Field Notes

A newsletter of the Sociology and Anthropology Department, Middlebury College Summer 2018 Number 14 Editor: Michael Sheridan



Front row: Chi Ching, Morgan Grady-Benson, Jenn Ayer, Liddy Renner, Wes Becton Back row: Priyanjali Sinha, Matt MacKay, Sam Wegner, Katie Mayopoulos, Ben Sanders, Taylor Cook, Arianna Reyes, Rachel Cohen, Julia Trencher, Joey LaLiberte, Roxxi Rivera, Chris Boutelle, Adam Luban

A Note from the Chair...

They say that chairing a department is like herding cats. These people are, of course, completely wrong. It's more like trying to convince your own cat-self as well as the other cats that various tasks need doing, while you just want to sit in that sunny window... OK perhaps I'm just looking at my cat. The story of the SOAN cats this year is (as always?) about important changes while we also keep on keeping on.

I'll start with the good excellent news: we have a

brand-new Associate Professor among us! Jamie McCallum received tenure this spring, which firmly sets political sociology and labor studies in the SOAN pantheon for a long time to come. The less-than-good and mostly bittersweet news is that two SOAN faculty are leaving the Department all too soon. Svea Closser, who has taught medical anthropology, global health, South Asian studies, and ethnographic research methods since 2008, will be leaving us for a new position at Johns Hopkins in early 2019. We hope to get her back now and again for symposia, workshops, and guest lecturing, so it's not all goodbye (just mostly). We're going to miss



her ready grin, insightful sense. common and devotion resolute to student success. Finally, Erica Morrell. who started teaching environmental sociology, the sociology of food. and the sociology of knowledge in the spring of 2017,

will be finishing her C3 Fellowship (if you never took a class with Erica and would like to know what she's all about, read this fascinating interview about her work:

https://www.europenowjournal.org/2018/09/04/foo d-activism-the-sociology-of-knowledge-and-firstfoods-an-interview-with-erica-morrell/). We're going to miss both of them terribly, and we wish both of them the best going forward.

This isn't quite about new members of the department, but we have increased the head count in SOAN. In the spring we expanded the collection of skulls in the Archaeology Lab. We now have skulls for *Proconsul africanus*, five new Australopithecines, a male lowland gorilla, and both male and female chimpanzees. This teaching collection really brings SOAN 107 and 159 to life (as it were)!



Alumni support is still driving the formation of the **Margaret K. Nelson** Award in Critical Sociology and Anthropology (thank you, thank you!!!). If you want a piece of the action, go to <u>http://go.middlebury.edu/give</u> 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 Nelson Award."

As you'll see in the senior projects abstracts section below, SOAN majors continue to produce highquality work in and out of the classroom. This year we recognized four of them as outstanding. Noah Liebmiller and Privanjali Sinha shared the Lank Prize, based in part on the strength of their senior projects. Noah wrote about the politics of American journalism. He examined the function of media spectacle in the American Alt-Right news press. Spectacle, in a sociological sense, is the transformation of real, complex events into signifiers of abstract meaning through dazzling and compelling images. Noah showed that these spectacles construct racial minorities as subhuman, the political Left as violent and corrupt, and their establishment-conservative rivals on the Right as humiliated and irrelevant. Privanjali, ever the devoted ethnographer, examined the discourses and practices around menstruation amongst Hindu and Muslim women with mixed caste backgrounds, but shared urban and emerging middle class identities, in the medium-sized city of Gwalior, India. She focused on the ways in which access to menstrual products, competing ideas of the body, class mobility, and appropriate menstrual management are negotiated amongst women who are first generation migrants from rural areas. Privanjali's thesis was also inventive in moving through multiple scales of analysis from cultural understandings of the body, to the structure of the urban community, to the economy of cotton and class-based consumption of menstrual products, to the impact of the nation-state.

The Margaret K. Nelson Prize went to **Rachel Cohen** and **Julia Shumlin** for their work exemplifying public social science. Rachel wrote her senior thesis about Vermont farmers' ideas and feelings about their work. It was a sophisticated theoretical analysis of the economics of meaningmaking in local agriculture. It was also a fine example of a project that combined anthropological and sociological methods and topics. Julia analyzed legal cases about sexual violence to present an argument about the shifting nature of punishment in America. She didn't just write about incarceration, either; she engaged directly by helping Rebecca Tiger teach introductory sociology at the Rutland Correctional Facility in J-term 2018.



Julia receiving her award at Commencement

As you'll see below, a special feature in this year's newsletter is a new section on Alumni Reflections about their lives after SOAN. Hope you like it, and if YOU would like to tell your story, yes please!

The final bit of news is that SOAN is about to get new digs. You know the funky bathrooms on the third floor, the circa 1930s classrooms, the too-bigto-be-useful 4th floor lounge, and the utter lack of an elevator that made learning in Munroe Hall such a distinctive experience? All of that is going away. The building is going to be gutted (as in, everything but the shell and load-bearing walls/trusses getting removed) in 2019-20, and SOAN will migrate to the yet-to-be-named new building now going up in the parking lot behind Wright Theater. The plan is for cubbies instead of offices, which isn't ideal. But when we get back into a brand-new Munroe in 2020, I'm hoping for a building styled after the Google headquarters. complete with latte-dispensing



robots, corkscrew slides, and ball pits.

We keep telling ourselves that our temporary departmental home is just a social construction...

Mike Sheridan, SOAN Chair

Faculty and Staff Updates

Svea Closser

Next January, I'll be leaving Middlebury and transitioning to a new position at the Johns Hopkins

Bloomberg School of Public Health, where I'll be working in the Program for Social and Behavioral Interventions in the Department of International Health. While I'm very excited about my new job, I will also deeply miss Middlebury, and would love to stay connected to Middlebury students and alumni. Stay in touch, and please come visit me in Baltimore!

James Fitzsimmons

I spent most of this year writing and polishing my latest manuscript, The Serpent and the Knot (renamed from "The Empire that Never Was"), under contract with Oxford University Press. This is a popular book on why the southern Maya lowlands never coalesced into an empire. Unlike my other works, The Serpent and the Knot tells a story using fiction and non-fiction. It does so while subtly communicating basic information about the southern Maya lowlands (which is a lot harder to do than I thought it was). I also tinkered with a second manuscript on mortuary patterns in ancient Mesoamerica, also under contract, but with the University of Texas Press. Classes are starting soon, so I am scrambling to finish more chapters right now!

Chong-Suk Han

It was another wonderful school year at Middlebury College. I finished my second year as the POSSE Mentor for ten great students from New York City. I'm happy to report that they've all made it through their second year at Midd with flying colors. At the same time, it was sad to see students from my First Year Seminar all graduate. They all made it!!! In terms of my own work, I've started two anthology projects, one is a collection of essays by and about gay men of color and the other is on "queer media" from Asia. While it is a lot of work coordinating two anthologies, they are chugging along nicely. In terms of my own research, I am finishing up the final chapters of my current manuscript on race and desire in the gay community and have spoken with a few presses that seem interested, so I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

Matt Lawrence

For the three years before I moved to Middlebury, I lived in a different state and worked at a different



institution each year. That meant this past fall was the first time in a while that I returned to the same campus after summer and had the chance to reconnect with students and colleagues. Little symbols like that of finally "being home" filled the year. In addition to re-teaching courses on contemporary families, inequality and social mobility, and statistics, I introduced a new course called "Social Life in an Age of Big Data." This course expands our quantitatively-oriented classes by considering what it means to live in a society where so many of our actions and interactions are governed by numbers and algorithms. While most of the year was spent continuing to settle in, I also began branching out. Beyond the SOAN department, I have been spending more time with Middlebury's "Privilege and Poverty" academic cluster, an interdisciplinary program linking coursework and internships related to the study of economic inequality. The P&P program joined with the University of Vermont to create the Vermont Educational Alliance on Poverty last year. I had the honor of giving the keynote address at VEAP's inaugural conference in December where I discussed higher education's surprisingly contradictory goals of accessibility and equality. Travels beyond Vermont took me to Germany to conduct a site visit of Middlebury's schools abroad in Berlin, Mainz, and Potsdam; Wisconsin for a workshop on teaching poverty studies; and Baltimore for the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society where I presented new research on the parents of first generation students. I had an opportunity to share some of that research with the College Board of Overseers last winter, and look forward to discussing related topics in my "Higher Education and Society" seminar this fall.





I recently received tenure, making me among the last people in America with job security. Tenure is often conceived of as an individual accomplishment. But really it is the culmination of a process that involves lots of folks. I thank my colleagues, mentors, friends, family and students for their support over the years. It made all the difference. In addition, I published a few things and got a contract for a book I'm co-editing with some Middlebury colleagues, the on youth unemployment crisis. This summer I have been a faculty mentor at MiddCORE again and I hope to make a lot of progress on my next book.

Erica Morrell

Erica Morrell is completing her book manuscript, *First Food Justice*, which is currently under review with the University of Minnesota Press. She has enjoyed working with students in the department, and will be teaching Sociology of Food



as her final SOAN class (in Fall 2018). In the Spring of 2019, Erica will be transitioning to a visiting position in GSFS. She will also continue her new Policy Fellow position with Farm to Institute New England. Following this academic year, Erica will be transitioning out of her role as faculty member at Middlebury. She is extremely grateful for the opportunity to have been a member of this vibrant intellectual community and will truly miss her role here.

