

# DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 | Edited by Dr. Amanda Gengler and Ms. Erica Talley

## Happy 2018!

And welcome back to the annual Wake Forest Sociology Newsletter. We hope to make this newsletter an annual publication, so we can keep our students, faculty, and alumni better connected. Please keep a lookout for a call for contributions next year, and let us know what you've been up to so we can celebrate our collective accomplishments!

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## Keep in touch throughout the year...

Be sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter, for up to the minute news on department events and speakers, student news, and faculty publications!



## Notes from the Chair

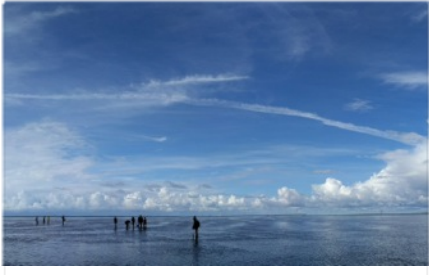
Greetings from Kirby Hall. This is our second newsletter reporting on the life of our department. We hope this information provides, at minimum, an affirmation of the relevance of sociology to everyone's efforts to better the social health of our communities. We remain a department of a dozen dedicated faculty supported by

one extra-ordinary administrator, with approximately one-hundred aspiring and challenging majors, in classrooms with enrollments numbering in excess of 1,200.

At our last commencement in May of 2017, we graduated 38 majors, three with honors for GPA and for completing a research honors thesis. Fourteen graduated with distinction in the major, meaning a GPA of 3.75 or higher; 3 graduated in the Health and Well Being concentration; 9 in Business and Society; 11 in Criminology.



**WAKE FOREST**  
UNIVERSITY



## Saylor Breckenridge spends Fall 2017 teaching in new “first year abroad” program in Copenhagen

As the inaugural Director of the Global AWAKEnings Program, Wake Forest University’s new first-year study abroad program in Copenhagen. Dr. Breckenridge spent the Fall of 2017 teaching Principles of Sociology and a First Year Seminar to a cohort of incoming Wake Forest Students. The students also took courses taught by faculty at DIS: Study Abroad in Scandinavia, the partner institution in Denmark. Over the course of the semester, in addition to their coursework, the group explored Copenhagen and traveled throughout Denmark, with trips to the Wadden Sea and western portion of the country, the island of Bornholm, and a week-long excursion to Venice, Italy where the students extended their Art course studies and connected with Wake Forest students studying abroad at Casa Artom.

Some stellar graduate destinations include:

Micaela Gladney (graduate) to Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health

Imogen Jenkins (graduate) to Columbia School of Journalism - Publishing Program

Callie Cleckner (graduate) to Indiana University Sociology PhD program

Mohsin Ahmad (graduate) to NIH activity

Kimberly Bowen, TFA, Freedom Preparatory Academy middle school teacher through TFA

Sebastian Ivory, TFA Social Studies teacher for Guilford County Schools

Conner Justin Brown, Stanford Law School.

Ashley Monae' Mitchell, North Carolina Central University School of Law

Bari Ilyse Pasternack, Wake Forest Masters in Liberal Studies

Julia Mireille Rootenberg, Crime and Criminal Justice Masters program at Leiden University in the Netherlands.

On student diversity, we have the highest relative percentage of underrepresented minorities (URM) in the college at approximately 38 percent of our majors. In terms of gender, our majors were 79% female. On social class diversity, 22% of our majors received Pell Grants and another 34% received Subsidized Stafford loans. Sociology is a department at Wake Forest that is disproportionately female, minorities of color, first generation, and low SES youths – and proud of that.

In terms of research productivity, we have never been stronger nor have we ever held a higher profile in the national and international discipline. Our faculty have published more top quality, high impact, peer reviewed articles and academic books than ever before. [\[Continued on page 11...\]](#)

