

SOCIOLOGY

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Spring semester is beginning to flower all over campus as the days get warmer, rainier, and longer. In the Sociology Department we are immersed in spring courses.

This issue of the newsletter is filled with information about some of our many amazing students. We highlight two of our graduating seniors—Evan Fossen and Sophia Friedl. I first met Evan the summer before he started here at UM in GLI orientation. Over a dinner of pizza, I was excited to find that he was enrolled in my very first GLI freshman seminar (*Who Am I? Identity and the Social World*). In class, Evan stood out in discussions and gave an early clue to his interest in how our identities influence where we fit in the social world.

I got to know Sophie Friedl in her junior year. Like Evan, Sophie is a hard worker and a great contributor to class discussions. In the *Inequality and Social Justice (ISJ) Capstone* course, Sophie is conducting in-depth interviews to collect data for her research project, “Stigmatization: The Effects of the Montana Meth Project.” She’ll be presenting the results of her data analysis at the UM Undergraduate Research Conference (UMCUR) this spring on April 15th.

We also feature two of our gradu-

ates, Jennifer Hildreth and Stephen Hatton. I first learned of Jennifer’s work on domestic violence and her interest in strangulation in the *ISJ Capstone*. She analysed in-take data from a local domestic violence shelter for that course and came away with some amazing results, now being used to draw attention to strangulation and to educate those who work with strangulation victims. Stephen Hatton is also making a difference, accepted into the Peace Corps, and helping at-risk youth in Thailand. He credits sociology with helping him to understand others from their points of view. Sociological research and service: making a difference!

You’ll notice that in this issue we also highlight one of our graduate students, Peter Ore. I’ve known Peter a long time too, since 2005, when he took *Social Psychology* from me in my second year here at UM. Peter is an outstanding student and seeing him grow into a real sociological thinker has been very exciting. I’m sure that the Sociology faculty agrees with me when I say how rewarding it is to work with students like Peter, Evan, Sophie, Jennifer, and Stephen. It’s exciting to see them learn how to recognize sociological problems, formulate socio-

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



DR. KUIPERS

logical questions, and then plunge ahead in pursuing the answers to those questions.

We round out this issue with an article on one of our most popular courses, *Gangs and Society*, taught by Dusten Hollist. This has long been a course that’s attractive to students for its topic and for the well-regarded professor who teaches it.

Last fall we held our first (in recent memory) Open House at homecoming for returning graduates. It was a huge success! Check out the photos in this issue of those who attended and updates from those who couldn’t make it. And plan to attend next year to catch up with your former classmates and “old” professors. We look forward to seeing you!



NEW FACULTY PROFILE: MEGAN BAHNS

The Sociology Department is thrilled to welcome its newest faculty member, Dr. Megan Bahns. Dr. Bahns comes to us from Syracuse University, where she received her PhD in 2013, and has been teaching since 2009. Bahns also taught briefly at Hobart, and William Smith, and served as the Executive Director for Alpha Kappa Delta, the Sociology Honor Society. Megan is the recipient of numerous awards for teaching and research, including receiving the Outstanding Dissertation Award for her *Gender Regimes in Finance: the Social Organization of Money Work*. Presently, her academic interests are gender, sexuality and work, and she is excited to extend her research to regional situations she has encountered since moving to Montana.

Dr. Bahns' many talents will be put to good use at UM: this fall, she taught Introduction to Sociol-

ogy, Social Research Methods, and Classical Sociological Theory. This spring, she is teaching Social Statistics, Gender and Society, and Juvenile Delinquency. Megan will also be acting as the faculty representative for UM's chapter of the Alpha Kappa Delta.

When she is not hard at work, Megan enjoys spending time with her family, including husband Jason, a lawyer specializing in Disability Law, and their two year old daughter Nora. Megan and her twin sister, a dietitian credited with having convinced the whole family to go vegan, co-author a blog where they share philosophical and logistical information about conscientious consumption practices. Megan comments that her students have been involved with her blogging project over the years, and have provided some



DR. MEGAN BAHNS

great tips and analysis.