Marybeth Nevins

My theme for this year is "putting down roots." With the reality of tenure setting in, and our time with faculty housing running out; I search hard with my family for a walkable and cycle-able home in town. We eventually found it and moved in this summer. In the realm of research, I have been growing a "glocal" archival project exploring notions of Nature in the schools, businesses, churches and newspapers of nineteenth century towns and villages in Vermont. My inspiration for this has been the late great Anthony Wallace's historical anthropology of colonial and early industrial towns. Some of my classes work with these questions and materials. You could say that we have been tapping some of Middlebury's own roots in the form of period materials in the Swift archive of the Henry Sheldon Museum and in Middlebury College Special Collections. In a separate but connected project, I have been worked with a cultural anthropologist colleague (and my spouse) Tom Nevins on a present-day ethnography of environmental disputes, including unusual or unexpected environmental disputes, in Vermont and the Northeast. It's been a banner year for that with the failure of "New Vistas," a proposed mega-ecoutopian real estate development initiated by a Mormon tycoon, modeled after Joseph Smith's 19th century designs and sited on land adjacent to Smith's birthplace in Royalton, VT. And thirdly, I continue to deepen my global-scale work on the history and use of indigenous language documentation. The roots of this project have already grown branches and fruit, with additional fruits to follow. Finally, some of the roots I put down this year have been guite literal. I am learning the longstanding craft of northern gardening and discover that I enjoy having too many tomatoes.



Linus Owens

This past academic year was split between a fall sabbatical and then a return to teaching (and more!) in the spring. I managed to maintain the momentum of my earlier work advocating and extolling the virtues of student protest. I was invited to participate in two panels on the topic this year, at the annual conference of the American Association for Colleges and Universities (which is mostly for college administrators) and the national meeting for the Education Writers of America (which is for journalists writing on education issues). I also organized a workshop on student protest in the spring, funding by the American Association of Liberal Arts Colleges, which brought together a dozen colleagues from peer institutions to discuss the national and local contexts of current student activism. I also continue to work on squatting, working on a paper on how squatting creates a networked urban commons across Europe, which I presented at a conference in Stockholm, Sweden one week after the student protest workshop. I followed up with another meeting with my research group in Catania, Italy. Afterwards, I stayed on in Rome for 5 weeks, where my partner was teaching Latin, and started learning Italian - with an eye towards working on a future project collaborating with colleagues on migrants and refugees in Italy who are currently using squatting as a tactic to reclaim self-determination in a situation where the primary structures provide very little. Of course, the Halloween project refuses to die, even if it now has the feeling of a ghost in the machine. But it's coming along slowly, slowly, slowly.

Ellen Oxfeld

2017-2018 was another year in which my senior project students were inspiring! They worked on original topics as diverse as menstrual practices in working class urban India, drag culture in contemporary Beijing, memories of and responses to the Japanese system of sexual slavery in World War II China, and grandparent/parent interaction of childrearing in contemporary China. It is a pleasure to advise students producing in-depth research and writing at such a nuanced and sophisticated analytical level! My own work this year was characterized by finishing off old writing projects as well as advance planning for my sabbatical this year. I completed essays for edited collections focusing on a variety of topics including a chapter on life cycle rituals in contemporary China for a handbook on religion in China, and a chapter on

moral discourses and practices among rural families in China for a volume on the anthropology



of contemporary China. I also wrote grant proposals and started to prepare a new project for my current sabbatical year, which will focus the theme of commensality as a social bridge builder in diverse Chinese settings. I hope I will have more to report on this new research direction by next year!

Mari Price

Thanks to several family events this summer – weddings, and the birth of another great-niece – I was able to spend more time than usual with my son and his wife as they traveled from North Carolina for each family celebration. I made one trip in early June to North Carolina and Maine in July. The rest of the summer has been packed with planning the events of the 2018 Clifford Symposium, Toni Morrison's *The Origin of Others*, - A Middlebury Conversation. Now we're about to begin another academic year, and I look forward to it.

Michael Sheridan

This year I've been working on my book about institutional ethnobotany in Tanzania, Cameroon, Papua New Guinea, French Polynesia, and St. Vincent. It's really coming along. The other big project I've been chipping away at, sometimes very literally, is my bread oven project. I'm baking bread now, but I was unhappy about standing in the mud of the construction site. So of course I expanded the project to build stone walls, a flagstone floor, a firepit, and a prep shed. The other massively fun project was teaching a new class, SOAN 342 Trust and Social Capital. We wrote a big synthetic report on the status of trust and social capital at Midd, and we're hoping to take it public soon. But the biggest and most satisfying work that I've done lately has been shepherding a proposal for a new faculty Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion from idea to passage and now implementation. I think I'm becoming an activist.



David Stoll

I continue to beaver away at the implications of migration debt. These are the debts that immigrants incur in order to reach labor markets that pay higher wages than they can earn at home. In 2019-20 I'll

be on sabbatical. One possibility is to take this issue to Britain, where Ben Judah's highly readable *This Is London* suggests that a wide range of immigrants are in a contemporary form of debt bondage—that is, in long-term debt to moneylenders, smugglers and/or family elders.

Rebecca Tiger

Much of my attention for the past few years has been devoted to developing a prison education program at Middlebury. This past winter term, I taught a course called "The Sociological Imagination" in Marble Valley Correctional Facility



(in Rutland). Julia Shumlin, a recently graduated SOAN major, helped me design the course and cotaught it with me. I could not have done with without her! This was an amazing experience that I hope to repeat during winter term 2020, when I plan to teach a course based on the Inside-Out model, where half the students are people in the jail and the other half are Middlebury students. I am also working with the Bread Loaf School of English and hope to offer writing workshops in the jail. An article I wrote about race, class and media coverage of the opiate panic appeared in the fall issue of the sociology magazine Contexts. My travels have included Finland, Austria, Spain and Greece mostly for work but also fun. This coming academic year I'll be on sabbatical and divide my time between Athens and New York City, developing a project on comparative punishment. And I hope to finally learn how to make podcasts. See you in Fall 2019!

Trinh Tran

The big news this year is I completed year one on the tenure track! Being a newbie professor was especially thrilling because I got a chance to teach a First Year Seminar class ("Your Connected World"). In many ways, I shared with my first year students an overall sense of adjustment; to new roles in the classroom and to the broader Middlebury community. Another highlight was teaching SOAN 105 ("Society and the Individual"), which reminded me of why I fell in love with sociology in the first place. For many students in the class, this was their initial encounter with the works of the great thinkers of sociology and the BIG questions asked by the discipline. Their excitement and enthusiasm reminded me of what I felt like when I took my first class in sociology (mind blown!) and why I've landed where I am today. Other highlights of the year included the chance to share my work on the intersection of school and housing policy at venues both local (Middlebury's Fall Faculty Forum) and global (the International Sociological Association Conference on Education and Exclusion in Mexico City). As I continue my comparative project on charter schools in California and Philadelphia, I'm also asking questions closer to home. My curiosity has been inspired by my participation in discussions the creation of a Professional regarding Development School that will accompany the implementation of the International Baccalaureate curriculum in the Addison Central School District. Upcoming ventures I'm looking forward to include co-organizing the Rohatyn Center's Seventh Annual International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Migration, Displacement, and Belonging (an endeavor which nicely complements a new project I'm starting on the educational pathways of immigrant children); serving on the newly formed Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; and co-teaching a class at Middlebury this coming spring with my husband, Kyle **Brudvik**!

Senior Project Abstracts 2017-18

Jenn Ayer

Gender Role Portrayal in Disney and Romantic Films 1930s to 2017



Disney films have been a large part of modern pop culture since the 1930s. Many of the most popular Disney films have a romantic theme with highly defined gender roles. However, Disney films do not exist in a vacuum. It is important to look at other parts of pop culture when studying Disney films, such as how they compare to romantic films designed for adults. I examine two central questions: 1) How have Disney and romantic films changed their portraval of gender over time? 2) How does Disney's portrayal of gender compare to romantic films' portrayal of gender? I studied the differences in gender roles based on the amount of agency that the main female character had in comparison to the main male character. I found that in general female characters in Disney princess movies had more agency than their male counterparts in the earlier films, but evolved to have more or less equal agency in more modern works. However, romantic films generally had female characters with less agency in earlier films but ultimately had similar amounts of agency to male characters in later films. In general Disney films gave women more agency than women were given in adult romance films. (advised by Prof. Han)

Margot Babington

Out of the Classroom and into the Streets: Understanding Intersectional Theory and Praxis Through the Women's March on Washington



My senior work explores the current conversations about activism framed through the recent popularization of the term 'intersectionality' in social media. Intersectional theory and praxis remains under debate in academia, creating an unstable framework for a traveling theory. Intersectionality's current home in the neoliberal corporate university threatens the theory's radical origins, but its growth online has the possibility to serve as a remedy. To comprehend the how the idea of intersectionality gets mobilized online, I address the following questions: (1) How does the symbolic meaning of intersectionality regulate discussions about activism on social media? (2) How does the unmooring of intersectionality from its academic roots and its proliferation in social media influence conversations about inclusivity in activism? In answering my questions. I present a case study of reactions to the 2017 Women's March on Twitter to see how people deploy different ideas of intersectionality and which trends from academia make their way to the mainstream. I also provide a close reading of liberal media articles on organization of the march and its use of two symbols, the pussyhat and Sherpard Fairey posters, in order to understand how people create meaning intersectionality through evaluating around activism. An in-depth look into intersectionality reveals the theory to be a double-edged sword that is building more inclusive activism while also creating a feedback loop of criticism that stalls the movement's progress. (advised by Prof. McCallum)

Wes Becton

Musical Motivation: The Interactions of Rap Music, Perceptions of Race, and Team Culture on a College Football Team

The project investigates rap music, team culture and perceptions of race amongst members of a football team at an elite liberal arts college. Previous literature on the topic has analyzed the appropriation of black culture through music and arts as well as the negative stereotypes often portrayed in rap music. Building on that, this project determines how music interacts with race and team culture amongst members of the team. Furthermore, I investigate how this music relates to the collective identity of members of the football



team and the specific content of this type of music. Through participant observation and interviews. Ι analyze the role of music through the lenses of three key values of team culture: grit, "being where your feet are," and short-term memory. (advised by Prof. Han)

