftermath of the event. This is probably not too surprising, considering our disciplines’ commitment to diversity, justice, and social change. What was very surprising, however, was how Middlebury became a focal point in our national political discussion about civil freedoms in a democratic society. One consequence of this for SOAN is that we’re looking to our curriculum to answer some of the questions raised by these events. For example, in Spring 2018 I’m going to be teaching a new class on “Trust and Social Capital” about how people come to trust and/or distrust one another. And **Linus Owens** is going to coordinate an 2018 AALAC-funded workshop on the topic of “student protest and

the liberal arts,” bringing together faculty from a variety of liberal arts schools.

The 2016-2017 SOAN students impressed us as they always do with their creativity and insight. We were particularly happy to recognize three of them for academic achievement, community engagement, and contributions to international understanding. **Aliza Cohen’s** senior thesis on stigmatization in the American penal system was an excellent example of critical sociology. **Rachel Kinney’s** project comparing the historical political economy of Inka balsa rafts to Thor Heyerdahl’s fanciful (and deeply biased) adventuresome quasi-scholarship (go ahead, google ‘Kon-Tiki’ and you’ll see what I mean) was an innovative way to engage critical historical anthropology. And **Sami Lamont’s** work institutionalizing Middlebury’s JusTalks program clearly prepared her for an excellent senior project on how social networks shape the construction of multiracial ethnic identities. Aliza received the Peggy Nelson Award in Critical Sociology and Anthropology, and Rachel and Sami shared the Lank Prize in Sociology and Anthropology for their excellent work and contributions to the Middlebury community and beyond.



*Aliza and Sami receiving their awards*

The final tidbit of news is that we have added some technology to the SOAN Lab in Munroe 301. There’s a long-needed new computer, but the big addition is the huge TV screen on the wall. This will allow teams of students and small classes to work collectively on data set analysis.

Alumni, please come by Munroe to see it when you’re in Vermont!

**Mike Sheridan**, SOAN Chair

## *Faculty and Staff Updates*

### **Svea Closser**

This spring was very stressful, but there were definitely some high points in this academic year. It was great to

work with students on a global health textbook I'm preparing. And, it was wonderful to work with alum **Harriet Napier '12**, who just finished an MPH program at Johns Hopkins, on an article about volunteer Community Health Workers. It's fantastic to work with alums like Harriet, who are building exciting careers and thinking critically about the work they are doing. And after that stressful school year, summer is a wonderful gift. I went to a fascinating global conference on Community Health Workers in DC in June; I learned an enormous amount from researchers, policymakers, and Community Health Workers from across the world.



*Svea, center, with Community Health Worker labor activists, Satara, Maharashtra, India*

Next, I went to India and Nepal, learning about volunteer Community Health Worker programs in both places. It was wonderful to be traveling in new places where I speak the language – and also wonderful to meet with Indian academics who are doing really fascinating work. It was a great trip and I look forward to returning.

### **James Fitzsimmons**

I was on leave this year, dividing my time between Middlebury and several countries, including Belize, Japan, and Germany. I spent a January field season at Cuello, Belize, with a couple of students; we were able to iron out a rough chronology for the site and figured out that it was abandoned – at earliest – around 750 AD. Speaking of students and fieldwork, I had a surprise visit from **Ashley Higgins '12**, who worked with me at Zapote Bobal, Guatemala several years ago; it is always fun to see former students and to hear about their exploits since graduation. In terms of academics, I just got a contract for a popular book on the Maya; it is tentatively titled “The Empire that Never Was” and is due to Oxford University Press in April, so I now have a clock to work with! I also

tinkered with a second manuscript on mortuary patterns in ancient Mesoamerica, also under contract with the University of Texas Press. Classes are starting soon, so I am scrambling to finish chapters right now!

*Ashley and Prof. Fitzsimmons standing in front of a Maya replica stele (in Davis Library) they helped bring to Middlebury in 2011. They unearthed the real one in Guatemala earlier that year and brought it to the National Museum in Guatemala City.*



### **Chong-Suk Han**

In 2016-17, I began my first year as the Posse mentor for students from New York. So far, it has been one of the highlights of my time at Middlebury and I'm having a great time with 10 wonderful students who have worked so hard to be here. Of course, it hasn't been all work and no play as we got to enjoy a wonderful day at Six Flags and will most definitely go again, hopefully for their Halloween special events. I also had a great time teaching J-term, which I haven't done in a while, but it reminded me how much I actually enjoy J-term classes. During the school year, I was invited to give talks at Brandeis University, Castleton University, and Saint Joseph's University. It's always nice to visit other schools and meet different types of students and talk with colleagues working at different types of institutions. While this has been a difficult year on campus for a variety of reasons, I am also grateful to have found so many wonderful



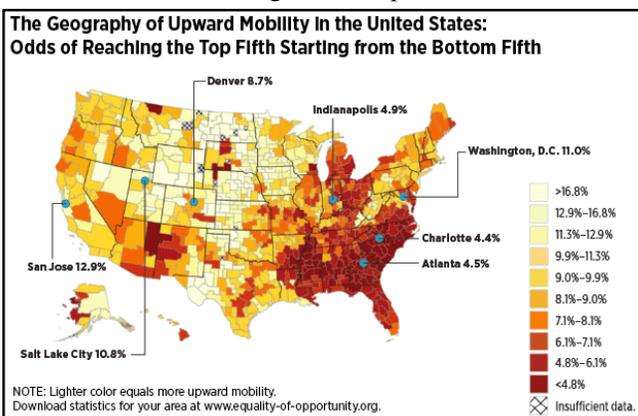
*Chong-suk's Posse group*

colleagues as well as get to know the folks I've known for a while a little better. I am amazed at the dedication that so many have shown to make Middlebury the best that it

can be for all of the people in our community. As I shared with you last year, I am making progress on my current project examining racial desire among gay men. The first publication from that project should be forthcoming next year as it makes its way through the revision process. I'm hoping that during the 2017-18 school year, the entire manuscript will be finished and ready to be shopped around to different publishers, so keeping my fingers crossed! Personally, spring semester was a little hectic with my forced move into a new apartment, but I'm enjoying my new place and it was probably time for a change anyway. I am, however, slightly grateful that I no longer live downtown, especially with all the construction going on.

### Matt Lawrence

My first year at Middlebury confirmed my greatest hopes: this department is a remarkable place to start a tenure track career. SOAN colleagues and students represent the best of the college in so many ways and it has been an honor to join them in Munroe Hall. I am especially thankful for their enthusiasm to add more quantitative training to our curriculum. Fifteen brave students signed up for my new social statistics course in the spring semester. I am delighted that a few of those pioneers were able or are planning to use quantitative methods in their senior work. I also enjoyed adapting my other courses to the Middlebury way of teaching. It was particularly rewarding to welcome back **Peggy Nelson** as a guest lecturer in the "Sociology of the Family" course she brilliantly developed over many years and has now passed along to me. Travels away from campus allowed me to present work at conferences in Philadelphia and Montreal and participate in workshops at the University of Michigan, CUNY's Graduate Center, and Haverford College. This past summer offered



some time to jump back into research. One current project on rural economic mobility grew out of conversations with students in my "Inequality and the

American Dream" course. A second project on economic diversity at selective colleges combines data used in the stats class with ideas discussed during my "Higher Education and Society" senior seminar. Of course, recent campus events raised many new discussion topics for that seminar in the future with SOAN students and faculty providing productive models for how to engage those issues in and out of the classroom.

### Jamie McCallum

I returned to teaching in the Spring of 2017 after a sabbatical and a stint of parental leave. My sabbatical consisted of research, a visiting position at UC Berkeley, filmmaking, writing, traveling, becoming a parent, and moving into a new house. Yet, the semester I went back to the classroom contained new challenges too. I taught



familiar classes but with new syllabi and had some important writing deadlines mixed in too. I am currently a faculty mentor at MidCORE at Sierra Nevada College at Lake Tahoe. What's MidCORE, you ask? I'll be better able to answer that when it's over. For right now, it's proving to be an interesting way to meet students, and challenges my approach to pedagogy in new ways. It also provides a surprising dimension to my scholarly research on labor issues. This summer I am working with **Ari Grant-Sasson '18** for the second consecutive year to write two book chapters for edited volumes and to craft my own next book proposal.

