Welcome New Students!

From Director. Andrea Leverentz

Hello all! I hope you’re all off to a productive fall semester! As always, this is a busy time in Sociology department!

This fall, we welcome a number of new PhD and MA students and three new faculty members! Current members of the department continue to accomplish amazing things – see news on publications, fellowships, tenure, and defended dissertations in the following pages. Our first dissertation defense of the 19-20 academic year was Kate Phelps this past Friday, September 20 – please join us in congratulating Kate on her successful defense!

The GSSA is hard at work planning events for graduate students this year. Stay tuned for updates and invitations. We will also be welcoming a number of visitors to the department (in person and virtually) to talk about their career trajectories. These include Professors Danny Gascón and Evan Stewart (UMass Boston), Professor Alison Cares (University of Central Florida), Nazgol Ghandnoosh (The Sentencing Project), and James J. Hughes (UMass Boston). All are welcome (see me or the Blackboard page for more details).

Finally, I am always happy to meet with students, to talk about your program and career plans and research ideas, celebrate your successes, or work through challenges you’re facing. You can find me in room 19, or set up a time to meet at https://leverentz.youcanbook.me.

I hope you all continue to have a fantastic semester!

Andrea Leverentz
Associate Professor
Graduate Program Director
Upcoming Events

- Join the GSSA for a social gathering on the Harbor Boat Cruise, taking place on September 30, 2019, meet in room 150c at 11:30pm. Please rsvp to Nahalia.Carless001@umb.edu.
- Welcome back fall party at Professor Kevin Wozniak’s house, Saturday, October 5, 2019 from 1:30-5:30pm. Please RSVP at: http://evite.me/W4UdxAvB9W

Conferences & Submission Deadlines

The Eastern Sociological Society (ESS)
Submissions due: October 15, 2019
February 27-March 1, 2020 in Philadelphia, PA

The American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR)
Submission due: November 8, 2019
May 14-17, 2020 in Atlanta, GA

The American Sociological Association (ASA)
Submissions due: January 29, 2020
August 8-11, 2020 in San Francisco, CA

American Society of Criminology (ASC)
Submissions due: March 2020 (for next year's meeting)
Date:November 13-16, 2019 San Francisco, CA
NEW STUDENT BIOS

TIM DACEY is entering the PhD in Sociology for Fall 2019. His primary interests include public opinion and policy, although he has additional interests in economic sociology and social theory. Currently, Tim is interested in investigating how communities perceive and assess risk of climate change, as well as examining the extent to which climate-change denial movements influence US political discourse. Outside of school, Tim enjoys watching sports and spending time with his spouse, Eileen, and their beagle, Darwin.

ALYSSA KUMLER is a first-year incoming PhD student in Sociology. Originally from Cleveland, OH, Alyssa attended the University of Cincinnati and just graduated this May with a B.S. in Psychology and a B.A. in Sociology. Her research interests have been primarily in gender-related issues, relationships, sexuality, and medical sociology. She has a lot of experience doing qualitative methods but is very excited to learn how to do more quantitative work. In her free time Alyssa enjoys photography, and taking dance and yoga classes.

JILL LAPLANTE is a first year Ph.D. student, with a master’s in public policy from Maastricht University, a master’s in business administration and a bachelor’s in public administration from Southern New Hampshire University. She grew up in upstate New York prior to serving in the U.S. Navy and has since lived in six states and three countries. Her research interests lie in group dynamics, specifically in exploring how individuals manage the tension between in-group cohesion and out-group conflict in ways that facilitate intergroup civility and respect. Jill draws on her diverse professional and academic background to integrate findings across the social sciences with sociological theory and methods. She aims to formulate research questions that are informed by and congruent with evolutionary psychology. In her free time, Jill enjoys reading non-fiction and spending time outdoors.

HAILY PICCININ-LAFIERRE is now a PhD student, after having just completed her MA. She is currently working for You Inc. as an Intensive Care Coordinator where she helps youth with behavioral health challenges. She is interested in researching something related to the human services field, but not quite sure yet what avenue she will pursue. She is still lecturing and a career goal is to lecture at the college level.