Mary Baillie

Artemisia Too: "Taking a Swing at the Patriarchy" through a Performance Ethnography



Arianna Reves, Mary, and Taylor Cook

The advent of 'experimental' ethnographic writing in postmodern anthropology has catalyzed some anthropologists to challenge experimentation within the ethnographic form itself. 'Performance ethnography' is a pioneering example, championing the use of onstage theatrical performance as an alternative, more publicly accessible output of social science to written text and analysis. This thesis examines the research and rehearsal process of The Anthropologists, a New York theatre company that seeks to create a devised 'onstage ethnography' showcasing the stories of sexual assault survivors within the framework of the 'Me Too' movement. The ensemble presents parallels across real life accounts of survivors ranging from contemporary interviews to the first ever known rape court trial transcript, the case of Artemisia Gentilleschi vs. Agostino Tassi in 1612. I worked for The Anthropologists as a "Creative Intern" in J-term 2018. Through observing and participating in rehearsals. interviewing company/audience members and experiencing the final show, I was able to identify how the group uses theatrical techniques and strategies to translate their anthropological research into а devised performance ethnography. Aided by a heightened exploration of Victor and Edith Turner's

"Performance as Pedagogy Framing," Nicholas Long's "Ethnographic Sociality" and Richard Schechner's "Play Framing," this thesis urges anthropologists to venture beyond the standard 'ethnography habitus' into the realm of devised theatre, onstage emotion and the intangible reality. (advised by Prof. Fitzsimmons)

Chris Boutelle

Contemporary Drag Queen Culture in Beijing: Transnationalism in a Chinese Space



Chris presenting his research at the Eastern Sociological Society meeting

Beijing now has a bourgeoning gay social network in nightlife, particularly through drag performance venues. The specific representations of drag queen performance, however, lack broader ethnographic analysis. The influence of Western media and foreign drag popularity have propelled Beijing drag into a transformative period. In this project, I explore three questions: (1) what are the opinions of Chinese drag queens in Beijing towards their gay identities and roles? (2) How do they relate themselves and their performances to the expression of gender and gender differences in contemporary China? (3) What are the implications of American influence on Beijing drag? Drawing on original field data and individual interviews, I present narratives of four Chinese gay men with connections to drag. Observations were done in gay nightlife spaces during drag events. The majority of the participants' responses showed profound

influence from Westernized media and transnational thought concerning gayness and drag. Both of these frameworks challenge Chinese traditional sexuality. These participants also expressed understandings of the Chinese gay selfidentity and tongzhi politics as evolving. However, these findings show differences from the environment of American queer politics, and the participants articulated their identities with awareness of both transnational and Chinese elements. This research found that Beijing drag culture intricately balances US and Chinese influences. These findings, although restricted by a small availability of respondents, demonstrate the changing social atmosphere of drag queen identity in Beijing and show the necessity for analysis of minority gay cultures in China. Beijing drag culture is on the rise and requires further academic and ethnographic attention. Continued research on the specifics of what Chinese drag consists of holds the potential for greater insight into this nightlife sociality and into variable gay identities in China. (advised by Prof. Oxfeld)

Andrew Cadienhead

The Growth of Social Control within Elite Liberal Arts Colleges: Are College Students Being Coddled?

This paper examines the growth of social control within elite liberal arts colleges within the U.S, and the effect it has on college students and their ability to navigate emerging adulthood as they transition into society. Because it would be difficult to examine the growth of social control at all elite liberal arts colleges across the United States, this paper will focus primarily on the banning of alcoholic beverages at tailgate events at Middlebury as an example of the growth of social control. To understand the potential long-term effects of these newly established regulations/restrictions on United



States college students, this senior work looks at colleges using Goffman's framework for "total institutions." I explore the following questions: Are college students at elite liberal arts institutions being coddled through the growth of social control? How does this affect college students as emerging adults and their ability successfully transition into adulthood? In what ways is the growth of social control within elite liberal arts institutions emblematic of changing conceptions of adulthood? My data, gathered by analyzing 99 comments made on an article on the online platform Middbeat, suggests that the growth of social control within elite liberal arts colleges may ultimately be slowing down the development of emerging adults, and can also be very harmful to the "social-psychological" environment that makes these institutions so special. (advised by Prof. Tran)

James Callison

Covering the Statue of Liberty: News Media Depictions of Immigration in the United States



This project examines the presentation of immigration issues in the U.S. mainstream news media. From Entman's framing theory to Debord's theory of the spectacle, scholars have attempted to define how hegemonic ideas in society are circulated. Recent history has witnessed successful anti-immigrant political movements, culminating in the election of Donald Trump and ascendance of the Alt-Right. At the same time, the news media has

frequently covered and framed immigration issues and debates in homogenous ways. This study uncovers the tone, messages, and associations that print media make when disseminating information about immigration. The following questions guide my analysis: How do mainstream newspapers discuss issues of immigration compared to other stories? How does news coverage frame immigration and what metaphors or associations are created about immigration for the public to consume? How do major political, economic, and terrorist events create moments of spectacle in immigration news coverage and how do these events impact this coverage? I used content analysis software to conduct quantitative discourse analysis surveying the tone, metaphors, frames, and events associated with immigration in over 300,000 news articles from 17 mainstream U.S. news publications. I found that the news media depict immigration in a predominantly negative way and identify immigrant groups as closely related to criminality, terrorism, illegality, the economy, education. and humanitarian crises. (advised by Prof. Tran)

Chi Chi Chang

Stories, Organizations, and Social Movements: What Time is it? What do I do? Who am I?

This senior project looks at the role of stories in social movements, and the organizations that tell these narratives. I place the #metoo movement in the larger context of activism against sexual violence and harassment. Why do different organizations different tell stories about the movement? How are social movement organizations in conversation with each other? How does the attention economy impact the type of stories that get heard? My research compares two organizations: Workplaces Respond, а professionalized and institutionalized organization that provides resources and training to a range of workplaces, and Time's Up, a newer, informal, celebrity-led organization that focuses on visibility and storytelling as justice. I analyze the stories these organizations tell, looking at narrative relationship techniques. their to time. assumptions about the audience, and the work that they do in building identity. Finally, I compare an earlier version of a Workplaces Respond story from 2012 to a more recent version, to see how organizations are in conversation with each other



and impact each other's storytelling. My findings show how different organizations hold different roles in social movements, and that this impacts and is reflected in the stories they tell. (advised by Prof. Fitzsimmons)

Sanchea Chung

Filial Tensions: An Exploration of Parent-Grandparent Relations Over Childcare in Urban China



research intergenerational Guided by on relationships, this essay investigates the complexity of parent/grandparent relations in urban China. It specifically asks how mothers and grandmothers interact over childcare and how they both feel about grandparents' emerging role as caregivers. Data used for this study comes from interviews conducted with mothers in Kunming, China, content analysis of Chinese contemporary television dramas and ethnographic surveys on grandparental roles. I found that the relationship between parents/grandparents over child rearing among urban families is fluid, dynamic, and characterized by contradictory feelings. The practice of filial piety is changing in light of urban childcare demands. I conclude with some policy changes that could grandparent/parent positively impact the relationship over childcare in China. (advised by Prof. Oxfeld)

Rachel Cohen

"It's Who I Am – It's Everything": How Vermont Farmers Find Meaning in Their Work From Weber's Protestant ethic to more recent conceptualizations of "meaningful work," sociologists have long been interested in why people devote themselves to their jobs. This thesis provides a case study of meaningful work by examining the ways in which Vermont farmers find their work to be imbued with meaning. In the past few years, more than half of Vermont farms have lost money in their on-farm operations. Why, then, do Vermont farmers continue to farm? I conducted interviews with both first-generation and multigenerational farmers in Vermont to uncover farmers' motivations for farming. I found that Vermont farmers find their work to be meaningful because it allows them to be part of a larger environmental and historical system, because they feel their work is necessary for society, because they sense that their physical work aligns with notions of "true work," and because farming is instrumental in shaping their identities. I argue that the meaning that farmers find in their work serves a societal purpose - it keeps farmers farming, even in the absence of a substantial income. Additionally, I compare the farmers' narratives with other accounts of meaningful work to show that the ideology of meaningful work is a broader cultural model. (advised by Prof. Closser. Rachel was the co-winner of the 2018 Margaret K. Nelson Award in Critical Sociology and Anthropology)

Thomas Crowley

Title: Risk Management Strategies for the Development of Artificial Intelligence

Experts believe that artificial intelligence (AI) risk management will become an increasingly significant global issue over the next 80 years. A 2016 email survey of 352 artificial intelligence researchers revealed that 5% of respondents believed that artificial intelligence would lead to an "extremely bad," or catastrophic outcome for humanity within the next 80 years, while 48% of respondents believe AI risk management should be prioritized higher than it is today. The field of AI Safety will therefore be a growth area. In this project



I measure the effectiveness of different spokespeople in influencing opinions for the field of AI Safety through a survey of 48 Middlebury College students. My results include an evaluation of the variable impact that different categories of spokespeople have on public perceptions of AI, a review of this data in light of sociological theories of risk management, and suggestions for further research on the field of AI Safety. (advised by Prof. Lawrence)

Anna Iglitzin

Evergreen and Always White? Race, Economic Mobility, and Higher Education in the State of Washington