### Erica Morrell

This year I joined SOAN as a C3 postdoctoral fellow after finishing my PhD in the summer of 2016 at the University of Michigan. It is such a pleasure to be here! The faculty, staff, and students are so welcoming. As a sociologist who specializes in environmental sociology, social movements, the politics of knowledge, and critical race and feminist studies, I enjoyed teaching the Sociology of Food and Environmental (In)Justice in America this year. Also on Middlebury's campus, with the Women of Color student group I co-organized a teach-in on the Dakota Access Pipeline in November (Native American Heritage Month). I also hosted a talk

with Migrant Justice, a local farmworkers' rights organization, and I spoke about food and climate justice initiatives during the Howard E. Woodin Colloquium Series and Climate Justice Symposium. Additionally, since joining Middlebury's vibrant community of scholars I began fieldwork on my new book project, *First Food Justice*, which explores struggles for infant feeding equity in America. Through the Spring and Summer, my qualitative fieldwork led me to New York City, Detroit, North Carolina, and the Navajo Nation, as well as right here in Vermont. The Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine invited me to brief policymakers on my work at a Summit in Washington, D.C. in June, and I will soon be discussing my research with fellow sociologists in Montreal at our association's annual meeting in August. Also during this meeting, I will take over as the new Chair of the Committee on Teaching, Training, and Practice for the Section on Environmental Sociology. In this position, I look forward to continuing to develop my pedagogy, and that of my colleagues, to enrich the learning experience for Middlebury students. Thank you for including me as part of this wonderful campus!



Left to right: Amanda Singer, Chair, Navajo Nation Breastfeeding Coalition, Erica, Ora Nez, co-founder, Navajo Nation Breastfeeding Coalition

### Marybeth Nevins

From me there are three pieces of news from 2016-7. My book – *Worldmaking Stories: Maidu Language and Community Renewal on a Shared California Landscape*, is “out” with University of Nebraska Press this August. This is the first book I have written for a broader than academic audience. It centers on a four-part creation narrative performed in 1900 by renowned

storyteller Tom Young in Maidu language and recorded by anthropologist Roland Dixon. In the story, the world assumes its present conditions following upon a series of arguments between two characters: K’odojapem/Worldmaker (the serious one) and Wepam/Coyote (the trickster). Their argument begins when the world was formless and progresses through the splitting of sky and earth, formation of landscape, living beings, people, names, languages, sex and death and finally to changes to the human and natural landscape with the arrival of an invading people with the California Gold Rush. This book offers a rare perspective on the California Gold-rush from a Native American perspective. The stories are presented in facing Maidu and English verses and illustrated with original lithographs, intaglios, serigraphs and wood blocks by artist Daniel Stolpe. There is also an appendix with lessons in reading and pronouncing Maidu by linguist William Shipley. The book is a result of collaboration with Maidu language revitalization organizations and designed with Maidu community use in mind, as well as wider audiences.

Contextualizing chapters place the stories within Maidu struggles to assert public stewardship roles with respect to land, and in partnership with federal and state agencies. Thanks to **Maddie Gilbert ‘14.5, Sophie Bufton ‘16, Anna Mullen ‘15, and Maddie Cochrane ‘16** for their help with the project. I also became a Trustee at the Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, the oldest community museum in the nation. This arose as a result of yearly visits to the museum’s Swift archives with my Language and Power class, including digital scholarship that class produced from items they found in the Swift archive. We’d been looking at 19<sup>th</sup> century spelling and elocution primers to explore the relation between village schools and American democracy. We also explore the role of anti-immigrant sentiment in the selection of the so-called “mid-western” (actually inland-north) dialect as the institutional standard for American English. In this photo archivist **Eva Garcelon-Hart** introduces this



remarkable New England community archive to students in my 2016 Language and Power class. Outside of

classroom use I enjoy the museum's quirky hybrid qualities: part crowd-pleasing "cabinet of curiosities" and part meticulous New England archive. Finally, I helped organize a conference with the Rohatyn Center entitled "Scroll to Scrolling: Shifting Cultures of Language and Identity." We fielded talks from linguistic anthropologists, archeologists (including our own **James Fitzsimmons**), classicists, medievalists, and linguists. I especially enjoyed having so many SOAN students involved in video production, moderating talks and composing summary discussions of the conference as a whole.

### Linus Owens

This was supposed to be my sabbatical year. It turned out to be that, and more, not to mention quite a bit less, too. First, everything got postponed one semester, to accommodate a colleague's family leave in the fall. When spring rolled around, it was at last time for me. But no sooner did my leave from Middlebury come, it already seemed to be leaving itself. That's because the beginning of my leave coincided with the visit of Charles Murray. In the lead up to the event, three



*Student protesters disrupt speaker Charles Murray on March 2 at McCullough Student Center*

students and I thought it would make a good subject for exploration through a grant I received from the Digital Liberal Arts program on campus. It looked like a good candidate – a controversy, a protest, and an event, something that we could easily manage over the semester, and which would also provide a history of what happened, given that Murray's last visit, ten years prior, had been mostly forgotten. How naive we were! What happened, of course, was something that was quite the opposite of "manageable," as both I and some of my collaborators found ourselves embroiled in the protests and the aftershocks. While the research side of the project sputtered and stalled, I did find time to start finding a public voice, first by writing an essay in the immediate aftermath that got significant attention, then branching out into radio interviews and

then an essay, co-authored with two Middlebury alumna, published in *Inside Higher Education*. Along the way, I was also deeply involved in advocacy on campus to support the students involved in the protest. Of course, it wasn't all Murray, all the time. I did my yearly meet up with my squatting research collective, this time in Prague. I also did a site visit for the Middlebury Study Abroad program in Tokyo, ostensibly in preparation for my plans to teach in the program this fall, plans which, unfortunately, had to be canceled. I also spent a month at the Hutchins Center for African and African-American Studies at Harvard, attending an NEH institute on the history of the Civil Rights Movement, with an eye towards developing a class on the topic. And, last but not least, the Halloween project, much like a TV zombie, refuses to die. I presented some work on racism and blackface in costumes at the International Visual Sociology Association conference in Montreal.

### Ellen Oxfeld

This past year I was inspired by the work of my students and colleagues. I continue to find our students' research and writing to be both thought provoking and impressive in the quality of the scholarship. This year my three senior thesis advisees wrote fascinating theses on the role of food in bringing refugees and host populations together in Berlin, Germany (**Amir Firestone**), the resistance of rural farmers to takeover by large propertied interests in Hong Kong (**Adrian Leong**), and the gendering of space in public gardens in urban China (**Caroline Agsten**). Advising these superb students has also given me plenty of ideas for my own future research projects. Congratulations to all of you! My colleagues also continue to provide so much help in our day to day conversations – whether it is about how to structure a grant proposal, or finding an innovative new way to approach a topic in the classroom. Thank you to all my wonderful colleagues! In late spring I was also able to celebrate the publication of my book on the relationship between food and culture in rural China which was



published in June (*Bitter and Sweet: Food, Meaning and Modernity in Rural China*, University of California Press, 2017). I'm looking forward to starting a new project on the use of commensality (eating together) to overcome social boundaries, whether these be those of religion, generation, class, race or ethnicity. I'm working now on defining three case studies and hope to have more to report next year. Finally, my extracurricular activity (health care reform in Vermont) continues unabated. Health care as a public good, as it exists in all other industrialized countries, has been elusive in the United States. Hopefully we may get there in Vermont with small steps. My present focus is on legislation which will make primary care a universal public good in Vermont. Countries with wide access to primary care have been shown to have better health outcomes in hundreds of refereed studies. I hope I will be able to report on progress on that front by next year.