## Faculty and Staff Notes

**Saylor Breckenridge** had an exciting 2017. In the spring, he taught Methods of Social Research and his Sociological Analysis of Film course, with a focus on the social construction of “teenagers” through cinema. He co-authored the article “No Such Thing as Bad Press: Retaining Legitimacy and Revitalizing LPs, EPs, and 45s in the 21st Century” with William Tsitsos, from Towson University. This examines the surging popularity of vinyl records and was published in *Contexts*, the “public face of sociology” published by the American Sociological Association. He also chaired Wake Forest’s Committee on First Year Seminars and Co-chaired the Committee on Online Education. In the broader environment of Winston-Salem, he continued working with the community development activities of Phuzz Records, which received \$20,000 in grants from local organizations to host the Pine State Holiday music festival, held at the Southeast Center for Creative Arts in October. In the Fall of 2017, he was the inaugural Director of the Global AWAKEnings Program, Wake Forest University’s new first-year study abroad program in Copenhagen. Arriving on campus in early August, seventeen new first-year students had an orientation to Wake Forest University academics and then, together with Dr. Breckenridge, traveled to Copenhagen for the semester. Students were enrolled in a grouped set of courses consisting of SOC 151 – Principles of Sociology and a First Year Seminar, taught by Dr. Breckenridge, and three courses taught by faculty at DIS: Study Abroad in Scandinavia, the partner institution in Denmark. Over the course of the semester, in addition to the coursework, the group explored Copenhagen and traveled throughout Denmark, with trips to the Wadden Sea and western portion of the country, the island of Bornholm, and a week-long excursion to Venice, Italy where the students extended their Art course studies and connected with Wake Forest students studying abroad at Casa Artom.

**Hana Brown** was awarded a \$137,228 grant from the National Science Foundation for her research (with Jennifer Jones, Notre Dame) on immigration policy in new immigrant destinations. In 2017, she also published two new articles. The first, “The Effects of the Body on Immigrant Incorporation: Identity, Mobility, and Transnationalism,” was the lead article in *Social Problems*. The second, “Logics of Redistribution: The Politics of Generosity in Three U.S. Welfare Programs” (co-authored with Rachel Best University of Michigan), appeared in *Sociological Perspectives*. In addition to these publications, she was invited to present her research at the Russell Sage Foundation in New York, NY and at the University of California at Berkeley. She continues to serve on the editorial boards of *Social Currents*, the journal of the Southern Sociological Society, and the *American Sociological Review*, the flagship journal for the American Sociological Association.

**Amanda Gengler** published an article with co-author Matt Ezzell (James Madison University) forthcoming in the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* titled "Methodological Impression Management in Ethnographic Research." During 2017 she was very honored to be awarded one of Wake Forest’s university wide Innovative Teaching Awards. She continues to serve on the editorial board for the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, and was elected to the publications committee of the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction. In April she gave birth to her son, Matthew, who has already become a regular visitor to the department.

**Steve Gunkel** is serving as the Faculty Advisor for the Alexander Literary Organization (ALO) which is an inmate outreach program led by Wake students and pairs them with inmates at the Alexander Correctional Institution (Taylorsville, NC). He recently presented (November 3, 2017) “The Bias We Seek (to Understand): Assessing the Attitude-Action Relationship in Policing” as part of the WFU School of Law Symposium “The New Law and Order: Working Toward Equitable and Community-Center Policing in North Carolina”. He also recently presented (November 15, 2017) “A Quick, Critical, and Criminological Take on Immigration and Refugee Issues” for a panel organized by WFU Student Union and the Student Association for the Advancement of Refugees (SAFAR). Lastly, he presented “Perils in the Piedmont: Rethinking the ‘Crime Problem’ in North Carolina” as part of New Winston Museum’s Salon Series (January 12, 2017). He is currently serving as a consultant for Project Reentry (a prisoner reintegration program) and assisting with the organization’s efforts to be certified for Evidence-Based Practices. He will complete his term as Past President of the North Carolina Sociological Association (NCSA) in February (2018).

**Robin Simon** continues to conduct research on the consequences of social inequalities, particularly gender inequality, for men’s and women’s social roles and relationships, identities and emotions, and mental and physical health. She is currently involved in a few new studies that reflect these themes. One study, which is part of a larger National Science Foundation funded cross-national project of well-being in 22 economically advanced countries, investigates the extent to which supportive social welfare policies reduce marital status disparities in adults’ happiness and health. A second study examines the costs and benefits associated with parenthood for adults’ mental and physical health over the life course. She recently completed data collection for a new book project that focuses on the culture of intensive parenting and middle-class mothers’ and fathers’ stress, emotions, and health. Professor Simon has a forthcoming chapter (Parenthood and Mental Health in the U.S.: Why Don't Children Improve Adults’ Emotional Well-Being?) in *Contemporary Parenting and Parenthood: From News Headlines to New Research* and received the 2017 Best Article Award from the American Sociological Association’s Family Section for her co-authored paper (Parenthood and Happiness: Effects of Work-Family Reconciliation Policies in 22 OECD Countries) that appeared in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 2016. Reflecting her interests in the social determinants of health, she teaches seminars on: Gender, Social Relationships and Well-Being Over the Life Course, the Sociology of Emotion, the Social Psychology of Inequality, and Health Inequalities.