Previous research into higher education as a mechanism for decreasing inequality has focused either on post-college economic mobility outcomes or has charted changes in college racial composition to weave a narrative about equality. This is exemplified by two recent articles published in the *New York Times*. The first article, from January of 2017, analyzed a report by the Equality of Opportunity project on how higher education institutions produce economic mobility for their graduates. The second, published seven months later, documented failures in campus' attempts to equalize their racial compositions. My senior work



combines these two topics previously treated as separate bodies of sociological research by focusing on how the racial composition of colleges and universities is associated with an institution's mobility outcomes. My findings reveal that change in collegiate racial composition is associated with economic outcomes, though these associations vary depending on whether institutions are public or private and their levels of selectivity. My institutional analysis in Washington state identifies several areas necessary for statewide analyses to contribute to national research and policymaking related to educational access for racial minorities and economic mobility for low-income students. I conclude that different types of institutions should be assessed for the specific types of outcomes they provide, that mobility should be broken into both access and success rates, and that education-minded policymakers and administrators should broaden their definition of low-income students to include not only those from the lowest income quintile but also those from the bottom 40% economically. (advised by Prof. Lawrence)

Sarah Koch

Educational Opportunity? Come and Get It!: A Case Study of the Privatization of Responsibility for School Reform

In this thesis I compare advocacy for school desegregation to school choice policies in order to understand why advocates continue to link school assignment with greater school equality while also shifting responsibility for school placement from the state to the parent. For my data, I analyzed legal briefs submitted for Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) and the Congressional Record, in which the school choice provisions in No Child Left Behind (2001) were discussed. I find that both desegregation and school choice advocates articulate childhood as the time and school placement as a mechanism to operationalize greater "equality of opportunity." However, desegregation advocates draw upon expert knowledge to argue for state responsibility for school placement while school choice advocates emphasize individualism (in the form of each parent's intimate knowledge of their 'unique' child) as the legitimate basis for school placement. The shifts in the arguments that advocates use to justify their favored policies reflect shifting understandings of the problem of inequality from an institutional paradigm (that it is both

created and solved by bureaucratic policy) to a paradigm that naturalizes inequality and locates it



in the cultural and geographic context of the intractable "inner-city" space. This analysis serves as a case study of the rationales for the increasing privatization of school reform. (advised by Prof. Tran)

Joey Laliberte

Crafting Healthy Conceptions of Masculinity: How the Summer Camp Experience Influences Boys' Expectations of Toughness and Expression of Weakness



Joey receiving an award for outstanding research from the president of the American Camp Association, Tom Rosenberg

At the turn of the 20th century and prior to assuming office, Theodore

Roosevelt delivered his Strenuous Life speech, articulating what he described as a "crisis of masculinity." In response, Roosevelt called for a return to the outdoors, advocating further development of American summer camps and outdoor programs for male youth to reconnect with nature and rekindle their masculine identities. Ironically, following the century-long expansion of the outdoor industry and the development of summer camps and outdoor education programs, researchers have identified a newfound crisis of masculinity, through which boys are at risk of being hyper-masculinized and losing touch with emotionality and gentleness. This project aims to utilize summer camp-based survey research to discover whether camps in America still serve as an outlet for boys to address this newfound crisis of masculinity. Major findings indicate that boys felt a higher expectation of stoicism and toughness at school than at camp. Additionally, analyses by the five age cohorts at camp suggested that older boys generally felt greater expectations to be tough and avoid showing weakness at school, but less at camp. This research analyzes these differences in reference to other survey data and demographic information, in order to further understand the benefits of the camp experience, and how such findings can be applied in other childcare and education-based programs. (advised by Prof. Lawrence)

Noah Liebmiller

Cucks, Shills, and Globalists: The Function of Media Spectacle in American Alt-Right Press

This project examines the function of media spectacle in the American Alt-Right news press. The election of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency in November 2016 challenged collective understandings of what is possible in politics, and also revealed the power and influence of a nativist, blithely transgressive new faction of American right-wing politics. A uniquely partisan online press ecosystem, which promulgates white nationalist viewpoints in the format of traditional journalism, has been instrumental in the formation and ascendance of the Alt-Right. This project identifies how these viewpoints are transformed into compelling narratives through the Alt-Right press's deployment of media spectacle. Spectacle (the transformation of real, complex events into signifiers of abstract meaning through dazzling and compelling images) is a phenomenon that the Alt-Right press has mastered. My research applies discourse analysis to a sample of Alt-Right press articles and commentary from three preeminent Alt-Right websites (Breitbart News, AltRight.com, and The Daily Stormer). I use this data to argue that spectacle is a primary Alt-Right communication strategy which persuasively associates real meanings with abstract events. Through repetition, the Alt-Right press uses these spectacles to construct racial minorities as subhuman, the political Left as violent and corrupt, and their



establishment-conservative rivals on the Right as humiliated and irrelevant. Alt-Right media deploys spectacle to argue that they represent a return to a "sane society," free from the symbolic corruption of racial minorities and the Left. (advised by Prof. McCallum. Noah was the co-winner of the 2018 Lank Prize in Sociology and Anthropology)

Adam Luban What 10 American Endurance Athletes have to Say about Doping Issues: An Experiment with Structured Interviewing



The world of international sports is frequently rocked by doping scandals. As a lifelong sports fan, I've seen many of my heroes felled by performanceenhancing drug use. As a collegiate ski racer, I've

had to make my own decisions about what substances to put into my body. Illegal doping is wrong, but certain medications and other substances are allowed under the rules. Despite widespread use of supplements among athletes, there is little literature about how athletes differentiate between the categories of drug and supplement. My project addresses this gap through structured interviews with ten endurance athletes about doping. supplements, and regulators. Interviewees describe being subject to constant body-level surveillance that is actually ineffective at stopping doping. Foucault's concepts of biopower and the panopticon help explain how institutions regulate athletic bodies. Despite the global prevalence of doping, there are large geographic differences in the discourse about doping. Regulatory institutions are products of western nations' approaches to doping. Institutions are composed of western values, actors, and resources, and are designed to contrast sharply with eastern state-sponsored doping programs. Issues about doping and supplementation are complicated by how athletes and regulators perform on Goffman's theoretical 'front and back stage.' While public statements from regulators and athletes uphold a zero-tolerance approach to doping, private actions reveal more nuanced approaches. (advised by Prof. Stoll)

Sylvia Lynch

La Vie en Blanche: The Gendered Experience of Women with Albinism in Cameroon and Tanzania

This study explores how women with albinism face different barriers to autonomy and how women differentially experience albinism in Cameroon and Tanzania. Previous studies and international reports on the persecution of people with albinism in Sub-Saharan Africa have largely omitted the gendered experiences of women with albinism. Additionally, the international community has focused on the persecution of people with albinism in Tanzania and Malawi, where the majority of attacks and murders of people with albinism have taken place, leaving other countries out of the dominant narrative. While many of the discriminatory and marginalizing experiences of albinism are common, the narrative is not universal. My interviews indicated different geographical experiences of discrimination in Cameroon and persecution in Tanzania. This project evaluates the intersectional marginalization of women with albinism in rural areas of Cameroon and Tanzania. I evaluate their marginalization by looking at access to economic, social, and political participation via education, employment, marriage, as well as their access to political and international institutions. My research shows that albinos constantly redefine and negotiate albinism. Albinos use political institutions in Cameroon and Tanzania as arenas in which they can assemble economic resources, social status, and alternate communities. I thus aim to understand the unique barriers that women with albinism face to full participation in society, and how they navigate the economic, social, symbolic, and political barriers they face. I draw upon theories of stigma, disability, witchcraft, and gender to understand the intersectional

discriminatory and marginalizing experiences of women with albinism, and how they navigate their identities. (advised by Prof. Sheridan)



Katie Mayopoulos

Creating Trust Networks to Recover from Domestic Violence: Stories of Undocumented Latin American Women in Spain

Immigrant women are killed by their partners at the highest rates of any population in Spain. This study uses Putnam's approach to social capital to explore how immigrant survivors of domestic violence initiate and sustain trust networks that help them leave their abusive spouses and heal from domestic violence. Using qualitative research methods, I focus on a specific violence prevention organization in Madrid and three of its clients who are survivors of domestic violence and also undocumented Latin American immigrants. I look at how these clients negotiate relationships with the Spanish violence prevention organization, fellow survivors of domestic violence and the Latin American immigrant community of Madrid. I conclude that trust networks do not necessarily develop as expected by Putnam: it can be hardest to trust those with whom we appear to share the most. (advised by Prof. Stoll)

Matt MacKay

Grandstanding against Globalization: The Case of West Papua

This essay examines the deleterious impact of globalization on the lives of indigenous people in West Papua. Globalization operates on intersecting political, economic and cultural dimensions, and this paper explores that phenomenon as an imposing matrix of domination mandating West Papuans conformity with foreign markets. I argue that the market principles of capitalism and profit-seeking incentives of trade liberalization have shaped labor markets in West Papua, such that transnational corporations, abetted by intergovernmental



agencies and Indonesian state actors, have economically marginalized this group of indigenous people. I

examine how the Indonesian state, in particular, has recolonized West Papua under the guise of decolonization from Holland, and finally, I describe how this oppression manifests itself in public education. Ultimately, when considering human rights, I argue that recent history in West Papua problematizes the putative values of neoliberalism and globalization. (advised by Prof. Han)

Chandler Nemetz

Fabricating a Monster: The Enduring Panic Surrounding Robert Mapplethorpe

This senior project examines how the theory of moral panics helps to explain the endurance of an art controversy over the public funding of subversive art, as exemplified in the iconic figure of Robert Mapplethorpe.