### **Mari Price**

2016-17 was a terrific year for me. It was **Mike Sheridan's** first academic year as Department Chair, and I am happy to say we work very well together. He has done a fabulous job and he still has two years in that position. [*aw shucks – Ed.*]

I have been travelling to North Carolina and Maine to visit family and friends. We have a wonderful time when we get together. Lots of fun memories!

Plans for my son's wedding on October 7<sup>th</sup>, are coming together nicely. That will be a very exciting day!

Oh, and I have added quilting to my extensive list of hobbies.

I decided to go with a photo of the sunrise from the summit of Beehive Mountain in Acadia, ME. It's an annual hike and Norm makes omelets at the top! ☺



### **Michael Sheridan**

I thought that my first year as SOAN Chair was going to be mostly quiet bureaucratic functions, like signing degree audit forms and telling other departments that no, we can't give \$500 to support their guest speaker (but how about \$50?). Then things got very busy in March with the Charles Murray affair. I got involved by appearing on TV and radio to give my assessment of Murray's scholarship. After the March 2<sup>nd</sup> event

turned out badly for everyone, it turned into a seemingly unending and stressful social drama. For me, the key questions that we seemed to be talking around was "who are we as a community, and how are we organized?" These are always important questions, and I think they're particularly cogent in this particular moment in American political history. The silver lining is, I think, starting to appear – faculty, staff, and students are all talking about what the Middlebury community is, what it does, and how we can and should relate to one another. I've been active on this issue by helping to write a memo to the College administration on support for immigrants, and by working to draft the Middlebury Faculty for an Inclusive Community statement on inclusivity and civil freedoms, which we posted online in May (see <http://sites.middlebury.edu/inclusivecommunity/>). For a long time these issues were just an eight-days-a-week job. With the rest of my time ("hah! As if!") I've been working on two big projects. I'm deep in the Cameroon chapter of my 'boundary plants' book project, and I can now see the contours of the Polynesia and Caribbean chapters. The most fun I've been having, though, has been building a wood-fired bread oven in my backyard. I've been thinking of this for about a decade because artisan bread really needs a 600-750F refractory heat. I've been playing with concrete, block, and firebrick for most of the summer. Right now I'm thinking about how to put a damper in the chimney...



### **David Stoll**

Many Midd faculty used to regard intellectual life here as too predictable, but not any more. Thanks to the college's push for greater sensitivity, the arrival of Donald Trump in the White House, and the Charles Murray debacle on March 2, there are injured feelings on all sides. Along with many other departments, SOAN profs are severely divided over whether it was appropriate to shut down an invited speaker. My position is that the students and

faculty who stopped Murray's talk became the enemy they claimed to oppose. One example of how their aim was as bad as a Trump tweet storm: when they chanted "Racist! Sexist! Anti-gay! Charles Murray, go away!", they ignored the fact that in 2013 Murray antagonized the Conservative Political Action Convention (CPAC) by telling them it was time to support gay marriage and abortion rights. I used to think Vermont was too isolated from national trends to study political polarization and bigotry; now I know better. Issues this next year will include student government proposals for a new board to approve speaker invitations. I continue to visit the Ixil Maya town of Nebaj in Guatemala. The local eco-tourism industry is alive and well, including a cheap, basic but functional hut-to-hut trekking network with options for hikers like myself who are merely in good shape, not just super(wo)men who love 1,500 meter ascents. The mountains are spectacular, and you can see the interaction between Mayan village life, peasant agriculture and cloud forest. At least one person should speak passable Spanish. You should also hire a guide, for \$25-35 per day, which will be worth every penny in terms of understanding what you are seeing, avoiding misunderstandings. and not getting lost.



Email me if you need more detail. On the research front, the flow of young Nebaj workers to the U.S. in my 2012 *El Norte or Bust!* has broadened to include many more women and children than before. Under the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, passed toward the end of the Bush administration but implemented by the Obama administration, U.S. authorities have stopped automatic deportation of many migrants under the age of eighteen. This also includes parents if they cross the border accompanied by a minor. As a result, smuggler networks have developed a two-tier price system for their Nebaj clients: if you are sufficiently young that

U.S. authorities will probably allow you to join your relatives, the price for direct delivery to custody can be as low as \$3,000. However, if you wish to be delivered to the U.S. informal job market the old-fashioned way – without being arrested, going before a judge, petitioning for asylum and posting bail – the price can be as high as \$11,000. This is double the old price. Once again I have started to collect stories about these deals and what can go wrong with them.

### **Diego Thompson**

Last year, I really enjoyed teaching sociology courses on food systems, immigration, and the environment. Students loved these topics, and class discussions were often enriched by political changes and current events that students brought to the class. During the last year, I wrote three book chapters (forthcoming) on how Uruguayan communities have dealt with water quality deterioration and the role of community governance. I have also become very interested in the role that media and key governmental actors have on perceptions and responses to these environmental problems at the local level, both in Latin America and in the U.S. I have also continued my work as a volunteer in the Advisory Board of Migrant Justice (MJ) which focuses on human rights and food justice in Vermont. MJ is currently developing a fair food program called 'Milk with Dignity' which aims to improve health and labor conditions of dairy farm workers in Vermont. Unfortunately, this has been my last year teaching in Middlebury. This Fall, I am beginning a new job as Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at Mississippi State University. I am very excited about my new job which will allow me to teach undergraduate and graduate courses on rural and environmental sociology. I will always remember with love the wonderful professional and personal experiences that I have lived in Middlebury. Contact me at [dthompson@soc.msstate.edu](mailto:dthompson@soc.msstate.edu).



### **Rebecca Tiger**

Like last year, I spent much of this past one putting my efforts to starting a prison education program at Middlebury. I am very happy to report that I will be offering a course in Marble Valley Correctional Facility in Rutland during the 2018 winter term. **Julia Shumlin**, a fabulous SOAN major, will be working with me in the fall to design the course and will go with me inside the jail when I teach. In June, I attended a conference on prison education and the liberal arts at Bryn Mawr College where I learned so much about the amazing work

my colleagues at our “peer institutions” are doing inside prisons as well as the partnerships they’ve formed with organizations, all run by formerly incarcerated people, that help people transition to life after prison. I’ve spent this summer writing grants for my 2018/2019 sabbatical and a few articles about the opiate panic in Vermont. With the help of recently graduated SOAN major **Aliza Cohen**, I’ve made progress on my book project *Reimagining Addiction*, which I hope to finish during my sabbatical. In August, I’ll be in Helsinki presenting a chapter from the book and in September, I’ll be attending a seminar in Salzburg, Austria on the future of criminal justice reform in the US.



*Inmates at the MVCF, Rutland*

### **Trinh Tran**

In my “Global Migrations” class this past spring, we learned that there was no escaping controversy. Charles Murray, President Trump’s travel ban, rising anti-immigrant sentiments across the globe—we tackled them all. And in the process, we learned what it means to *do* public sociology. I’m grateful to my students for the candor and open mindedness with which they approached these conversations. This summer I’ve been continuing my project on charter schools in Oakland, California. I’m looking forward to comparing the results to my previous project on school choice in Philadelphia. With summer winding down, I’m excited about transitioning to my new role as an assistant professor. The bonus will be having my husband and dog at my side.