Love of the outdoors was one factor influencing Bahn's decision to move to Montana. She enjoys hiking, and running (though she jokes that she is not the ultra-marathoner that her husband is), and looks forward to trying downhill skiing for the first time this winter.

Welcome Megan, and thanks for joining our UM family! ■

PROFESSOR RICHARDS RETIRES AFTER 20 YEARS AT UM



DR. REBECCA RICHARDS

After a long and distinguished career, Professor Rebecca Richards retired at the end of Fall Semester 2015. Professor Richards received her PhD from Utah State University in 1990, and taught briefly at the University of California-Davis, before accepting a position with the University of Montana Department of Sociology in 1995. Richards' scholarship focuses primarily on Rural and Environmental Sociology, though her research interests vary widely, from local issues to international concerns. Among her accomplishments, Richards has numerous publications, has received two Fulbright awards, and has given expert testimony before Congress. Professor Richards is a talented academic, a valued colleague and a respected educator and mentor, she will be greatly missed. Thanks Becky, for all your years of service, and good luck with your next adventure! ■

FEATURED UNDERGRADUATES: EVAN FOSSEN AND SOPHIA FRIEGL

Evan Fossen is an excellent example of the versatility of an education in Sociology. Born and raised in Lander, Wyoming, Evan graduated Valedictorian of his 2012 high school class, and came to UM hoping to pursue a Sociology degree with a Criminology emphasis, with the ultimate goal of attaining a career in federal law enforcement. In the summer of 2014, Evan was awarded an internship with the Washington Center Program in Washington, D.C.. He worked with a detective unit of the Metropolitan Police Department responsible for investigating burglaries and robberies. While Evan describes his time in D.C. as a “wonderful experience”, he also attributes the internship with making him realize that “working in the criminal justice system wasn’t for me.”

Fossen chose to finish his Sociology degree, but decided he would use it to go in a completely different direction. He added a second major, Psychology, and after realizing how rewarding he found involvement with his fraternity, became increasingly involved with Greek Life advising and Student Affairs. Evan presently works as the Assistant Student Director for the Student Involvement Network, a position he credits with expanding his understanding of the career opportunities available through Student Affairs. Evan will graduate in Spring 2016, and is currently in the process of applying for a Regional Director position with Sigma Phi Epsilon, a year long engagement. Evan eventually plans to attend a graduate program in Student Affairs.

Evan will also graduate from UM with a minor in Spanish. Last spring, Evan and 14 other students participated in a three month trip to Oaxaca, Mexico led by Professor Clary Loisel. The group stayed with host families, and attended an intensive Spanish immersion school, where they studied language and grammar, Mexican culture, Spanish literature, and

Mexican cinema. Students were given a chance to take two week sessions on Mexican cooking, crafts and salsa dancing. Fossen describes taking weekend trips by bus around southern Mexico, with a couple of his fellow students, to visit other cities and famous landmarks. He also spent time working with several ‘intercambios’, or Mexicans looking to practice their English. After finishing the program in O-



EVAN FOSSEN

xaca, Fossen took a solo trip to Peru, where he accomplished one of his life goals, visiting Machu Picchu. “That was the coolest experience I have ever had,” Fossen said.



For a person just turning 20 years old, UM senior **Sophia Friedl** is wise beyond her years. This becomes apparent when Sophia describes her experience as a volunteer for the Open Aid Alliance, in their Syringe Exchange Program (SEP).

Continued Page 5

LECTURE SERIES HOSTS DR. JANJA LALICH

The Sociology Department's Lecture Series 2015-2016 kicked off by welcoming guest speaker Dr. Janja Lalich, of Chico State University in October. Dr. Lalich is an expert in "self-sealing belief systems", such as cults, extremist and terrorist groups, and human trafficking, and is the author of several influential books, including *Bounded Choice: True Believers and Charismatic Cults*, and *Take Back Your Life: Recovering from Cults and Abusive Relationships*. She has been featured in the documentary "The Revolution isn't a Tea Party", made for the Investigation Discovery Channel series *Dangerous Persuasions*, where Lalich reflects on her own 10 1/2 year experience as a cult member in the Democratic Workers Party

UM Sociology would like to acknowledge the generosity of Scott and Sally McNall, whose contributions have made possible the McNall Lecture Series. Thanks Scott and Sally for your continued support and your dedication to sociological inquiry.

in the 1970s and 80s.