The openendedness in the interpretations of works of visual art makes artwork an easy target for political demonization. I trace a series of



Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs, as they were first institutionalized within a 1988 controversial art exhibit and how they were then taken and recontextualized in the Senate by Republican conservative politicians. Specifically, I examine how North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms used the AIDS epidemic in conjunction with Mapplethorpe's photographs to reframe the artwork within a moral panic discourse. I apply entextualization theory in conjunction with the theory of moral panics to illuminate the manner in which Helms judiciously detached selected images from Mapplethorpe's exhibit and recontextualized them as monstrosities to be expelled from civic life. I show how Helms produced a discourse of moral panic in his legislative work and constructed Mapplethorpe as a monster with such success that the name continues to signify monstrosity in right-wing politics, even thirty years later. (advised by Prof. Nevins)

Nadine Nasr

Trackies and Khakis: An Analysis of Mass Media, Sport, and Social Class

This senior project is concerned with the way in which the mass media, specifically working-class publications, behave as hegemonic institutions and are symbolically violent toward the working class. I focus on discourse about British rugby, colloquially known as the middle-class "gentleman's sport," and

football (soccer), known as the "working man's sport" in the UK. I identify subverted characteristics of social class and class conflict within the texts. The analysis is primarily constructed using a Marxist framework. I conclude that the British mass media behaves as a unified



hegemonic institution and is symbolically violent toward the working class through its discourse on rugby and football. Further, the mass media is a mechanism for reproducing class hierarchies and maintaining the oppression of the working class in Britain. (advised by Prof. Sheridan)

Amosh Neupane

Death Behind Bars: Hospice Care in American Prison, its Goals and Implications

Of all places, the hospice movement has seen a considerable growth inside American prisons lately, and about 80 U.S. prisons now have prison hospice programs. Such programs predominantly employ the inmate-volunteer model, which relies on healthy inmates to take care of their dying fellows. These programs claim to reform criminals, while also giving dying individuals a "dignified death." Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola (LSP) has been the vanguard of the inmate-volunteer prison hospice movement since 1996. By conducting



content analysis of LSP's hospice-related policy papers, in addition to analyzing documentaries and literature on the hospice program at LSP, I question this peculiar relationship between prisons and ostensibly hospice care, two incongruent institutions that exist symbiotically. I discover that prison reform initiatives like hospice have a managerial purpose, which undermines the central argument for instituting hospice, i.e., providing dignified deaths for prisoners. Pragmatically, hospice has immense immediate benefits; however, to reform prisons is to expand them, and as long as American prisons perpetuate both "social and civil deaths" through their dehumanizing practices, deaths can never be "dignified" behind bars. (advised by Prof. Closser)

Liddy Renner

The Whiteness of Natural Spaces: A Theoretical

Approach to Understanding Race and Class-Based Exclusion in the Outdoor Industry

This senior work studies the historical production of ideas of natural spaces in the United States since the 17th century. I will attempt to answer one main research question: Why is the "outdoors industry" so White? To understand the historical and current



function of leisure activities in natural spaces I explore sociological approaches to space, leisure, and power dynamics within a capitalist society. The social relations embedded in the practice of leisure and the creation of natural spaces have created the outdoor industry as a place primarily for White upper-class Americans. There is a need to recognize the social constraints that allocate leisure time to certain class segments, which determines their engagement in certain types of leisure activities. I use four outdoors education institutions as case studies of how hegemonic classist and racist biases get reinforced and embedded in the outdoors industry. I conclude that the outdoors industry is so rich and White because of its social history of class, which offers some guidance for what it will take to equalize participation. (advised by Prof. Sheridan)

Arianna Reyes

Sex Without Gender: Dirty Talk, Language Formation, and Liberatory Practices

This work is a historical and textual analysis of how sexual practices, and the epistemological methodologies used to classify those practices, relate to modern identity formation. 'Dirty talk' is language that people use to form both collective and individual identities, describe sexual practice, and ultimately facilitate pleasure. I use the works of social constructionists and modern case studies to argue that 'de-gendered dirty talk' is a liberatory



practice with the potential to break down categories which are understood to be socially constructed such as gender/sex and race. (advised by Prof. Owens)

Roxxi Rivera

At a Crossroads: The Negotiation of Identity in Latina Religious Individuals Integrating into Secular Environments

This senior project examines the reconstruction and negotiation of identity in young Latinas with religious backgrounds when integrating into a secular college with a prevailing hook-up culture. From preliminary observations, I understood that many young Latinas expressed feeling restricted and controlled by their religious background and used the college experience, especially its hook-up culture, as a vehicle for reconstructing their sense of self. This led me to question the consequences of sexual liberation celebrated by the hook-up culture, and how these may affect the trajectory of young Latinas with religious backgrounds into secular higher education. To understand the experiences of these young adults. I ask how Latina college transition students who from a religious environment re-negotiate their identities in college, and how Latinx cultural and social norms about sex affect this process. The narratives showed that my original hypothesis described individual outlier cases, but not the sample as a whole. I learned that religion was just one of many dimensions involved in the negotiation/ reconstruction of identity, and that sometimes negotiation and reconstruction of identity was not reported or did not occur. (advised by Prof. Nevins)

Cicilia Robison

Turning Trauma Not Tricks: How Prostitution-Specific Treatment Courts Define the Identity of the Prostitute

This senior project grapples with the construction of the identity of the prostitute through the lens of prostitution treatment courts. It analyzes three questions. How do prostitution-specific treatment courts construct the identity of the prostitute in relation to the crime? What are the rhetorics of social control operationalized within prostitution treatment courts to create and control the prostitute? What purpose does this specific construction of the prostitute serve in terms of the greater scope of sexual deviance control? I analyze documents produced by and for these treatment courts, as well as their websites and the information provided by institutions designed to buttress these courts. I also track a parallel criminal justice movement from the Progressive Era, as a foil for present-day events. I consider all of this through the lens of deviance theories of drugs and addiction, medicalized deviance, and moral panic theory. This is an exploratory work meant to open up new veins of analysis on the construction of the identity of the prostitute as a site for the social control of sexuality. (advised by Prof. Tiger)



Ben Sanders

Space-ConsciousConsiderationsinGenderqueerIdentityDevelopment:ASituational IdentityApproach

Looking at genderqueer identity development demonstrates the ways that particular spaces, times, and people influence how gender is constructed and embodied. This study focuses on seven genderqueer students at Middlebury College and uses Bourdieu's theory of social fields to understand how these individuals influence and are influenced by gender norms. Two of the main findings of this study are that community size affects community formation and that the means for expressing non-normative gender are tempered by mainstream understandings of how gender is expressed and embodied. In short, the salient cultural capital for defining and expressing gender depended both on the size of the genderqueer community and the broader community's overarching expectations of gendered embodiment, namely that gender will be visual and conform to expectations of a gender binary. The genderqueer community was too small to be able to have cultural capital relating to a genderqueer identity, so the relationships between members of the community relied more heavily on personal connection and social capital. (advised by Prof. Han)

Julia Shumlin

Sexually Violent Predator Statutes: The Liminal Space of the Carceral State

In this thesis, I use Washington's Sexually Violent Predator (SVP) statute to study the interplay between medical and legal knowledge in sex offender civil commitment laws. I also aim to understand how these laws interact with a larger shift away from a rehabilitative penal model. For my data, I analyze court decisions from Washington's Appellate and Supreme Courts in addition to academic articles on sex offender civil commitment from top journals of law and psychology. I find that medical and legal knowledge interact to cement a "new penology" system of surveillance, incapacitation and management of high-risk groups under the facade of a rehabilitative ideal. These statutes enact a liminal space that strip the SVP of his legal personhood. They employ actuarial tools and diagnoses to reify this liminal space and to construct new knowledge about sexual deviance that will metastasize throughout society. The category of the juvenile SVP is critical to this construction: he confirms the inherent "badness and sickness" of the SVP while serving as the necessary foil to the cultural ideal of the innocent child. The SVP serves as the first frontier and the perfect



subject of the new system of punishment, in which carceral power increasingly permeates the civil realm. (advised by Prof. Tiger. Julia was the cowinner of the 2018 Margaret K. Nelson Award in Critical Sociology and Anthropology)

Priyanjali Sinha

Access, Boundaries, and Class in the Discourses on Menstruation in Gwalior

This study examines the discourses and practices around menstruation amongst Hindu and Muslim women with mixed caste backgrounds, but shared urban and emerging middle class identities, in Gwalior, India. Drawing on ethnographic research with women between the ages of 19 and 64 and Twitter feeds from the #lahukalagaan (tax on blood) campaign, this study seeks to understand the ways in which access to menstrual products, competing ideas of the body, class mobility, and appropriate menstrual management are negotiated. An analysis of gendered taxation through the lens of the #lahukalagaan movement and the materiality and



Most of the Indian women do not use sanitary napkins as 80 % cannot afford them 19% lack information 2% lack access

#lahukalagaan

economy of cotton reflects class-based consumption of menstrual products, which sheds light on access and women's abilities to participate in these expectations. Furthermore, by examining an urban community made up of both Hindus and Muslims, this study also seeks to expand existing understandings of menstrual practice, which have previously focused on the maintenance of caste structure amongst Hindus. Class emerges as a more significant marker of difference and convergence in Gwalior and reveals an overlap in practices amongst Hindus and Muslims, despite narrative departures. Moving through the scales of the body, the urban community, and the nation, this study moves beyond dichotomies of purity and pollution to show how the conceptions, rhetoric, and boundaries surrounding menstruation reflect not just the expected markers and boundaries of caste and religion but also of class, ideas of modernity, and citizenship. (advised by Prof. Oxfeld. Priyanjali was the co-winner of the 2018 Lank Prize in Sociology and Anthropology)

Mari Tanioka

The Collective Memory Construction of the *"Ianfu"* System in Mainland China



This thesis explores the collective memory construction of the "*ianfu*" (慰安 婦) system, an institutionalized form of mass rape established and

perpetrated by the Japanese government and military prior to and during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) in mainland China. From the Mukden Incident (mannshuhenji, 満州変 事) in 1931 to the end of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1945, the Japanese Imperial Force instituted the "ianfu" system in the majority of the regions they invaded and/or occupied. Since then, the collective memory construction of the "ianfu" system has been overwhelmingly dominated by the Republic of China (ROC) and the People's Republic of China (PRC) governments. The History (with a capital "H") curated and (re)produced by the ROC/PRC governments has undergone immense transformations that are often attributable to the governments' larger political schema. The study of the collective memory construction of the "ianfu" system explores processes in which certain memories are privileged and reveals the underlying mechanisms of power that come to monopolize the memory that is collectively remembered and reremembered. In particular, this thesis focuses on the changing ways in which the PRC government, since it came to power in 1949, has strategically managed the memories of the "ianfu" system, reinforcing systems of oppression rather than illuminating the narratives of the survivors to seek justice. (advised by Prof. Oxfeld. Mari was the winner of the 2018 Senior Honors Thesis Award in International and Global Studies)

Julia Trencher

Welcome to America: The Border Crossing Experiences of Undocumented Migrants as an Introduction to "Illegality" in the U.S.