### ***Senior Project Abstracts***

#### **Caroline Agsten**

#### **Stratifying Spaces or Green Places? Gendering Public Parks in Beijing and Shanghai**

From 1914-1925, Beijing underwent a vigorous public works campaign in which all formerly imperial gardens were converted into public parks. The dismantling of

imperial walls coincided with urban Chinese woman beginning to occupy a more significant role outside the home. This thesis examines the role of public parks in Beijing and Shanghai as social organizing structures with specific attention to gender. Although the physical walls surrounding imperial gardens were knocked down long ago, access to parks and full use of them is still constrained by numerous factors. By evaluating contemporary phenomena with historical developments, I found that public parks today are still patterned by ideas about normative gender roles for Chinese men and women. Many park activities act as gendered performances that reinforce implicitly understood social roles. This thesis therefore describes how the built environment plays a fundamental role in constructing these gendered activities. But despite physical (and social) boundaries, park users are able to negotiate their positions by appropriating different spaces to pursue different leisure activities. Drawing on personal interviews and participant observation, this thesis illuminates a facet of the ongoing discussion surrounding gender roles, gender expectations, and gendered behavior in contemporary China. (advised by Prof. Oxford)



*Fuxing Park, Shanghai*

#### **Isabella Morganne Carey**

#### **Dividing Women: An Analysis of the Racial Reality that impacts Black and White Women’s Path to College**

This research demonstrates that despite the rising college enrollment rates of women in the United States, access and attainment is not equal across all racial groups. By interviewing Black and White women about their college application experiences, this research draws parallels and highlights the differences in their lived reality. It reveals that there are still many obstacles that Black women face when going through the college application and decision process, many of which are perpetuated by the power structures and racist systems of society. Taking three main variables in pre-existing research that impact students’ access and attainment possibilities, I examine the different implications for Black and White women. I conclude with possible areas of focus for structural reform to reduce the racial achievement and attainment gap amongst Black and White women. (advised by Prof. Han)

Aliza Cohen

### “Willie Horton Syndrome”: A Case Study in the Transformation of United States Penal Culture



This thesis analyzes the transformation from a rehabilitative ethos of punishment to a penal system focused on stigmatization and incapacitation of

the criminal. In order to understand this shift in American penal policies, practices, and sentiments, I examine the role of the visual in creating and sustaining our collective understandings of criminality. First, I explore the origins of the visual with the penal system. The contemporaneous rise of criminology and photography in the late nineteenth century facilitated the growth of a state apparatus concerned with understanding the criminal so as to better manage and regulate the criminal class. Second, I examine the case of Willie Horton, whose mug shot was circulated in the 1988 presidential election by Republican candidate George H.W. Bush as a way to portray his Democratic opponent Michael Dukakis as “soft on crime.” I conduct a content analysis of *New York Times* articles mentioning Willie Horton in order to track the lasting power of Horton’s image and to understand the role that Horton played in transforming how we treat criminals. I find that while the earliest iteration of the criminal photograph was used to better know the criminal, Horton’s mug shot rebirthed the idea that Blackness and criminality are inextricably linked, that the victim warrants protection at all costs, and that the criminal cannot be reformed and, thus, deserves incapacitation. (advised by Prof. Tiger) [Aliza was the 2017 recipient of the Peggy Nelson Award in Critical Sociology and Anthropology – Ed.]

Maggie Danna

### Regulation of Homelessness in Sarasota, Florida: How Public Spaces and Laws Are Biased Towards the Interests of the Affluent and the Exclusion of the Homeless

This report explores the issue of homelessness in Sarasota, Florida and what actions Sarasota County and the city of Sarasota take in dealing with it. Sarasota’s economy is heavily reliant on the tourism industry, and the region has been experiencing a continuous influx of out-of-state retirees in recent years. Keeping the ambiance of the City of Sarasota beautiful and peaceful is important to both tourists and retirees. Many retirees are wealthy enough to purchase luxury housing, and this contributes to the rising cost of living in the area and increases economic strain upon the working class. With the average age of residents rising, Sarasota is attempting to draw in young business

professionals and diversify the local economy. In this report, I look at local newspapers and minutes from relevant city and county meetings, as well as Sarasota County’s comprehensive plan, to see how the homeless are being treated and thought about in Sarasota. Looking through these sources, it becomes apparent that wealthier residents have a greater influence on city and county commissioners’ decision-making than others in the community do, and that Sarasota’s desire to strengthen its economy and its image while appeasing wealthy residents takes precedent over truly helping the poor and the homeless for the long-term. Instead, many short-term solutions are created to push the homeless out of wealthy residential areas and the downtown shopping district. (advised by Prof. Tran)

Aoife Duna

### The End of the Road: Resource Extraction in Canoe Country

This ethnography investigates issues of class, resource management, and community values surrounding a proposed sulfide-ore mining project near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, a federally protected wilderness territory. The mining conflict is an issue of emerging meanings connected to ideological values and economic need; demographic studies show that park visitors are wealthier and better educated than local residents. Pro-extraction and pro-conservation arguments disguise the communal experiences of economic stagnation, class difference, and political marginalization of residents in Ely, Minnesota. My work investigates these experiences of marginalization and aims to answer the following questions: What are the narratives about the mining proposal and the town of Ely? How do residents of Ely articulate political marginalization through these narratives? How do pro-extraction and pro-conservation individuals establish their sociopolitical identity? Lastly, what were the historical, social, and economic interactions that created the sociopolitical separation in the mining conflict? I illustrate how the historical, social, and economic interactions in the Great Lakes region created the circumstances for these modern experiences of marginalization. The divergent arguments of extraction and conservation represent different visions of the future, and with them, different paths of socioeconomic investment that will transform the town of Ely. (advised by Prof. Sheridan)



Boundary Waters Canoe Area

**Amir Firestone**

**Ingredients of Integration: A Study of Collaborative Cooking Classes as Mechanisms of Social and Cultural Integration of Syrian Refugees in Germany**

Over the past few years, the United States and much of Europe have fallen into political turmoil in the face of the largest global refugee crisis since World War II. In the midst of growing social, cultural, and political tensions, some have sought creative ways to mend such divides and prevent further social and cultural schism. This thesis examines a method of



integrating refugee and host communities in Berlin, Germany through collaborative cooking classes. Focusing on two cooking classes led by Syrian refugees, I examine how social relationships emerge from these interactions and study the role that food plays in facilitating these social interactions. A close analysis of these events and of nine follow-up interviews conducted with participants from these classes reveals various mechanisms for promoting sociability and *communitas*. I implement a holistic approach to analyzing these cooking classes by considering how these interactions function as rites of passage, rituals of reversal, social dramas, and exchanges of different forms of capital in which food plays a central role. Through this analysis, this study reveals the extensive potential of collaborative cooking for fostering social interaction among distinct cultural groups and offers insights into the practical uses of food and cooking to these ends. (advised by Prof. Oxfeld)

**Hana Gebremariam**

**“I Miss Greens, but not Kale”: A Qualitative Analysis of Black and Latina Women’s Experiences with Food at Middlebury College**

Food has a critical role in identity formation, group boundary maintenance, enacting racialized and non-racialized identities, and marginalizing racial and ethnic minorities. Although there is an extensive understanding of food and its various functions in society, there is very little focus on the food narratives of Black and Latina women, who share similar food histories in the United States. Thus, this research used in-depth interviews and participant observations to explore the



complex role of food in Black and Latina women’s experiences at Middlebury College. I found that there were dominant food norms imposed through discourses of health that Black and Latina women negotiate at Middlebury College; however, they were able to use their racialized identities to critique and challenge these norms. (advised by Prof. Closser)

**Yasmine Gilbert**

**The Patient’s Experience of Conventional and Alternative Approaches to Biomedicine: Ambivalence, Autonomy and Rationality**

This research examines why, given the pervasive biomedical hegemony, certain individuals seek alternative health care. I draw on anthropological and sociological literature, which has suggested that people are ideologically drawn to alternative health modalities, such as chiropractic medicine, naturopathy and acupuncture by the promise of holistic treatment. Alternatively, previous research indicates that rejection of biomedical principles drives people away from conventional medicine and towards alternative modalities. The popularity of these alternative treatments contrasts the growing biomedical hegemony that relies on pharmaceuticals for sickness management. I interview individuals with chronic illnesses because pharmacological biomedicine is often unsuccessful at satisfactorily addressing these individuals’ health concerns. I also analyze posts on a popular health forum to better understand sentiments towards biomedicine, doctors, and alternative practices. Insights gathered in semi-structured interviews guided my analysis of the online discussions. My research indicates that frustration with doctor care, not biomedical principles, motivates people to seek alternative health care professionals. These individuals maintain their trust in biomedical tools, such as blood tests, while pushing back against traditional medical authority. While “holistic” concepts do justify alternative therapies, they do so only in contrast to conventional therapies. My research comments on the strength of the biomedical hegemony, the authority of doctors, and the importance of medical autonomy. (advised by Prof. Closser)