Samar Ramy, born in Massachusetts, she is a first year student in the MA program in Applied Sociology. Prior to coming to UMB, she got her BA in Psychology from UMass Lowell, along with minors in both Sociology and Gender Studies. Her research interests primarily include the intersections between gender, sexuality, and mental health. Outside of academia, Samar enjoys singing, bullet journaling, and living life as an avid Taylor Swift enthusiast.
MEET OUR NEW STUDENTS

PhD in Sociology:
Timothy Dacey
Alyssa Kumler
Jill LaPlante
Haily Piccinin-LaFierre (defer to 2020)
Robert Rice
Joe Silcox
Nicole Young
Eve Zasoba

MA in Applied Sociology
Orsia (Ersie) Konstas
Samar Ramy
Esi Coro
ALESSANDRA BAZO VIEIRICH is in the final stage of her doctoral candidacy having just successfully defended her dissertation entitled "DREAMs of College: In pursuit of higher education while undocumented" this summer. This dissertation sheds light on the motivation that undocumented students have to pursue higher education and illustrates how undocumented students frame their own place-based narratives about illegality in relation to their experiences in education. The findings have important implications for undocumented students' educational inclusion, and for their futures as they transition into the labor force after college. Since the defense, Alessandra has begun her new role as a Visiting Assistant Professor at Davidson College.

JULIE LABAGNARA went to Lisbon in June to study at the Human-Animal Studies summer school where I made great contact in the field. She submitted her own research abstract to the Canine Science Conference at ASU, which was accepted for a talk at the conference in October. The title is "It's the Pits: Race and the American Pit Bull Terrier." She just made her IRB submission and Professors Leverentz and Mayorga-Gallo have been instrumental in helping plan this study. Julie has also been nominated to serve on the board of directors at New Beginnings Reentry Services, Inc in South Boston, where she volunteered during her first year. Julie is excited for all that's ahead in her second year, including being Vice President of the GSSA!

MEREDITH GAMBLE is a Ph.D. candidate with a focus on immigrant experiences in the US at the intersections of gender, work, race, and law; participatory-action research; and decolonizing methodologies. This past spring she defended her dissertation proposal "Latina Immigrant Women at Work in Boston: Investigating Rights, Power, and Resistance Through Participatory Action Research", which received support from the Social Science Research Council Transdisciplinary Dissertation Proposal Development Program at UMass Boston ($3,000). This summer, Meredith was awarded $7,500 to fund dissertation research from the UMass Boston Public Service Grant. Also this summer, Meredith was a Program and Teaching Assistant at Northeastern University for a course on ethnography that took place in Barcelona, Spain and was taught by Dr. Silvia Dominguez at Northeastern and Dr. France Winddance Twine at UC Santa Barbara. This fall Meredith will be back on campus teaching sociology in the Navitas program.

KATE PHELPS successfully defended her dissertation entitled "Digital Vanguards: Tween Girls' Online Performances and the Construction of Modern American Girlhoods" this past Friday, September 20, 2019. This year, she published a chapter in the new 2019 collection Body Battlegrounds: Transgressions, Tensions and Transformations (Bobel and Kwan, eds.) entitled "Am I Pretty Enough for You Yet?: Resistance through Parody in the Pretty or Ugly YouTube Trend." She also presented her paper "Girlhood Reimagined: Compulsory Visibility and New Girlhood Subjectivities through Tween Girls' Social Media Participation" at ESS this past spring. Kate continues her role as the chair of the Fat Studies Interest Group for the National Women's Studies Association, organizing two accepted panels for the upcoming NWSA annual conference in San Francisco this November: "Fat Bodies Becoming: Feeling Fatness in Literary and Visual Creation" and "Fat Politics and Violences: Conceptualizing Resistance to Sexual, Medical, and State Violences." She will not physically be in attendance at NWSA this year because she is expecting her second child in November! Kate currently teaches in the Gender and Women's Studies department for the University of Wisconsin-Madison, as well as in the Sociology department at Madison College. She is excited for adventures both inside and outside of the classroom this year!
**Kate Price** is finishing up the final stage of her career as a PhD student. This past summer, she successfully defended her dissertation entitled "Defining Worthy Victims: State legislative decisions to decriminalize commercially sexually exploited children in the United States". This mixed methods study uses Event History Analysis and interviews with anti-criminalization advocates, state legislators, state legislative aides, and state prosecutors to examine social, economic, and political factors associated with legislative decisions prohibiting the arrest and/or prosecution of sexually exploited minors for prostitution. Statistical analyses suggest states with human trafficking task forces and mandated CSEC-specific services are more likely to pass partial or full non-criminalization legislation. In contrast, states with more people living in areas of concentrated disadvantage, more anti-CSEC NGO's and lower prevalence of sex trafficking activity are more likely to criminalize this population. Since the defense, Kate has begun her new role as a Visiting Scholar at the Brandeis University Women's Studies Research Center.