**Joseph Soares** continues to serve as chair of the sociology department. In 2017, he published two contributions to the academic discussion in China on moving away from standardized tests toward holistic review on undergraduate admissions. Both articles were collaborations with a former visiting scholar to the department from China. Yuan Wan, & Joseph Soares (2017), “Excellence, equity, and diversity: An exploration of the admission goals at selective colleges and universities in the United States,” *Journal of China University of Geosciences (Social Science Edition)*, 17, (4): 148-156; Yuan Wan, & Joseph

Soares (2017), “Excellence and equity in undergraduate admissions at UNC-Chapel Hill in the United States: An empirical research based on its consideration of admission factors,” *Studies in Foreign Education*, 44, (7): 3-17. Separately, he kicked up a small storm with an article titled “Meritocracy Dismissed,” that came out in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2017 VOL. 40, NO. 13, 1-8. The controversy this sparked hit a cross section of web based publications, some highly conservative, and some like these two pieces below, in the mainstream of journalism on higher education. (See this article by an editor of Inside Higher Ed explaining the debate: <https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/article/2017/07/24/article-renews-discussion-about-lottery-approach-elite-college>. And this contribution to the controversy: <https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/views/2017/07/31/essay-considers-whether-meritocracy-myth>).

**Ian Taplin** published one article and wrote three book chapters this year. The article, co-authored with Amanda Anthony, was entitled ‘Sustaining the retail pilgrimage: Developments of fast fashion and authentic identities’, in *Fashion, Style and Popular Culture*, 4/1, 2017. The chapters were as follows: (with Ouvrard, S., Remaud, H.) ‘The Bordeaux classified growth system: A strong legacy’, in Quinn, M. and Oliveira, J. *Accounting for Alcohol: An Accounting History of Brewing, Distilling and Viniculture*, London, Routledge/Taylor Francis, forthcoming; ‘Building and sustaining legitimacy in an emerging wine region: the case of North Carolina USA’ in Inglis, D. and Almila, A-M (Eds.), *The Globalization of Wine. The Transnationalization and Localization of Production and Pleasure*. London: Bloomsbury, forthcoming; and ‘Of space and time in wine’, in Robert, J and Armitage, J. (Eds.) *Luxury and Space*. London: Bloomsbury, forthcoming. He also was also invited to write the ‘Foreward’ to a book on craft beer by Chapman, Lellock and Lippard (Eds.) *Untapped: Exploring the Cultural Dimensions of Craft Beer*. West Virginia University Press, Morgantown. 2017. He is currently writing a book entitled ***The Luxury Pilgrimage*** to be published by Routledge/Taylor Francis. He was appointed to serve a three year term on the NC Grape Council – the first non-winery owner/manager to do so. He continues in his role as North American Editor of the *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*.

**David Yamane** continued to develop his project on guns in America, “Gun Culture 2.0.” In addition to teaching a seminar on the “Sociology of Guns,” he published a review essay on “The Sociology of U.S. Gun Culture” (available as a free download at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/soc4.12497/full>) and was invited to write the concluding chapter to the book, *Understanding America’s Gun Culture*. He presented papers based on his ongoing research at two invited symposia (at Amherst College and the University of Arizona, both available on the open access SOCARXIV at <https://socopen.org/>). The Arizona Gun Studies Symposium paper was co-authored with Wake Forest undergraduates Sebastian Ivory and Paul Yamane. Yamane was sought after as a commentator on guns in America, having been quoted in Newsweek magazine, Paris Le Monde, The Times of London, Univision Noticias, The Guardian of London, Infobae of Argentina, the French magazine Reforme, and Le Devoir of Montreal, among others. His blog, [www.gunculture2point0.com](http://www.gunculture2point0.com), continues to grow, finishing 2017 with over 150,000 page views by nearly 80,000 visitors. You can follow his work there or find him on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook (@gunculture2pto).



## Current Student Profiles



**Taylor Alouf ('18)** is a Sociology major and Biology and Health & Human Services minor. Her major sociological interests include public health policy and social inequality, especially pertaining to refugees, homelessness, and other financially vulnerable populations. She is currently serving as the World Relief Coordinator for the Student Association for the Advancement of Refugees and a Freshman Resident Adviser, in addition to serving on several other organizational leadership teams across campus. This school year she hopes to be acting as the Vocational Education Intern at World Relief Winston-Salem. After graduation, Taylor hopes to pursue a master's degree in Social Work.