**Rebecca Johnson**

**Grading Shades of Black: Reproducing Skin-Color Hierarchy When Casting Black Women in Television Shows**

This project looks at Black women appearing as leads in current popular television shows and analyzes them through the framework of a casting call case study. The casting call for the 2015 film *Straight Outta Compton* gave four categories for Black women to audition for – “A Girls”, “B Girls”, “C Girls”, and “D Girls.” The listing (posted on Facebook) used the letters A – D to label the type of girls in a way reminiscent of grading in the education system. Getting an A would signify intelligence, while receiving a D



would mean a poor performance and deviance in school. This project gives a historical perspective of colorism and the portrayal of Black women on television through history. With this knowledge, I draw connections between the history of skin-color hierarchy and education, refinement, and social acceptance. I find a societal preference for light-skinned Black women because they are thought to possess these traits while dark-skinned Black women are stereotypically believed to be uneducated and unruly. While the seven Black women I chose to analyze bring a greater variety of racial narratives to American television, colorism stereotypes continue to shape Black women's progress toward equality in media representation. (advised by Prof. Han)

### **Isabel Kannegieser**

#### **Signaling Status Through Sport**

There has been extensive research that observes the ways in which successful, high profile, collegiate athletic teams are used as status symbols to market colleges and universities to a wide array of stakeholders. The literature suggests the status elicited by high-profile sports teams aids a higher education institution in three main ways: by boosting its "character and spirit," both on and off campus, by providing various financial rewards and advantages, and by increasing its "visibility" amongst various applicant demographics. It is clear from such literature that the status high profile sports teams bring is invaluable to higher education institutions. However, organizational sociology and Weber's bureaucratic model act as a lens to reveal that very little research has been done to understand how various administrative actors within these institutions utilize sports to promote their own personal agendas. These strategies allow them to elevate their status relative to both a) other organizations within the college and b) to outside organizations that are similar to them in both structure and function. The focus of my senior research work is to develop and present a more holistic understanding of the links between athletic reputation and success at a liberal arts school, and the various administrative organizations within the institution that capitalize on such performances. This project aims to understand whether intercollegiate athletics serve ulterior purposes for the liberal arts institution, and if sports accrue status to help preserve and reinforce the competition within a schools' internal hierarchy. (advised by Prof. Lawrence)

### **Jordan Killen**

#### **The Myth of Marinaleda: Ideology, Discurso, and the Creation of Utopia in an Andalusian Pueblo**

This project explores the creation and perpetuation of revolutionary utopian ideology in Marinaleda, a village of 2,700 in Andalusia (the southern region of Spain). Specifically, my analysis addresses the following: 1) how regional social structures and historical movements set ideological and political precedents for the contemporary collective struggle that landless Marinaledan day



laborers initiated in the late 1970s; 2) how the ideology that emerged from that struggle has manifested in the conceptions that village residents express of themselves and of their local history; and 3) how both struggle and ideology have served to support and legitimize Marinaleda's basic contemporary social structure and political hegemony. Methodology took place chronologically, in two main phases: first, fieldwork in the Marinaledan community, including participant observation and semi-structured interviews; second, analysis of interview recordings, fieldnotes, ideological materials gathered while on-site, and relevant secondary sources, synthesized into grounded theory. (advised by Prof. Stoll)

### **Hye-Jin Kim**

#### **Baking "Granola Privilege": A Case Study on College Outdoors Orientation Trips as an Institutionalized Mechanism of Social Reproduction**

This senior project focuses on "granola" identity as a case study of privilege that is prevalent among students of elite liberal arts institutions. The theoretical



framework for analysis is the role of institutions in Bourdieu's theory of "cultural reproduction" and Goffman's definition of "total institutions." My research examines the institutional logic behind mandatory first-year orientation trips and how they shape students' views of the ideal college experience. By studying the role of the institution in the perpetuation of "granola privilege" on campus, I aim to shed some light on these research questions: 1) Which values of today's American elite are being reproduced through "granola" identity on college campuses? 2) How is the experience of participating in a wilderness orientation trip different than other types of trips in terms of activities, leaders and group dynamics? 3) What kind of effect do wilderness trips have specifically on first-years and their impression of the dominant campus culture? To answer these questions, I interviewed 15 first-year students from the same dormitory hall on their orientation trips and the social benefits of being "outdoorsy" or "granola" on this campus. (advised by Prof. Lawrence)

**Rachel Kinney**  
**Norwegian Wood: Recontextualizing Thor Heyerdahl's Kon-Tiki Adventure**

This project examines the symbolism of Inka balsa rafts, first within their original context in the South American maritime political economy during the 15th century CE and then in Thor Heyerdahl's pseudoscientific Kon-Tiki reconstruction project of 1947. Scholarly understanding of the form and function of balsa rafts remains limited, and I therefore examine archaeological evidence, Spanish accounts, and ethnographic studies to fill this gap. Andean peoples frequently used balsa rafts for fishing and especially for obtaining and transporting the sacred *Spondylus* shell, a valuable trade good whose meaning elites controlled to create power in the form of social capital. Heyerdahl argued that South Americans traveled west in balsa rafts to populate Polynesia, although this myth- and diffusion-based theory lacks support. I believe that his ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, and colonization and his pseudoscientific approach concealed historical realities of the function of pre-Columbian balsa rafts. Heyerdahl saw his journey as a liminal adventure and thus used the balsa as cultural capital, which he converted to social capital through the popularity of the voyage and his subsequent *Kon-Tiki* book. Archaeology of the mid-20th century is not now known for its sensitivity, and Heyerdahl's work, though pseudoscientific, follows the same tradition of archaeology as colonizing. I believe that if we would like to understand more about the past, we must acknowledge that any statements about the past are informed by and inform the present by practicing a postcolonial, social archaeology that attempts to correct historical wrongs. (advised by Prof. Sheridan) [*Rachel was the co-recipient of the 2017 Lank Prize in Sociology and Anthropology – Ed.*]



**Samantha Takahashi Lamont**  
**The Fluid, the Fixed and the Fly: Mixed-Race Identity on Facebook**

“Hapa” is a Hawaiian word meaning mixed-race. Among youth and young adults in mainland United States it has taken on a new meaning referring to someone who is part Asian and part something else. In this project I examine the negotiation of identity on the Hapa Facebook group. My dataset consists in four months of user posts and responses on this page. I perform content and density of response analysis on the posts to understand: 1) the major themes mixed-race people use to make sense of their group identity 2) the ways in which members negotiate the tension between fluidity and security and 3) the ways in which

virtual spaces influence how multiracial people form identity. I consider the identity work that participants perform in the Hapa group in relation to Zygmunt Bauman's notion of fluid modernity, in particular his discussion of the tension between fluidity and security in modern identity. An analysis of the major themes shows that while Hapa members embrace aspects of fluidity, systemic racism complicates their ability to effortlessly cross boundaries and disrupt racial hierarchies. Members fill a desire for security through expressions of pride and solidarity, racializing their own experience as they do so. (advised by Prof. Nevins) [*Sami was the co-recipient of the 2017 Lank Prize in Sociology and Anthropology – Ed.*]