Lalich's lecture concerned her testimony before the Superior Court of New Jersey on the harmful practice of conversion therapy. Her testimony was given in relation to a consumer-fraud case brought last June against the JONAH

(Jews Offering New Alternatives for Healing) organization for offering services that it claimed could change a person's sexual orientation. Dr. Lalich testified that JONAH offered "therapies" that took advantage of vulnerable populations, often forcing them to relive and reenact traumatic events in their lives, and blaming them for "not doing the work" to change their sexual orientation when the treatments failed. JONAH was convicted of fraud, and a Therapeutic Fraud Prevention Act has been introduced to Congress that would prohibit sexual orientation or gender identity conversion therapy from being provided in exchange for monetary compensation.

"While I think that most people recognize that conversion therapy is not okay, Dr. Lalich was able to hone in on why what this group was doing was exploiting the participants," observed Dustin Satterfield, an Adjunct Instructor

for UM Sociology. "Her discussion of 'bounded choice' was an intriguing concept...it describes the inability to simply walk away from a cult, an abusive relationship, or similar situations... Outsiders may comment that people in those situations have 'free will to leave,' the reality is that that choice does not exist."

Many who attended the lecture were surprised that they had not previously heard of the JONAH case. "Lalich mentioned that the verdict was overshadowed by the Supreme Court's Equal Marriage decision the same week" said Satterfield, "but I was not even aware that the case was going to trial...I think the fact that the Southern Poverty Law Center pursued this case is very important to the LGBT+ movement. While DOMA has been struck down, conversion therapy is still legal in the US. As long as conversion therapy exists, some LGBT+ people will be forced to attend to 'correct' their queerness. The consequences of that are often tragic."

Sociology Chair Kathy Kuipers, commented that Lalich's lecture offered something to "anyone interested in social justice, criminal justice, cults, and the law...We hope to ...invite more speakers who will appeal broadly to a range of interests, and who illustrate topics with 'real world' actors." ■



DR. JANJA LALICH



SOPHIA FRIEDL

Continued From Page 2—Initially, Friedl sought out the Open Aid Alliance because she was a Biology major, interested in pursuing an MD/MPH program. She wanted to learn more about public health, and to make a difference in the Missoula community. “I...got certified to use rapid tests for HIV and Hep C antibodies, and now assist in testing community members for those diseases,” she explains. Friedl comments that, “This experience...taught me to treat everyone with respect, and that no human life matters more than any other.” Friedl tells the story of an HIV+ man who she got to know through the housing program operated by Open Aid Alliance. “He would give us updates about his CD4 count (white blood cells that HIV attacks), and about his living situation. He was great to talk to, but I’m sure if people saw him on the street they would keep their head down and ignore him...I learned never to underestimate people, and to always give everyone a second chance.”

Originally from Agoura Hills, CA, Sophia decided to attend UM after a visit to Missoula, “I fell completely in love, and couldn’t imagine myself anywhere else”, she says. Sophia plays lacrosse and hurling at UM, and is president of the Sports Club Union, but after three short years, she will be graduating in the spring. She hopes to be accepted to University College Dublin’s International Public Health Master’s Program, and is excited about the prospect of working with Ireland’s homeless population, as well as with the Syrian refugees

Ireland has committed to accepting.