**Don Camelio** graduated this past May with his PhD in Sociology, after successfully defending his dissertation entitled "The Impact of Stigmatization on College Students Returning from Mental Health Leave". Since graduation, Don has continued his work as Associate Dean for Residential Education at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

**Julianne Siegfriedt** completed her PhD in Sociology this past summer. She successfully defended her dissertation entitled "From Victim to Volunteer: A life course perspective and the transition to adulthood for individuals who have sold sex". Julianne has been working as a Lecturer in the Women & Gender Studies Department at the University of Southern Maine.
NEW FACULTY BIOS

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR DANIEL (DANNY) GASCON joins us from the University of San Francisco, where he was an Assistant Professor. His research lies at the intersection of urban sociology, law and society, and race and ethnic relations, and is primarily concerned with critical approaches to the study of urban policing, punishment and inequality, and gang and youth culture. He recently published a book (with Aaron Roussell), The Limits of Community Policing: Civilian Power and Police Accountability in Black and Brown Los Angeles, NYU Press. (See UMB Bio)

VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR ADAM PITTMAN is finishing his dissertation in our department. This is an ethnographic study in which he explores the contestation over space and place identities in the South End and the area known as “Methadone Mile.” His research interests center on communities and crime, urban and community sociology, and immigration and crime.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR EVAN STEWART comes to us from the University of Minnesota, where he recently finished his PhD. His work in political and cultural sociology focuses on why people lose trust in institutions and the political implications of leaving them. He currently focuses on religious disaffiliation as one case of this process. Professor Stewart is also the current editor at Sociological Images (https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/) and happy to talk with graduate students about research methods and public sociology. Professor Stewart is scheduled to teach SOCIOL 652 Advanced Quantitative Methods this spring.
Congratulations to Professors Liz Brown, Jason Rodriquez, Cinzia Solari, Leslie Wang, and Kevin Wozniak on being officially promoted and tenured this past August!

NEWLY TENURED:

SABBATICALS & TEMPORARY LEAVES:

Congratulations to Sofya Aptekar on being selected as a Russell Sage Fellow for the 2019-20 academic year! As a visiting scholar with the Russell Sage Foundation, she will be cowriting a book based on the research of how the lack of legal status affects the lives of undocumented youth attending colleges in the City University of New York system.

We would also like to extend congratulations to Jorge Capetillo, who will be on research leave this fall and working as a visiting faculty member in Mexico!

The following faculty will be on sabbatical during this academic year: Philip Brenner, Cinzia Solari, Kevin Wozniak, and Leslie Wang (2020 calendar year).

Additionally, Sarah Mayorga-Gallo and Heather Zaykowski will be returning to us in the Spring after their family leaves.

This past spring, Heather Zaykowski and her husband Kevin welcomed their son Benjamin into the world.

This summer, Sarah gave birth to her daughter, Elina Cecilia, born June 6th, 2019. (Blanket handmade by Sofya Aptekar!)
**FACULTY PUBLICATIONS**

**SOFYA APTEKAR**


**PHILIP BRENNER**


**LIZ BROWN**

**DANNY GASCÓN**

**ANDREA LEVERENTZ**


**SARAH MAYORGA-GALLO**


**SILVIA MIGNON**

**ADAM PITTMAN**

**RUSSELL SCHUTT**

Russ, along with a colleague at Harvard Medical School, have just received a major external grant (nearly $4 million over 2 years) from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). The goal of the project is to comparatively assess the effectiveness of cognitive enhancement and social skills training in the treatment of schizophrenia.

**EVAN STEWART**


**KEVIN WOZNIAK**


**HEATHER ZAYKOWSKI**
Meet the Graduate Sociology Student Association!

MISSION:
The Graduate Sociology Student Association (GSSA) is here to build a sense of community, among graduate sociology students and the sociology faculty, by providing opportunities to socialize and engage with the larger campus and Boston communities. The GSSA is open to all graduate students in Sociology and is committed to being respectful, resourceful, supportive, and above all, welcoming. GSSA’s mission is to enrich student involvement across all aspects of university life and within the broader community.

Your Officers for 2019-2020:

Joe Silcox, President
Julie LaBagnara, Vice President
Jonathan Vega Martinez, Secretary/Treasurer
Nahalia Carless, Professional Events Coordinator
Haily Piccinin-Laferriere, Social Events Coordinator

The function of sociology, as of every science, is to reveal that which is hidden

Graduate Program Leadership:
Dr. Paul Benson, Department Chair
Dr. Andrea Leverentz, PhD & MA Program Director
Dr. Russell Schutt, Survey Certificate Program Director
Dr. Silvia Mignon, Forensic Services Certificate Program Director

Thank you to those who contributed to this issue of the fall newsletter!

- Sarah Bopp [Editor]
Graduate Program Coordinator