**Adrian Leong**  
**Decolonization at the Grassroots: Resistance and Place-making at a Migrant Village in Hong Kong**

The ongoing pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong aims to purge the existing governance structure of the outdated prerogatives for the rich and the powerful that were put in place during the British colonial era. Currently, a resurgence of grassroots, community-based organizing is sweeping across the border zone in response to land disputes that were precipitated by major infrastructure projects. These movements of defiance and resistance are challenging the dominant spatial practices that target the political migrants who escaped southern China in the 1940s-60s. Breaking from the tradition of past mass mobilizations in the region, these organizing efforts address land issues. They rely on everyday forms of resistance as well as discursive strategies to animate the Hong Kong landscape with meanings derived from local history. Through a synthesis of the ethnographic materials collected through participant observation, naturalistic inquiry, and grounded ethnography, this thesis explores how the synergy of bureaucratic power, mass media, and the culture of the market is transforming the remaining farmland of Ma Shi Po in Fanling North, Hong Kong, into prime real estate. It documents the everyday forms of resistance and discursive practices that the people of Mapopo Community Farm in Ma Shi Po are using to fight back. In doing so, it provides insights into the workings of



certain discursive strategies: specifically, how they engender social networks that create an emotive bond to land and the people who are sustained by it, along with a sense of historicity. This attention to spatial relations and material conditions has opened up new venues for the pro-democracy movement, just as regional integration in the Pearl River Delta becomes more imminent. The multiplying of place-based struggles like that in Ma Shi Po holds the potential to make the ground more fertile for the growth of a decolonized Hong Kong subjectivity, with respect to both the British past and current movements for self-determination from the Chinese government. (advised by Prof. Oxfeld)

**Shuba Maniram**

**Whiteness: Understanding Identity Through the Cultural Imagination**

This research looks at the way Whiteness gets constructed through the imagination. Poor White people cannot control the social construction of Whiteness due to their economic position in society where negative terms are associated with their actions and living conditions such as “trailer trash” or “white trash.” This creates an image of conflict of what it means to be truly White. In this research, I explore the following questions: 1) how is Whiteness constructed through the class position of self-identifying Whites? 2) In what ways is the idea of “being White” illuminated through the symbolization of trailer parks? To answer these questions, I conducted interviews and secondary text analysis. Through these methods, I gathered opinions of Whiteness through lived experiences of white people and analyze the ways that individuals place themselves in a category that defines not just their physical attributions, but also the believed ways that Whiteness reflects certain behaviors in society. (advised by Prof. Closser)

**Patrick McElravey**

**The Purpose of Education: Cross-Class Interaction in the Elite Liberal Arts College**

The contemporary narrative on the “crisis” in higher education – which accuses elite colleges of failing their disadvantaged students and perpetuating class inequality by encouraging the development of a singular mindset among its student body – calls into question the value and purpose of higher education. This paper examines this critique on the value and purpose of higher education by studying a unique site in the field of American higher education, the liberal arts college. This study asks: 1) What is the purpose of education for students who attend an elite liberal arts



institution and how does this relate to students’ notion of “having a calling” within Weber’s “spirit of capitalism”?

2) How does a student’s definition of this purpose differ based on their relationship to social class and does their liberal arts education influence this relationship? 3) Can a student’s relationship to class predict how they make educational choices such as major decisions as well as how they value various aspects of their education? My data, gathered from survey responses from 125 Middlebury College seniors, suggests that students who have a more complex relationship to social class (i.e., students who both do not identify with and aspire to rise above their family’s socioeconomic status) exude “critical consciousness.” Contrary to popular critiques, these students do not adopt a singular mindset that sees the value and purpose of education as narrowly related to economic mobility or “the calling;” rather, they display “critical consciousness” by fundamentally questioning the values and purpose of education. (advised by Prof. Tran)

**Maggie Nazer**

**“You are the Cause of Poverty”: A Case Study of Female Empowerment Discourses in Sierra Leone**

Ranked as the 7th poorest country in the world, Sierra Leone attracts significant amounts of humanitarian aid and development assistance. The empowerment of females in the country is a concern for international development agencies and local development actors alike, and is addressed through the implementation of various empowerment programs targeting marginalized females from adolescence to adulthood. Based on five weeks of field research comprising of ethnographic and qualitative data collection, this senior project presents a case study of female empowerment discourses in Sierra Leone. Drawing on Foucault’s theory of discourse and its disciplining power, as well as the literature linking development practice with neoliberalism, my thesis compares the dominant discourse of female empowerment employed by institutional actors and development workers with the narratives of female participants. Through their discourse empowerment programs in Sierra Leone propel a neoliberal agenda and discipline women to view themselves and to act as the main carriers of responsibility towards their well-being and protection. Whereas the institutionalized discourse defines empowerment in terms of individual capacity-building and self-responsibility, female participants emphasize the structural obstacles rendering them incapable of affecting change in their lives no matter their effort, ambition, or desire for change.

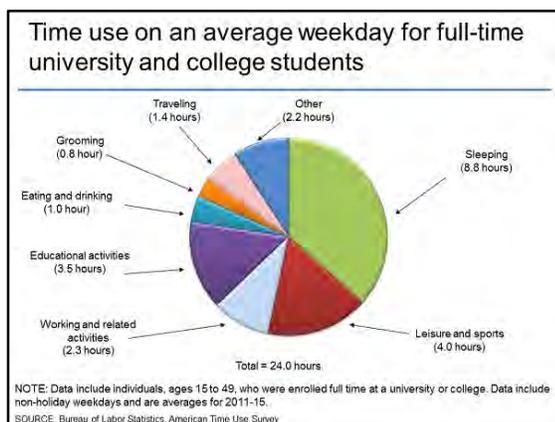
(advised by Prof. Closser)



**Adriana M. Ortiz-Burnham**

**Work Hard, Play Harder: Invisible and Unpaid Student Labor Outside the Classroom**

This research project theorizes the time and energy students spend on their commitments outside the classroom as “work.” I pay special attention to the ways extracurricular activities in particular serve similar functions as the other kinds of work students perform. There are three main implications of this theorization. First, students are performing new kinds of labor that are rendered invisible by traditional narratives of work. Second, colleges and universities are becoming a part of work society by expecting and encouraging this (invisible) labor. Finally, labor sociologists are increasingly concerned with the labor process and with working time. This research contributes to this general trend by furthering discussions about work and leisure and introducing new theorists to this debate. I add that the emotional labor of women students and students of color is inseparable from the work of being a student, and complicates the work performed in the activities listed above. Moreover, reconceptualizing students’ activities as work has direct impacts on the mission of colleges and universities. (advised by Prof. McCallum)

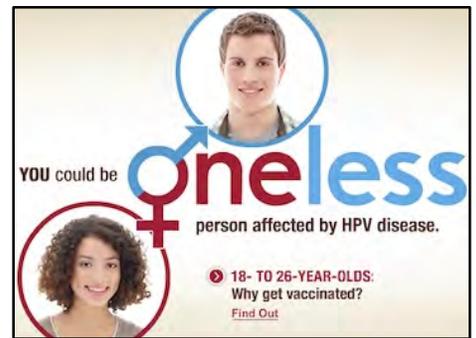


**Morgan Randolph**  
**Creating a Vaccine and Reinforcing Social Norms: An Analysis of the Commercial Advertising for the HPV Vaccine Gardasil**

This research examines Merck’s campaign for the release and ongoing promotion of their vaccine Gardasil. While their campaign was obviously designed to take the path of least resistance toward generating demand for a new vaccine, their advertising decisions didn’t take place in a vacuum. These decisions included marketing Gardasil as cervical cancer vaccine, downplaying the link between HPV and cervical cancer due to the sexual implications, marketing Gardasil heteronormatively and as a women’s-only drug, and using fear and doctors’ authority to sell Gardasil. These choices were more than just random choices, or choices made on the basis of creative expediency, or choices even meant to address the greatest threats to public health. Instead, I believe that the strategy and execution of Merck’s release and promotion of Gardasil was driven primarily by numerous pre-existing cultural biases, negative social stereotypes, and the stigmatization of certain populations and practices. Furthermore, my work pushes public health to consider that the ways in which Big

Pharma uses these social factors to drive their marketing, not only fails to make progress against correcting biases and stereotypes, but in fact actually perpetuates and reinforces them.