Friedl took her first Sociology classes as part of her required coursework for her Global Public Health minor. The course she found most compelling was Sociology of Poverty, which she describes as an inspiring, and eye-opening experience. This past summer, Sophia spent over a month in a rural hospital in Uganda, where she was able to use her skills to test pregnant women for HIV. She says she saw many things that caused her to change her mind about her Biology major, and this fall she switched to Sociology with an Inequality and Social Justice emphasis, and minors in Global Public Health, International Development Studies, and Biology. “I think the ISJ option fits ...well with GPH and the IDS minors. I feel as if I have a more critical eye in terms of global issues,” Friedl states. “I tell people that when I grow up, I want to save the world, but I think I need a bit more experience before I can do that.” ■

SSRL CELEBRATES LONG ANTICIPATED RENOVATION

Congratulations to the Social Science Research Laboratory for the recent completion of its renovation project. The impressive new lab space features video conferencing capabilities, an observation room, space for the new 3D imaging system, and office space to house research staff , including those working on a multi-million dollar project for the US Army Corps of Engineers. ■

FEATURED GRADUATE STUDENT: PETER ORE



PETER ORE

Graduate student Peter Ore has a way of making the Bakken Region sound incredibly compelling. Despite unflattering things you might hear about the area, Ore contends that it is rich with fascinating social change and stories of personal resilience.

With the guidance of his committee, chaired by Prof. Daisy Rooks, Ore is currently working on his thesis project, a short-term, inten-

sive ethnographic study of temporary work in the Bakken region.

Ore completed his undergraduate degrees at UM in Sociology, Inequality and Social Justice Option. He first became interested in the Bakken around 2008, while working security at a local bar. He describes being intrigued by stories of men he knew “leaving for weeks at a time to make good money on an oil rig.” Ore recalls one man who came back describing a horrific incident that killed several of his coworkers.

Peter seriously considered going out himself, he decided to pursue EMT certification instead, then moved on to graduate school. Ore decided to return to UM to pursue an MA in Sociology, which he found attractive both because of the wide range of theoretical and methodological perspectives at play, and because of the supportive environment a small department offers.

However, Ore remained captivated by the idea of the Bakken as a 21st century ‘boom’ site, situated in an area historically faced with long-term demographic and economic decline. Last summer, Ore began his thesis research by traveling to the Bakken area to live in an RV, work for temporary labor agencies, and document observations about his surroundings. Ore notes the ingenuity and unrelenting optimism of the men he met there, who came from around the globe in search of an oil job, and often faced hardships and indignities.

Peter plans to graduate in the spring, and to pursue a PhD once his wife, Katheryn, finishes law school in 2017. He hopes to continue to develop many of the ideas from his thesis into a dissertation project focusing on the mobile laboring population, especially those involved in resource extraction industries. ■

FEATURED COURSE: SOC 438/538 GANGS AND SOCIETY

This fall, Professor Dosten Hollist offered his extremely popular course Gangs and Society for the first time since 2011. Hollist has been teaching a course on this subject in one form or another since 2006, and over the years it has adapted into a true seminar, with class time mostly devoted to extensive discussion of the weekly readings and related documentary films, instead of formal lectures. The primary message behind the course has not changed much over the years, however. Hollist asserts that the study of ‘gangs’ is really an examination of small group interactions and informal control, and challenges students to question stereotypi-

cal assumptions.

Professor Hollist discourages his students from using the term ‘gang’, which has acquired connotations and can detract from appreciation of the diversity of the groups often lumped into that category. “Many of the ‘gang’ definitions forwarded by researchers require that groups be involved in crime and delinquency,” Hollist explains, “Some of the groups that we focus on in the course are involved in crime and delinquency, but some are not.”

Hollist became interested in this topic while studying in Guayaquil, Ecuador **Continued Page 9**

UM STUDENT CHOSEN FOR PEACE CORPS



Former Sociology graduate, Stephen Hatton was recently accepted into the Peace Corps, and will

begin his service in Thailand next year. Stephen was kind enough to share some of his experiences:

How did you decide to apply to the Peace Corps? UM's pre-law advisor, Soazig LeBihan, told me to think about the experience as a way to distinguish myself when applying to law schools in the future. [When] I then started asking around...I learned that it would... help appease my adventurous spirit before the world forces me to buckle down and grow up.