**Jasmine Brown ('18)** is a Sociology major and American Ethnic Studies minor. Her major sociological interests include social inequality, especially pertaining to gender, race, and ethnicity, political sociology, public policy and education. She has served as a president, treasurer, and as an organizational leader in other capacities for several on-campus organizations. She has also served as a Girl Scout leader for the past 4 years and is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. This summer she is working as a legal intern at a law firm in the Charlotte Metro area. After graduation, she plans on attending law school and is considering getting a dual JD and Masters in Public Policy degree. She eventually wants to get an LLM in a human rights related legal field.



**Cameron Steitz ('18)** is a Sociology major with minors in Latin America Studies, Chemistry, and Environmental Studies. He is a resident advisor, a sustainability ambassador, a student worker at the Pro Humanitate Institute and Campus Kitchen, a certified PEER Educator with a focus in mental health, and is a part of the Global Laureate Academy. He serves on the College Advisory Board for Winston-Salem and has worked in the nonprofit community, including research and volunteering with ABC of NC, a therapeutic and educational center for children with autism spectrum disorder. His interests include social and environmental justice, immigration policy, and political sociology. He hopes to pursue a career in student affairs.

### 2018 Undergraduate Honors Theses

**Callie Cleckner**, Keeping it Classy: Social Strategies for Assimilating to an Assumed Upper Class Status  
Faculty advisor: Catherine Harnois

**Mackenzie Slater**, Nasty Woman: The Portrayal of Women's Issues in the 2016 Presidential Campaign  
Faculty advisor: Hana Brown

**Imogen Jenkins**, Social Construction of Sexual Identity in Dating Markets: Self and Desired Partner Characteristics in Man-Seeking-Man Craigslist Advertisements. Faculty advisor: Saylor Breckenridge

## Alumni Updates

**Larry Colbourne ('90)** serves as President of Mebane Charitable Foundation in Davie County, North Carolina. In 2017 the Mebane Foundation made a 5-year commitment of over \$2.5mm to Davie County Schools in an effort to raise kindergarten readiness from 70% to 90% and third grade end-of-grade (EOG's) scores from 67% to 80% by 2022. His wife Beverly is a UNC Chapel Hill grad and a dental hygienist. His oldest son graduated from Columbia University and teaches in Arizona, while his youngest son is a sophomore in the Poole College of Management at NC State.

**Timothy L Gupton ('95)** is employed by the United States Probation Office in Raleigh, NC. He supervises 60+ defendants who have been convicted of federal crimes related to drugs, firearms, fraud, etc. He has the pleasure of working with several attorneys and federal judges, who are also proud Wake alumni. Tim and his family still reside in Louisburg, NC.

**Trevor Hunt ('15)** is currently a second year medical student at The Brody School of Medicine at ECU and still credits his studies in sociology as the basis for his ongoing interest in public health. This past year he has increased his involvement in lab research and was honored to be selected to join the school's Research Distinction Track. However, what he is most proud of is founding a children's cancer fundraiser in May that raised over \$7500 for kids at his local hospital. Dean Shore, WFU's beloved campus barber, even made the trip to Greenville to help shave heads!"

**Megan Jarrell ('15)** is currently obtaining her Master's degree in Healthcare Administration at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After graduating in May 2018, Megan will be relocating to Winston-Salem, NC to begin an Administrative Fellowship at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center.

**Chelsea (Ruskoski) Keen ('12)** recently accepted a position in career development at Penn State University's College of the Liberal Arts. Chelsea serves as the Global Experiences Coordinator in a role that blends career services with study abroad and intercultural skill development. She earned her M.Ed. in Higher Education in 2016 and previously worked in the field of online education with Penn State World Campus, where she launched a virtual internship program. Chelsea and her husband love living in "Happy Valley" (State College, PA) and recently bought their first home.

**Erin Harzinski Russo '95** is a school counselor in Germantown, NY. She lives with her husband and two children, Lily (14) and Eli (11) in Chatham, NY.



**Brittany Vasquez ('15)** is currently pursuing her doctorate in Public Policy and Sociology at the University of Michigan. This past fall she became an IES fellow in the Education Policy Initiative's Predoctoral Training Program in Causal Inference in Education Policy Research, and a predoctoral trainee in social demography with the Population Studies Center at the Institute for Social Research.

**Hall Wang ('08)** is currently in his 2nd (of 3 years) at Georgetown University, working on his joint MBA / Public Policy masters. This past year, Hall played curling at his family honeybee farm in upstate York over the winter and traveled to Switzerland. He will spend his summer doing his MBA internship at Facebook in Menlo Park, California.