(advised by Prof. Owens)



**Erin Reid**  
**Re-blogging and Resistance: Constructing an Oppositional Black Feminist Aesthetic on Social Media**

My senior project focuses on the capacity of new media to combat dominant oppressive ideologies about Black womanhood. I use Tumblr as my case study in order to answer questions about the potential of social media to challenge hegemonic notions of Black womanhood and the Black female body. My central research questions are: In what ways do Black feminists use social media to push back upon dominant media discourses of Black womanhood? How does Black feminist engagement with social media open up the possibility for resistance of hegemonic notions of the Black female body, and create a self-defined subjectivity? Lastly, is there a way in which Black women’s self-representation within social media plays into and reaffirms the commodification of the Black female body? By engaging with the wider scholarly conversations surrounding the historical construction and dominant media discourses of Black womanhood, and deconstructing representations of Black female sexuality, I draw connections between how contemporary black women are shaped by history and mainstream media, and how they actively enact resistance through self-authorship and visual forms of self-representation. (advised by Prof. Tiger)

**Amanda Reilly**  
**Looking into the World of Sports Media: How Forty-Five Years Under Title IX has Increased Opportunity yet Lacked Equal Media Coverage for Collegiate Female Athletes**

Before Title IX was passed in 1972, female athletes had limited opportunities to participate in sports. Sports were more focused on men and what they offer – strength, power, agility, and speed. These were not categories used to describe women. These disparities also meant that media coverage of women athletes was distinctly different. As a result of the scarce media coverage females have become prone to different, even overly sexualized publicity. The saturation of male



dominance in sports and the incomplete progress of Title IX towards equal opportunities for females prevent viewers from more fully experiencing and engaging with female athletes. Although women in sports challenge the association between masculinity and sport, many female media representations confirm gender differences through the emphasis on femininity in addition to, or even instead of, athletic strengths. These gender discrepancies are evident in college and university settings as well. Although Title IX equalized various funding differences between men's and women's teams, one-way status differences still persist through portrayals of team and individual accomplishments by campus media and athletic department publications. (advised by Prof. Lawrence)

**Michelle Athena Roman**  
**Shifting Narratives of Violent Female Criminality**

This study examines how the violent female offender is made intelligible through narratives of risk in criminological texts. The rise in the incarceration rate of women as the drug war took off in the 80s-90s coincided with ideological shifts in how female criminality was understood and how it was managed.

Through a textual analysis of two major criminology textbooks, I explore how violent female offenders are constructed as a legible category despite their inherently doubly deviant nature. In doing so, this analysis sheds light on the role criminology and feminist theory play in the construction of the violent female offender as a special category. This senior work concludes that the shifts in ideology that were witnessed in the 90's are still present in contemporary criminology and that the high-risk female offender is at once incredibly dangerous yet entirely preventable. (advised by Prof. Tiger)

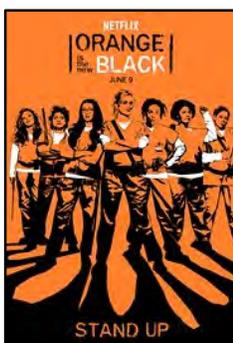
**Elizabeth Stears**

**Born in the Bananas: Constructing Ethnicity within the Socio Cultural Ethnic Labor System of Banana Production in Changuinola, Panama**



This thesis discusses the construction of ethnicity within historic and contemporary groups of United Fruit Company (Chiquita Brands) employees and the inhabitants of Changuinola, Panama. Changuinola was constructed by the UFC in the early 20th century and has become an excellent case study on the

structurally violent influences of the United Fruit Company on the lives and ethnic identities of its employees and Changuinolans. The Company was able to maintain an

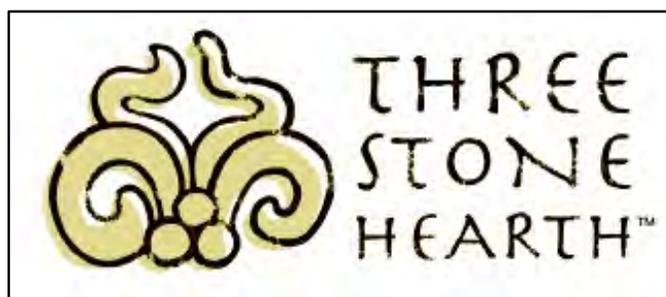


economically profitable Fordist plantation system by constructing a new labor system, worker communities and societal expectations within Changuinola as well as controlling an individual's ability to accumulate and convert capital within the confines of that same structure. This interplay between structure and agency comprises the Socio Ethnic Labor System (SELS), which in turn is responsible for the construction of ethnicity within Changuinola. (advised by Prof. Sheridan)

**Henry Thomson**

**The Biopower of Organic Intellectuals: Reconciling Foucault and Gramsci to investigate the Socionature of Community Supported Kitchens**

The neoliberal industrial food system is the dominant paradigm for food consumption and is hegemonic, reinforcing the system that created it. This system financially benefits large corporations while degrading the global environment, making humans sick, and enforcing class inequality. Recent trends in the study of "socio-natures" suggest that reconciling the work of Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault is productive for analyzing socio-natural systems, for studying the power structures of liberal capitalist social formations, and for developing a dialogue between these theorists. By developing their ideas of cultural hegemony, biopower, and the power of intellectuals, this project develops the critical scholarship on the complex socio-nature of food systems. A case study of Three Stone Hearth, an innovative Community Supported Kitchen simultaneously operating in, and resisting the capitalist liberal social formation provides an example of intellectual reclamation of biopower, the very notion of which deconstructs the established neoliberal power structure. This paper finds that Three Stone Hearth is not only an effective bottom-up approach to addressing critical issues within the industrial food system, but also an effective model for increasing democracy within the workplace. Increased democratization in the workplace has been discussed as essential to overcoming structural issues that face contemporary society outside of the food system. (advised by Prof. Stoll)



**Tegan Whitney**

**Working Class Discourses of Meritocracy and Upward Mobility: The Endurance of the American Dream Ideology**

This project aims to understand how ideologies are reproduced through discourses of working-class staff at Middlebury College. I focus on the American Dream ideology, as represented by belief in the meritocracy myth and upward mobility. As many ideologies employed in the U.S. promote and distract from the exploitation of certain groups, this work is

relevant in considering the relationship between inequality and the American ethos. My research questions are as follows: 1) How do members of the working class imply, assume, promote, and reflect the American Dream ideology in their conception of themselves and the world? That is, how is this ideology reproduced by working class discourses of upward mobility and meritocracy? 2) Why do members of the working class not push back against this ideology? Interviews with staff members were conducted to observe the discourses involved in the ideology, and with what logic they are wielded. I conclude that the narrative constructed beneath the American Dream ideology framework uses an adaptable logic that does not result in questioning or resistance. (advised by Prof. McCallum)

**Sasha Whittle**  
**The “F” Word**

This project is about the concept of failure in elite liberal arts institutions. I examine this concept at Middlebury College through a discourse analysis of interviews with students and professors at the college, and through an analysis of archival material on academic policies. My research finds that failure, though widely perceived to be a problem of individual moral shortcomings, often serves a productive social function. While it is currently fashionable to discuss the benefits of failure, these discussions largely center on what it may do to inspire more work and success within individuals. By contrast, I find it actually serves large institutions, much like the way Durkheim conceived of crime. Although this is a self-contained essay, I also directed a short film concurrently about my own experiences with these issues. (advised by Prof. McCallum)



**Michiko Yoshino**  
**Everyone Is a Hero: Unmasking Gendered Morality in the Hero Shows of Japan**

Hero shows are a part of popular culture in Japan, created after World War II. They usually depict a hero, villain, and an emcee. Although the storytelling is the classic narrative of good guy beats bad guy, the catch is that the hero cannot defeat the villain without the help of the audience, which is guided by an emcee. These shows give audience members a chance to actively participate in the shows and the success of the heroes, helping transmit new information from their experiences. Through interviews and surveys with hero show producers and audience members, as well as through my own fieldwork in Japan, I argue that through audience participation, the audience is socialized to a gendered form of moral education through these hero shows. Although these shows are meant to empower the audience, especially young children, and make them believe that everyone can be a hero, these shows are a space of discreetly socializing

young children into Japanese beliefs about gender, hierarchy, and morality through heroic narratives. (advised by Prof. Nevins)



**Faculty Publications, 2016-2017**

**Svea Closser**

2016 “The Global Context of Vaccine Refusals: Insights from a Systematic Comparative Ethnography of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative,” with Anat Rosenthal, Kenneth Maes, Judith Justice, Kelly Cox, Patricia Omidian, Ismaila Zango, Aminu Mohammed Dukku, Adam Koon, and Laetitia Nyirazinyoye, *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 30 (3): 321-341.