In 2016, the United States was home to more than 5.6 million Mexican-born undocumented individuals. The majority of this population came to the U.S. on foot by crossing the U.S.-Mexico border without identification. Attempted by hundreds of thousands of people each year, this journey is characterized by extreme physical trials in which migrants are forced to put their very lives in peril in

order to make it across. Through an analysis of ethnographic data of undocumented Mexican migrants living in Vermont, I find that border crossing experiences serve as an introduction to the experience of "illegality" once in the U.S. Drawing on Willen's definition of "illegality," I explore how the sociopolitical and phenomenological conditions of border crossings prepare migrants for their experience as undocumented individuals living in the U.S. Through interactions with state agents, crossing guides, and the geographical landscape, I find that migrants "preview" how they will experience "illegality" in their host country. (advised by Prof. Closser)



Samuel Wegner

Utopia Now, Utopia Forever: The Role of Utopian Theory, Fiction, and Practice in the Process of Envisioning and Enacting Reflexive Social Transformation

This project interrogates the concept of utopia through the sociological lens of social transformation, as represented in both fictional and contemporary (that is, real-life, actually existing) contexts. In doing so, this project simultaneously challenges the assumption that sociology cannot speak to the speculated conditions and dynamics of future societies and explores the inherently sociological questions raised by utopian communities, both fictional and real. I study two works of fiction, Ursula Le Guin's 1974 novel The Dispossessed, and Ryan Coogler's 2018 film, Black Panther, for their representations of and value for sociological theories and strategies of social transformation. I then compare these fictional utopias with an actually existing utopia, the Spanish village of Marinaleda as described in Dan Hancox's book The Village Against the World. This town actually implements sociological theories and strategies, and proves that utopia is both a means

and an end to social transformation. (advised by Prof. McCallum)



After SOAN: Alumni Reflections

47 years after fieldwork in Sápmi

by Sally Anderson '73 and Cindy Wright Berlack '73



Cindy (left) and Sally (right); kids waiting for the reindeer herd, 2018

We spent a year living and working among the Sámi people in northern Norway in 1970-71. The knowledge we gained from immersing ourselves in migratory reindeer herding and Sámi villages served as the basis for our senior theses. The spring 1972 issue of *Middlebury Alumni News* ("Cindy and Sally in Lappland" [*sic*, the appropriate term is now 'Sápmi']) portrayed us as two adventurers living with remote and exotic others. While this is no longer a desirable depiction of field research, we both found immersive fieldwork a profound learning experience, one that continues to shape us nearly half a century down the road.

In the early 70's, we were as restless as the rest of our generation to leave the beaten path. The Middlebury campus felt tiresomely small, conventional, segregated and overly safe, given the social and political turmoil of the time. Our required 60-100 page theses seemed a daunting task, so our strategy was to write from first-hand field experience instead of the library. Since Middlebury did not award academic credit for unsupervised independent study, we dropped out. Without any pre-established program or plan, we left to do fieldwork above the Arctic Circle. Needless to say, our parents were less than happy.

The Sámi

The Sámi were originally Finnish-Ugric speaking hunter-gatherers who followed wild game into the Scandinavian and Kola peninsulas after the last Ice Age. Their successful trade with other northern peoples was interrupted in the 1600 century when Scandinavian kings and Russian czars vied for control of the region's rich resources by colonizing territories, minds and souls. While some Sámi chose to migrate seasonally with semi- domesticated reindeer herds, others kept to fishing, trapping, gathering and later farming. Already divided by dialects, territories and subsistence forms, the Sámi were later dissected as Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia consolidated national boundaries in the 1700s and 1800s. Never isolated, the Sámi have persevered, adapting over time to many political, economic. sociocultural. and environmental changes, some self-imposed, some heavily imposed by colonizing regimes.

Notable innovations in the 1970s included the strategic incorporation of new transport and media technologies. Skis, reindeer-pulled sleds, reindeer-skin overcoats (*bieska*), and heavy canvas tents were replaced by snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, pre-fab houses, campers, tents of cotton/polyester, and Gore-tex clothing. Sámi youth developed Sámi radio and television programs, music, film and



Reindeer herd, 2018

theater festivals, and new orthographies and textbooks. All of these were aimed at refashioning deeply stigmatized identities, educating younger generations to take pride in their language and ethnic origins, and making tundra life easier. Although we did not know it at the time, a local demonstration against Norwegian government plans to dam the Kautokeino-Alta River, initiated a longer struggle leading to the first semiautonomous, democratically elected Sámiparliament in 1989.

Fieldwork for life

Sally was already fluent in Danish from a year abroad in Denmark, and Cindy had local contacts from a short visit with Swedish Sámi on a gap year in Europe. We gained more knowledge of the Sámi through library research, museum visits, and interviewing scholars along the way as we hitchhiked from Copenhagen to Tromsø. We fed off each other's independent spirit and perseverance, and survived on Sally's linguistic and Cindy's outdoor skills. Before spring migration to the coast, we both lived in the same small town, Máze. Although we got together infrequently, our proximity became an oasis through the long dark months. We always could - and still can - share a hearty laugh. What we could never have anticipated is how the experiences, and relationships forged there, have reverberated throughout our lives.



Housing in Sápmi: Canvas lavvo (left); sod kåta (right)

Sally: in retrospect

During fieldwork, I worked at a boarding school for young Sámi children, as a maid in a mountain hut, and followed the spring reindeer migration to the calving grounds and summer pasturage with a local *siida* reindeer-herding group. I am amazed at how vividly I remember details of this year: broad mountains, low voices and crinkly smiles, comforting reindeer skin, fresh butter-fried mountain char and sweet birch smoke. There were times when I wanted to stay there forever.

After graduating Middlebury, a Watson Fellowship allowed me to return to Sápmi to study the impact of a new road connecting two Sámi villages. I later wrote an article for *National Geographic* with Middlebury photographer, Erik Borg (September 1977) about changing Sámi life. I also followed the Sámi youth movement, then struggling to reform harsh assimilation policies in Norway and segregation policies in Sweden. This was an important lesson in what the world looks like from the perspective of a small indigenous minority colonized by four nation-states and struggling for some semblance of sovereignty.

Returning frequently to Sápmi over the last 40 years, I have been deeply impressed and moved by

the fruits of these early struggles for cultural recognition, the right to be educated in their own language, and for political representation in national parliamentary and international politics. The Sámi children I meet today are trilingual (Sámi, Norwegian and English) and proud of their culture, even as they engage with popular culture and social media like most children their age. Sámi is now an official language in many northern municipalities and there are Sámi Parliaments in Norway, Sweden and Finland. Despite this progress, the Sámi continue to struggle against the encroaching dams, mines, logging, tourism, and wind parks that national governments and foreign investors want to impose on their 'empty' land.

After the Watson, I married and relocated to Copenhagen, Denmark. While teaching at the Copenhagen International School, I earned my Master and PhD degrees in anthropology. I now teach at the Department of Educational Anthropology at Aarhus University. I have used my knowledge of Sápmi as a backdrop for research projects on schooling and nation-building, minority schooling, and more recently on children's environmental knowledge in urban and rural settings.

Anthropology has changed since the 1970s, and the anthropologist is no longer the 'hero' of encounters with the exotic other. Some fieldwork is now conducted without working knowledge of local languages or long-term immersion. Without these, I would never have forged the cherished relationship (*verdde*) I have with my host family, which has survived across four generations. This has led to fieldwork on Sámi children's participation in reindeer herding, joint teaching with the grandchildren of my former hosts, and best of all, their recent visits to my own winter and summer



Calf-marking, 1973 (left); calf-marking, 2018 (right) places in Copenhagen and New Hampshire. As we know today, classical immersive fieldwork has many ethical issues. One of which is that leaves you

in great debt to your hosts. However, I have never had a debt I was happier to repay.

Cindy: in retrospect

I worked as a live-in house-help (*piiga*) with two different reindeer herding families. Then I was a reindeer herder on the spring migration with the *siida* of the second family. When I met the Sámi for the first time in Sweden in 1968, I was impressed with their inner joy. The 'back to the earth' lifestyle appealed to many of us young people at the time. While a visiting tourist for four days, I cleared land to earn my room and board.

In my sophomore year I switched from the Alpine ski team to Middlebury's fledgling women's Nordic ski team. The hard work and monotony of training motivated me find a way to use my love for skiing in a more practical way. I liked snow and cold, so what better place to ski than chasing reindeer in the tundra? Joining up with Sally brought that fantasy into reality.

Once back at Midd in 1971, I longed for the tiny sod and birch huts of Sápmi. Sally and I cut some pine trees near Middlebury (with permission) and she debarked them. Throughout the fall, I built my own hut in the woods off Rte. 116 near Bristol. That was my 'dorm room' senior year.