**Are you a parent or alumnus who would like to support our current majors—in particular in their efforts to engage in independent research and travel to regional and national conferences where they can present their work? Consider making a *directed donation to the sociology department!* We are starting a new fund that we can use to support our students in the ambitious endeavors they undertake in collaboration with faculty mentors. Every little bit helps! Please visit:**

**<http://college.wfu.edu/sociology/giving>**



## Department Photos from 2017...

Dr. Soares and Dr. Harnois present graduating seniors with certificates of achievement.



Sociology Major Ann Nguyen standing out in the commencement crowd!

Dr. Yamane celebrates the graduation of his son, Paul Yamane '17.

Ms. Talley went above and beyond as usual with this extraordinary strawberry and marshmallow bouquet!



Meanwhile, Dr. Gunkel and Dr. Wahl presided over the champagne....another excellent Dr. Taplin selection.



Dr. Gengler receives a 2017 Innovative Teaching Award from Teaching and Learning Center Director Catherine Ross with newborn son Matthew in tow.



Dr. Simon receives the 2017 Article of the Year award from the ASA Family Section at the American Sociological Association's Annual Meeting in Montreal.

## Notes from the Chair [continued from page 2...]

In particular, David Yamane published a new text book on the sociology of religion and Catherine Harnois published a new book on doing data analysis on social inequality using the General Social Survey online. Faculty have won more competitive research grants than ever before, in particular Hana Brown won a top award from the National Science Foundation for \$137,228.00. Faculty in our department are major national and international players in the fields of immigration and racial politics (Brown); in the intersectional quantitative analysis of gender, race, and class (Harnois); in the field of the sociology of emotions and health (Simon); in the sociology of religion (Yamane); in the study of markets and luxury goods (Taplin); and in the sociology of education (Soares). I know of not one non-graduate PhD program in the country with more high profile scholars than our own.

On public sociology, America's tragic inability to respond to the murder of our school children sadly pushes David Yamane's work on gun culture into the media. In 2017, Dr. Yamane was quoted in Newsweek magazine, Paris Le Monde, The Times of London, Univision Noticias, The Guardian of London Infobae of Argentina, the French magazine Reforme, and Le Devoir of Montreal, among others. Yamane's blog on the topic of guns finished 2017 with 151,354 page views by 79,007 visitors. On Ian Taplin's wine research, he was appointed by the North Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture, Steve Troxler, to the NC Wine and Grape Growers Council for a 2 year term beginning September 1, 2017. The council is an oversight/governance body for the wine industry in NC; we are proud of Ian's position on this council, made possible by his extensive scholarship on the industry. Other examples of faculty engagement with public sociological concerns includes: Dr. Hana Brown in the field of immigration and racism; Catherine Harnois in the field of gender equality and equal rights for LGB&T community; Amanda Gengler on families struggling with child mortality; Robin Simon's work on national variations in parental stress explained by national variations in tax-supported programs; my own work on socially biased and predictively weak standardized test. In April, a film on standardized tests and their impact on America is coming out. Its title: "The Test and the Art of Thinking." Three sociology students were interviewed for the film (Alana Harrison, Carlton Morgan, and Bryson Rominger), plus our admissions dean, Martha Allman, and myself. The film aspires to be the "Waiting for Superman" of the test-optional movement, but we'll see if it manages to be as good or to have anywhere near as much impact. There are now over one-thousand test-optional colleges in the United States. We are winning this campaign. We celebrate the public sociology contributions of all department members.

On service by faculty to Wake Forest University, Ana Wahl has served as chair of the American Ethnic Studies minor program at Wake for three years. Catherine Harnois is a senior core faculty member of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGS) and as such provides leadership service across all of the needs of that program. Saylor Breckenridge was the pioneering professor getting Wake Forest University's new residential program off the ground in Copenhagen in fall of 2018. Dr. Breckenridge had 18 freshmen to teach and guide through the experience of living and learning abroad. By all accounts he did a stellar job. Finally, the Dean has launched an Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Core Curriculum of Wake Forest College on which I am serving.

Finally, last year's alumni donations to the department were sufficient for us to cover conference registration fees and some transportation costs for seven of our current majors. When you give to the Department of Sociology, we use all of that money to support student activities on and off campus.

We in Kirby Hall wish you all a full year of productive engagement moving forward on things that matters to your life and to the welfare of your community.

Sincerely,

Joseph Soares