What was the application process like? The application process was about 6 months long. Most of the time is spent waiting...[After receiving] an email request for an interview with the Peace Corps Thailand placement specialist, I prepared well for the interview and attempted to display

all of the qualities that the Peace Corps says that they look for in future volunteers.

What was surprising about the application process? I messed up a time-zone conversion and missed my first interview by 3 hours. Fortunately, and despite my fear that I had blown the opportunity, the placement specialist gave me another chance to interview.

Where will you be going and what will you do there? I will be going to Thailand...I will be a Youth in Development volunteer, targeting at-risk youth populations in the community to better prepare them for their transition into adulthood.

What aspects of your Peace Corps experience are you most excited about? What aspects are you most nervous about? I am very excited to leave the country and adapt to a new situation. New food, new people, and a new routine for daily living are all challenges that I am excited to

face. Who knows, maybe I will find someone during my service, as I hear many people do! I am the most nervous about being seen as part of a problem...I am [also] going to stick out in Thailand; I am 6'5" tall and white.

How do you anticipate that your Sociology courses/experiences will prepare you for the Peace Corps? I believe that Sociology gave me a greater capacity to step into the shoes of people who are in drastically different situations than I am. This empathy will help me to avoid thinking that my solutions are "the" solutions, and it will motivate me to work harder to help those who express the need for whatever assistance I am able to give... ■



FORMER GRAD STUDENT RECEIVES RURAL SOC AWARD



JESSICA ULRICH-SCHAD

Former UM graduate student Jessica Ulrich-Schad received an early career award this summer from the Rural Sociological Society for her paper, "Perceptions of Community and Environment in Bakken Oil Field Communities". Jessica is finishing her post-doctoral fellowship work at Purdue, and has ac-

cepted a position as Assistant Professor at the University of South Dakota. Ulrich-Stad completed her Master's degree in 2009, and has since completed her PhD at the University of New Hampshire, where she focused on social theory, research methods, community and the environment. ■

SOCIOLOGY OPEN HOUSE AND ALUMNI UPDATE



(CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT): DR. KUIPERS WITH EMMY GRAYBEAL AND MARGARET PERRY; DR. BALCH WITH DETECTIVE CHRIS SHERMER; FORMER ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT BRANDI TERPE WITH SON GABE

This September, UM Sociology celebrated its first Homecoming Open House. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to join us, or to send us information about what they are up to. Here is a brief update about some of our alumni:

- ◆ **Lorianne Burhop (BA,2006/MA,2009)**-Lorianne is Chief Policy Officer at the Montana Food Bank Network of Missoula, where she works along with **Tirza Asbell, (BA, 2015)** and **Jeff Gutierrez (MA, 2009)**.
 - ◆ **Mike King (BA,2011/MA, 2013)**- Mike is currently working on his PhD in Sociology at the University of Wisconsin, where he is developing a survey to collect data from a national sample of STEM students. He hopes to deliver a paper on the marital habits of first-generation college grads at the Population Association of America conference later this year.
 - ◆ **Robert Howe (BA,2015)-** Since graduation, Robert and a friend have started a non-profit organization called Good Neighbors Missoula, that provides housing and employment opportunities to newly returning citizens having trouble accessing loan opportunities and financial support.
 - ◆ **Tara Top Sky (BA,2011)-** Tara graduated in May with an MA in Native American Studies from MSU, and is considering applying for a PhD program there. Her kids and partner, Wabusuk, are doing well.
 - ◆ **Patrick Bixler (MA,2008)-** Patrick received his PhD from Colorado State, and is working as a research scientist with Texas A&M's Institute for Renewable Natural Resources. He and his wife just celebrated the birth of their new daughter.
 - ◆ **Rebecca Goe (MA,2010) -** Becca and her husband, Er-
- ic, recently had a baby boy, Anders. She is currently working with the UM Rural institute and pursuing an MA in Public Health.
- ◆ **Floy Scott (MA,2007)-** After graduating, Floy worked for the UM Office for Research and Sponsored Projects, then for the Social Science Research Labs. She retired last summer, and still lives in Missoula.
- ◆ **Savanah Moore (BA, 2015) -** Savanah is currently working for the Missoula Police Department as a full-time Police Support Specialist.