Cindy and her house, 1973

I never have worked professionally as an anthropologist, but my experience in Sápmi has had a profound influence on my outlook. Throughout raising children, working in schools, and coaching ski racing, I look to others' backgrounds to understand them better. My experience of being a minority among the Sámi, taught me a depth of acceptance and compassion that has greatly enriched my life. While people were mostly kind, I was also the butt of much joking and teasing. The determination required to stay within a foreign family, speaking a foreign language – which I did not fully understand – tested me daily. These lessons were hard earned but valuable for life.

The changes in the Sámi culture between 1970 and now are minimal in some ways but profound in others. I have gone back every 5 to 10 years to visit my Sámi families, and went on the spring reindeer migration again in 2014. Despite global warming, it is still very cold there. The biggest changes I see among the families I stayed with are the use of storebought clothing, technology and snowmobiling to the flock from warm houses instead of skiing around the herd from on-site canvas *lavvos*. Cell phones function well on the low hills of the tundra, Ipads are useful for tracking the reindeer with GPS transmitters, drones help spot strays and potential predators, and the Internet gives children and adults access to distance schooling.

I was incredibly lucky to have experienced the old ways of herding with the Sámi. It was amazing to be so purely with nature; working with it, watching it. I will never forget the brilliant stars in the dark tundra skies visible 24 hours a day in winter. My Sámi community, and the personal enrichment I acquired there, are etched in my heart.



Herding on skis, 1970 (left); by snowmobile, 2013 (center); with all-terrain vehicles, 2018 (right)

In conclusion

We highly recommend taking the leap into extensive immersive fieldwork, if one feels drawn toward a people, their environment, and the issues they are facing. Be fueled by the joy of learning another perspective on the world. Know you are gaining a unique human experience available only by walking out your door and out of your comfort zone. It is life-long learning and definitely worth the trip!

Hunting for Wild Pigs By Raj Puri '85

To fulfil my childhood dream of sleeping outside and studying people and nature in far-off and exotic places, I created a joint degree in Biology and Anthropology when I was at Middlebury (Class of 1985). My teachers back then were **David Andrews, David Napier, Ellen Basu** and **Rudy Harley**, plus others in Religion, English, History



Raj with a bearded pig, Borneo 1991

and Biology. To supplement the anthropology offerings at SOAN, I spent a summer at an Archaeology Field School in Arkansas ('81) and a year abroad at the University of Queensland, studying anthropology, archaeology, human ecology and ethnobiology ('84). The former was inspired by the arctic archaeologist George Wenzel, the latter by David Napier, whose Art of Oceania seminar had me reading Melville, Darwin, Stanner and Captain Cook, all of which has had a lasting impact on me.

Two months backpacking through PNG before I came back to Vermont gave me the material to write my senior thesis on the economic consequences of missionization in PNG, and the idea to go to Indonesian West Papua for future research on rainforest peoples. My thesis topic wasn't exactly the marriage I was looking for between biology and anthropology, but it did direct me toward development studies, historical perspectives and theories of change, which I draw on today in my work on climate change adaptation. Actually, even before I wrote that, I already knew that what I really wanted to pursue was ethnobiology - a brilliant interdiscipline linking cognitive, linguistic and ecological anthropology, and organismal biology (botany, zoology, systematics, evolution), it really had everything I was interested in. As for rainforests, the rainforest conservation movement kicked off in Australia while I was there, so I visited them, became involved in protests, and began to learn all I could about them.

After a few years of bumming around the West Coast and Asia, I decided to pursue ethnobiology and anthropology at the University of Hawai'i. Once classes started, I found that my expected mentor had retired to Auckland, and our chair, the late Ben Finney, warned against any expectation of having a career in anthropology. I also learned that one of the most important tasks at graduate school is to surround yourself with expertise and inspiration, and also to develop a social/academic network that you will tap into for the rest of your career and life. I was very fortunate to have that in Hawai'i, and then to land a degree fellowship at the East-West Center's Environment and Policy Institute. which gave me insight into multidisciplinary endeavours, applied anthropology, environmental policy issues, and paid the way for my doctoral research in Indonesia.

I started learning Indonesian right away, intensively, so when I arrived in Jakarta the first time, I walked off the plane fluent in textbook Indonesian. We had a brilliant group of expert Indonesianists, and everyone that worked in SE Asia eventually came through Hawai'i, which is how I met Roy Ellen, working on ethnobiology and human ecology in Seram, Eastern Indonesia. 22 years later he interviewed me for my first academic job at the University of Kent, where I have been ever since.

Before Roy though, on the advice of Peter Brosius, on his way back to Michigan after 3 years in Sarawak doing fieldwork with the Penan Gang, I gave up on West Papua, and decided to head for Indonesian Borneo, where he said there were Penan

groups still living in the interior forests. So, I ended up living in the rainforested interior of Borneo, spending my

days with the Penan Benalui and Kenyah Badang hunting for wild pigs. I spent two years doing





ethnobiological research, specifically on how to hunt, which was, in a sense, about the uses of knowledge in action, in practice. I wanted to reinvent anthropology for myself. from the ground up, but of course Ι was inevitably working in conceptual frameworks that I barely understood at

the time. (I was really into Barth, Vayda and Bloch, to name but a few). Practically, to be hunter, I had to learn everything about forest trees and animals, navigating mountains, rivers and streams, the weather, tools (like the blowpipe), and the social and cultural aspects of life in a small village. I was fully immersed in daily life there for two years. I'd never paid such close attention to life before, or known any place or any group of people so well, in such detail. I loved them, they loved me; it was the most exciting time of my life, living my dream, every day.

While I was there, I became involved in establishing what became the Kayan-Mentarang National Park, which introduced me to the emerging field of conservation social science, and I got to design all sorts of ways to integrate anthropology with biology, and introduce local knowledge and practices into research and management plans for protected areas.

So, I spent the 1990s as a gypsy anthropologist, working for various applied research projects at WWF, EWC and the newly established Centre for International Forestry Research, CIFOR. I travelled all over SE Asia, to conferences and fieldsites, and met lots of other students, scientists, NGO staff, funders and policy people. It was yet another education, this time in international indigenous rights and environmental policy, and I loved every minute of it, that is, until I almost died from malaria in one of the most remote places in Borneo. While the illness had no obvious long-term effects on my health, it did have a not so subtle impact on my desire to spend long periods in areas of endemic malaria again! A bit tired and, frankly, frustrated at the slow pace of change after 13 years working in Indonesia and Hawai'i, and with the new millennium in sight, in 2000 I headed off to the Netherlands to make use of the Dutch Indonesian archives, museums and libraries, to finish my books and see a bit of Europe. Once there, it was a short hop to the UK and the next chapter in my life.

All of my experiences at EWC, WWF and CIFOR, made it possible for me to walk comfortably into a new job at Kent in the School of Anthropology and Conservation. teaching Environmental Anthropology, Ethnobiology and Ethnobotany, Research Methods and Development Anthropology. Given my lack of academic work experience to that point, it was starting at the deep end, but I managed. I still think it was complete luck that I was able to get this post. But, it was a job perfectly suited to my research background, where the newly integrated department was trying to create a context for interdisciplinarity, for applied research, where natural and social scientists would work together to train a future generation of researchers and practitioners to save the planet. I had never planned to end up in academia, but there it was, all my favourites served on a golden platter, who could resist?

From SOAN to Refugee Service Work By Adriana Ortiz-Burnham '17

Last month I got my first parking ticket. To pay it, I was forced to play a thrilling game of phone tag with the town of Farmington, Maine. The ticket was left on my student's father's car, which my student, Y, used to drive my coworker, Meg, and me to his future alma mater. The flawed parking was my fault. Don't worry about it. This eventful excursion meant Y could complete his Accuplacer testing and finish the paperwork necessary for his academic enrollment and housing assignment.

My job title, until recently, was College Access Coordinator. I also did homework and job search help. Starting this fall I will be the head of the youth leadership program at the same nonprofit – a relatively young and growing organization in Lewiston, Maine devoted to emotionally, socially, academically, and professionally supporting local youth regardless of background or identity. We strive to offer a safe and positive space where our



kids have the room and resources to explore who they are and can be.

Many of our youth are members of the large immigrant and refugee community in Lewiston. The current political climate makes supporting them a unique challenge. Many of the immediate steps they must take to succeed – whatever that means – mean partaking in and perpetuating a system that was not built for or by them. A system that often actively harms them. How to encourage them to follow rules and fill out forms that will get them accepted to colleges where safe spaces will be few and far between, if there are any at all? How to be a source of strength, a grown up, in their lives when I frequently feel voiceless and inadequate in the face of injustice and inequality?

Working at a small nonprofit means knowing every staff member, means I can ask them these questions. Means if they've been there longer than I have they have some answers, and if they haven't then they have the same questions. My job is one where I get to take my kids to their college appointments and on the drive up be honest with them about which parts of college might feel impossible but can be withstood, even if they shouldn't have to be. It's also a lot of nagging about the Common App and housing forms, but that is exactly as boring to talk about as it seems.

At the end of this month Meg, Hannah, our other coworker, and I are taking one of our students, K, to college. We all have a shared Google Doc with a list of all the necessities K needs to take. She made us promise to carry the heavy stuff. My work follows me home. It calls me every day of winter break with questions about the FAFSA and messages me at midnight to edit an essay due the next day. It asks me for help facing trauma I have no experience with and demands that the growth I'm encouraging in my kids is mirrored and multiplied in my own life. It's really hard and I think I mess up a lot, but here we are. The kids forgive me for getting parking tickets and I forgive them for leaving their photosynthesis projects until the night before. Can't ask for much more than that.