**James Fitzsimmons**

2016 “Revisiting Cuello: The view from the Classic Period,” *Research Reports in Belizean Archaeology* 13: 251-259. The Institute of Archaeology, Belize.

**Chong-suk Han**

2017 “West Hollywood is Not that Big on Anything but White People: Constructing “Gay Men of Color,” with George Ayala, Jay P. Paul, and Kyung-Hee Choi, *Sociological Quarterly* 58(4): online.

2017 “Examining Identity Development among Gay Men of Color,” *Sociology Compass* 11(9): online.

**Jamie McCallum**



*So that’s what MiddCore is all about.*

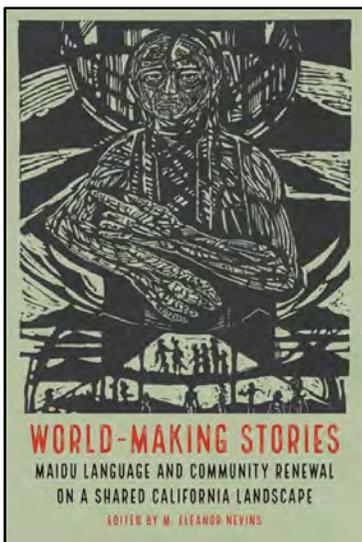
2016 “Before Europe Lets Uber Run Wild, It Should Consider What It Did to US Workers,” Yes Magazine. October 7.  
<http://www.yesmagazine.org/new-economy/before-europe-lets-uber-run-wild-it-should-consider-what-it-did-to-us-workers-20161007>

2016 “Why Colin Kaepernick is Winning,” with Jack McCallum, *Dissent*. September 23.  
<https://www.dissentmagazine.org/blog/why-colin-kaepernick-winning-black-lives-matter>

2016 “The World Social Forum Just Concluded – Here’s What Happened,” with Sarah Stroup, *Washington Post*. August 18.  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/08/18/the-world-social-forum-aka-the-anti-davos-just-concluded-heres-what-happened/>

### Erica Morrell

2017 “Detroit’s Urban Agriculture Ordinance,” with Jess Halliday and Corinna Hawkes, in *What Makes Urban Food Policy Happen?* Corinna Hawkes and Jess Halliday, eds, pp. 62-73. International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems. Online at [http://www.ipes-food.org/images/Reports/Cities\\_full.pdf](http://www.ipes-food.org/images/Reports/Cities_full.pdf)



### Marybeth Nevins

2017 *World-Making Stories: Maidu Language and Community Renewal on a Shared California Landscape*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

2017 “‘You Shall Not Become This Kind of People’: Indigenous Political Argument in Maidu Linguistic Text Collections,” in

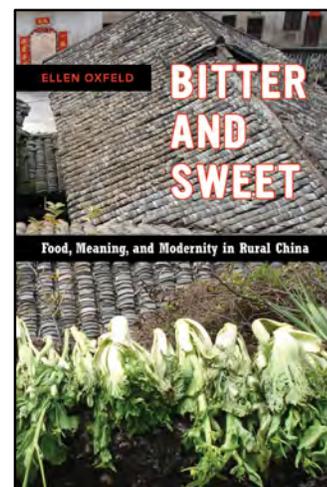
*Engaging Native American Publics: Linguistic Anthropology in a New Key*, Paul V. Kroskrity and Barbra Meek, eds., pp. 61-81. New York: Routledge.

### Linus Owens

2017 “Divisiveness Is Not Diversity,” with Rebecca Flores Harper ’11 and Maya Goldberg-Safir ’12, *Inside Higher Ed*, March 17.  
<https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2017/03/17/professor-and-two-former-students-say-why-they-think-students-are-protesting>

### Ellen Oxfeld

2017 *Bitter and Sweet: Food, Meaning, and Modernity in Rural China*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.



### David Stoll

2016 “Racial Discourse at Middlebury,” *Middlebury Campus*, November 17.  
[middleburycampus.com/35436/opinions/racial-discourse-at-middlebury](http://middleburycampus.com/35436/opinions/racial-discourse-at-middlebury)

2017 “Questions for Those Who Shut Down Murray,” *Middlebury Campus*, March 9.  
[middleburycampus.com/35539/opinions/questions-for-those-who-shut-down-murray](http://middleburycampus.com/35539/opinions/questions-for-those-who-shut-down-murray)

## Alumni News

**Khairani Barokka '05.5** published a poetry-art book in December 2016, *Indigenous Species* (Tilted Axis). She also co-edited *HEAT: A Southeast Asian Urban Anthology* (Buku Fixi), which came out earlier in the year, is co-editing the UK's first D/deaf and disabled poets' anthology, and her debut poetry collection *Rope* (Nine Arches) is out in September 2017. She's based in London for the next few years, so say hello if you're around!

**Emily Benson '14** is living in Boston and working for the NGO Hope Through Health. She continues to visit the Togolese village where she lived in 2014-2015.



**Lila Buckley-Lim '04** is training her daughter Sage (left) in archaeological methods.

**Elissa Bullion '10** received her Masters in 2014 and is finishing up the PhD program in archaeology at Washington University in St. Louis. She is currently the project bioarchaeologist for the Archaeological Research of the Qarakhanids (ARQ) Project, Uzbekistan.

**Brigit Carlson '10** is heading for a PhD in medical anthropology and has been working in the private sector (consulting) for the last five years.

**Arthur Choo '12** has completed a Fulbright in South Korea and graduate studies at Oxford's Centre for Socio-Legal Studies.

**Maggie Danna '16** is working for an immigration law firm, Chin and Curtis, LLP, in Boston.

**Emily Hewitt '16** is planning to get a Masters degree in

Sports Management, likely at Columbia.



**Andrea Hamre '05** is finishing up her PhD at Virginia Tech. Her topic is employer-provided transit subsidies, which she evaluates using a theory of justice developed for transportation planning. She focuses on disparities across income groups, both in terms of access to commuter benefits as well as their impacts on affordable access to opportunities. Her work has relevance to ongoing

discussions regarding transit benefit ordinances at the local level, as well as the tax-exempt treatment of commuter benefits at the federal level.

**Julianna Tschirhart '11** recently graduated with her Master of Urban & Regional Planning from the University of Michigan. She was honored to be nominated by faculty as the 2017 American Institute of Certified Planners



Outstanding Student for academic achievement and her leadership in several campus groups. Her concentration was transportation planning and she hopes to be a part of establishing regional public transit in southeast Michigan in her career (and won't be deterred by the narrow defeat of the most recent ballot proposal to fund regional transit here!).

**Kyle Warner '13** is using his SOAN skills as a strategist for CVS Health, a pharmacy and health care company. He says that his job is about identifying patient groups and patterns in their behavior.

### *Future Issues*

As always, please send us more newsletter material at [msherida@middlebury.edu](mailto:msherida@middlebury.edu)! We love to hear from you. And as you may have noticed, we really like photos of rites of passage. Send us stuff!

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