Continued from page 6 - in the early 1990's. He recalls seeing groups of young men square off in the street like "revolutionary armies", then engage in brutal, largely hand-to-hand combat.

While pursuing his PhD at Washington State University, Hollist studied with then-retired James Short Jr., an innovative theorist on group processes, who helped Hollist to make sense of what he had experienced in Ecuador, and refined his understanding of what really constitutes 'gang' membership. "I grew up in...rural southeastern Idaho," Hollist says, "I was a member of my local Boy Scout Troop...played

on many sports teams, and was a member of the Future Farmers of America. Each of these groups was organized, met regularly, and were identifiable by colors and symbols that provided meaning to the participants within them." All of which, by some definitions, made them 'gangs'. Regardless of whether or not you live in a place that has traditional 'gang activity' Hollist says, "all of us come from and live in places where young people come together in the quest for identity and belonging...the role of Sociology in understanding these groups continues to peak my interest..." ■

SOCIOLOGY STUDENT'S RESEARCH HAS MANY USES



JENNIFER HILDRETH

During her senior year at UM, Sociology major Jennifer Hildreth did an internship as a women's advocate. She worked at the women and children's domestic violence shelter, answered the crisis line, and responded to men, women and children fleeing from domestic violence, sex trafficking, and sexual assault.

Hildreth discovered an unsettling trend while working with the shelter participants' data. She found that 75% of the victims entering the shelter reported strangulation

as a form of violence by their partners. The data also showed that there was an increased level of threats, lethality, and control when strangulation was part of the domestic violence, and that strangulation has a greater likelihood of coexisting with other forms of violence and control mechanisms. Hildreth summarized and codified data from 114 women who sought shelter from domestic abuse situations, and used her research in a paper for Prof. Kuiper's Inequality and Social Justice Capstone course, little guessing the important impact her work would have.

After becoming familiar with Hildreth's work, Cat Ottway, a SANE nurse at First Step and Forensic Interviewer, who does training about strangulation all over Montana, decided to use Hildreth's findings to support her advocacy of strangulation training. Recently, Ottway secured grant funding through the Montana Grants Commission, to provide strangulation

awareness training to several graduating Law Enforcement Academy classes. The Montana Grants Commission, in collaboration with Ottway, is also currently working on a grant to provide training to seasoned officers, and to draw attention to the alarming number of strangulation incidents in our community. The new grant also employs Hildreth's research.

Hildreth graduated in 2015, and is currently employed at the Missoula Correctional Services Pre-Release Center as a Case Manager, and as a Sexual Assault Response Advocate for the YWCA. She plans to present the results of her analysis to the UM Social Psychology Research Group in February, and has been working with Prof. Kuipers to expand her observations into a co-authored paper, titled "Strangulation and Control", which the two will present at the Pacific Sociological Association Conference in 2016. ■

UM Department of Sociology

Social Sciences 333

University of Montana

Missoula, MT 59812



MAKE A GIFT...

Contributions from Sociology alumni and friends fund a variety of departmental initiatives, from student scholarships and assistantships, to faculty development and program enhancements. We are working to raise money to fund graduate and undergraduate travel to academic conferences, and there's more work to be done to renovate our conference room.

To help support the Sociology Department, click the "Make a Gift" link on our website: <http://www.cas.umt.edu/sociology/support.php>

Private philanthropy, as evidenced by the 144 privately funded scholarships in College of Humanities and Sciences, truly does make a difference. Thank you for remaining connected to the Department of Sociology and for your support.

PLEASE STAY IN TOUCH!

Department of Sociology
Social Sciences 333
University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812-5184

Phone: 406-243-5281
Web: <http://hs.umt.edu/sociology/>
E-mail: jessica.anderson@mso.umt.edu