Faculty Publications, 2017-2018

Svea Closser

2018 "Why Eradicating Polio is More Complicated than it Seems," *Sapiens*, July 11. <u>https://www.sapiens.org/culture/polio-eradication-pakistan/</u>

2018 "Volunteers in Ethiopia's Women's Development Army are More Deprived and Distressed Than Their Neighbors: Cross-Sectional Survey Data from Rural Ethiopia," with Kenneth Maes, Yihenew Tesfaye, **Yasmine Gilbert '17**, and Roza Abesha, *BMC Public Health* 18: 258.

2018 *Foundations of Global Health*, with Peter Brown. New York: Oxford University Press.

2017 "Per Diems in Polio Eradication: Perspectives from Community Health Workers and Officials," with Anat Rosenthal, Judith Justice, Kenneth Maes, **Marium Sultan '16, Sarah Banerji '15**, Hailom Banteyerga Amaha, Ranjani Gopinath, Patricia Omidian, and Laetitia Nyirazinyoye, *American Journal of Public Health* 107(9): 1470-1476.

Chong-suk Han

2018 "Very Few People Say No Whites: Gay Men of Color and the Racial Politics of Desire," with Kyung-Hee Choi, *Sociological Spectrum* 13(3): 145-161. 2018 "How Sexual Racism Impacts Erotic Capital," with Jesus G. Smith and Maria Cristina Morales. In *The Handbook of the Sociology of Racial and Ethnic Relations*, 2e, Pinar Batur and Joe Feagin, eds., pp. 389-400. New York: Springer.

2017 "The Deliberate Racism Making #GayMediaSoWhite," *Contexts* 16(4): 70-71.

Jamie McCallum



2018 "There's No Trick," *Jacobin*, January 23. <u>https://www.jacobinmag.com/2018/01/janus-</u> afscme-right-to-work-public-unions-dues

2017 "The New Global Labor Studies: A Critical Review," with Marissa Brookes, *Global Labour Journal* 8(3):201-218.

2017 "Reflecting on *Global Unions, Local Power*," *Journal of World Systems Research* 23(1):213-218.

Erica Morrell

2018 "First Food Justice = Food Justice = Environmental Justice: A Call to Address Infant Feeding Disparities and the First Food System," *Environmental Justice* 11(1):1-5.

2017 "Localizing Detroit's Food System: Boundary-Work and the Politics of Experiential Expertise," *Science as*

Culture. <u>https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1</u> 080/09505431.2017.1346599?journalCode=csac20

2017 "First Food Justice: Infant Feeding Inequities and the First Food System," *Breastfeeding Medicine* 12(8):489-492.

David Stoll

2018 "Will George Clooney get the Gerardi Assassination Wrong?" *Miami Herald*, February

27, <u>https://www.miamiherald.com/opinion/op-ed/article202460824.html</u>

2018 "Genocide in Guatemala? Pam Yates's Resistance Saga," *Academic Questions* 31(2):219-226.

2018 "Rednecks, Norteños, and the Next American Melting Pot?" *Society* 55(1):11-17.

2018 "Day Labor in Two U.S. Cities," *Latin American Perspectives* 45(1):217-221.

2017 "Review Essay: Latin Americans and African Americans in the U.S. Slaughterhouse Industry," *Anthropology of Work Review* 38(2): 113-116.

2017 "Critical Debates: Gang Wars of Central America – What Anthropologists Have to Say," *Latin American Politics and Society* 59(4):121-131.

Rebecca Tiger

2017 "Race, Class and the Framing of Drug Epidemics," *Contexts* 16(4):46-51.

Alumni News

Rod Abhari '15 earned his M.A. with distinction in European Studies of Society, Science, and Technology at Maastricht University, and is now entering the Ph.D. program in Rhetoric and Communication at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. Great to see such a direct line from SOAN major, senior work and career!

Lila Buckley-Lim '04 has welcomed her second SOAN major, class of 2040, Cedar Buckley-Lim!

Kenzie Chin '10 is starting a Master's program in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Boston University.

Amy Donahue '13 is in Boston, doing global health work with the NGO PIVOT, see http://pivotworks.org/.

Yasmine Gilbert '17 is in Denver, working in digital marketing.

Dr. Andrea Hamre '05 has completed her PhD in Planning, Governance, & Globalization at Virginia Tech, with a dissertation entitled "A Transport Justice Evaluation of Employer-Based Transit Benefits."

Ji Eun Lee '15 is starting grad school in social work

at Washington University in St. Louis, with a focus on gerontology.

Alex MacMillan '15 is starting the Masters of Arts in Teaching program for Secondary Social Studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Corrine Prevot '13, like her product line of excellent hats, continues to stay on top. See https://www.outsideonline.com/2282501/vermont-



skier-who-makesbest-hats

Lizzy Stears '17.5 has been trekking across Central America since Jterm.

Future Issues

As always, please send us more newsletter material at 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!

Department of Sociology and Anthropology Munroe 201 Middlebury College Middlebury VT 05753

http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/soan

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Page 1 - 2018 grads by Mike S Page 2 - Svea Closser head shot from Svea C, hominin family snapshot from James F. Page 3 - Julia Shumlin photo by Mike S; social construction also by Mike; fall in Vermont from https://www.flickr.com/photos/bg/268834700 Page 4 - Tenure cartoon from https://www.listland.com/top-10reasons-why-teachers-should-not-get-tenure/, but I wouldn't recommend reading this blog post; Erica WSJ-style art from https://www.europenowjournal.org/2018/09/04/food-activism-thesociology-of-knowledge-and-first-foods-an-interview-with-ericamorrell/ (which I DO recommend that you read) Page 5 - too many tomatoes from http://foxpoker.com/pokeradvice/do-you-suck-at-poker; street food in China from http://www.shunya.net/Pictures/China/Beijing/StreetFood.html Page 6 - Oven project from Mike S, MVCF from http://www.doc.state.vt.us/custody-supervision/facilities/facpics/mvrcf/a-look-around-marble-valley-regional-correctional-facility/ Page 7 – Disney princesses from

http://disneyprincess.wikia.com/wiki/List_of_Disney_Princesses; Women's March from
http://www.thedieline.com/blog/2017/11/15/the-pink-pussyhat-wins-
as-the-first-ever-brand-of-the-year Page 8 – Football with headphones (look, it's actually not that easy to find images to illustrate the tremendous diversity of senior project topics!) from https://8tracks.com/explore/nfl/hot/1; Arianna, Mary,
and Taylor from Mike S
Page 9 – Chris B at ESS from Chris B; coddled student from https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/09/the-coddling-
of-the-american-mind/399356/;
Page 10 - Legal immigrant for Trump from https://www.politico.com/story/2016/03/trump-immigration-critics-
220737; #metoo image from https://www.womensmarchmn.com/our-
stories/2017/10/17/me-too-our-stories
Page 11 – Chinese grandparents from
https://www.popsugar.com/moms/Grandparents-Raising-
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ai-is-already-here/;
Page 12 – Diversity at Midd from
https://www.collegefactual.com/colleges/middlebury-college/student-
life/diversity/; GW Bush signing No Child Left Behind law from
https://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/no-child-left-behind-
overview-definition-summary.html Page 13 – Joey L award from Joey L; Alt-right media chart from
https://www.mediamatters.org/networks-and-outlets/rebel-media
Page 14 – Intervarsity syringe throw from
https://thevarsity.ca/2015/11/29/russian-athletes-doping-controversy/;
Tanzanian woman with albinism, Bibiana Mashamba, from
https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-3266662/Tanzanian- albino-16-leg-fingers-hacked-thieves-sold-witch-doctors-reveals-joy-
fitted-prosthetic-limb-doctors-LA.html
Page 15 - Free West Papua activist from
https://www.freewestpapua.org/actions/ask-your-government-to-
support-media-freedom-in-west-papua/; Mapplethorpe photo from
https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/5353; Khakis from
https://www.billskhakis.com/mens-khakis;
Page 16 - Louisiana State Prison from https://www.theadvocate.com/nation_world/article_16a6a926-5707-
56ec-a77a-ad45e779df42.html; rockclimber from
https://www.pinterest.com/pin/141019032052058971/
Page 17 – "Dirty talk" by Gemma Correll from
https://www.instagram.com/p/BJhbC5MAqBQ/; prostitution court
image from <u>https://kellerlawoffices.com/minnesota-adopt-specialized-</u>
prostitution-courts/; Page 18 – Washington state Supreme Court from
https://www.tvw.org/category/washingintonstatesupremecourt/;
#Lahukalagaan campaign image from
https://www.vagabomb.com/Say-No-to-LahuKaLagaan-The-
Campaign-Thats-Trying-to-Make-Sanitary-Napkins-TaxFree/
Page 19 – Shanghai 'ianfu' statue from http://english.donga.com/3/all/26/766669/1; migrants in the Sonoran
Desert from
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/06/02/whos-
crossing-the-mexico-border-a-new-survey-tries-to-find-
out/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.d945332ef07b
Page 20 – Marinaleda image from <u>https://anonhq.com/marinaleda-</u>
spanish-town-equal-wage-full-employment-housing-food-residents/; Anderson/Berlack photos from Sally A and Cindy B
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Pages 21 and 22 – Anderson/Berlack photos from Sally A and Cindy
Pages 21 and 22 – Anderson/Berlack photos from Sally A and Cindy B
Pages 21 and 22 – Anderson/Berlack photos from Sally A and Cindy B Page 23 – Raj with a pig and making a rattan pack from Raj P
Pages 21 and 22 – Anderson/Berlack photos from Sally A and Cindy B Page 23 – Raj with a pig and making a rattan pack from Raj P Page 24 – Cover of Raj's book from Raj P
Pages 21 and 22 – Anderson/Berlack photos from Sally A and Cindy B Page 23 – Raj with a pig and making a rattan pack from Raj P

Page 27 – Febbiest Feb Lizzy Stears and Mike S being Febby at Snow Bowl Febs 2017.5 graduation ski-down