

# WC Sociology Newsletter

## Note from the Chair

Washington College Sociology has reached a milestone: Our largest faculty ever! With the addition of Dr. Libby Yost in fall 2016 we have reached 4 fulltime sociology faculty with an additional 2 adjunct faculty teaching our courses in Social Welfare. We are excited about this growth and the possibilities it will give us in expanding our catalog of courses, our connections with other programs at the college, and the expansion of our interdisciplinary minors in Justice, Law, & Society and Public Health.

We're in a bit of a transition period right now. Dr. Ryan Kelty had such an excellent experience as a visiting professor of sociology at the

U.S. Air Force Academy that they invited him to stay on. We are sorry to see him go, but wish him and his family the best in their new home in Colorado.

Dr. Rachel Durso will be on research leave through the fall 2017 semester and I will be taking a research leave for the spring 2018 semester. But, we are fortunate to have two visiting faculty members with us for the year and I know our students are excited about the opportunity to take some new courses. Dr. MeCherri Abedi-Anim is teaching courses focused on social inequalities, race and ethnicity and immigration this year

while Dr. Brian Klocke is sharing his expertise in gender, media, and globalization.

Much has changed in the world, and in our department, over the past year, but we remain as committed as always to education through sociology.

-Dr. Erin Anderson



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## Sociology Standouts Earn Senior Awards



The Margaret Horsely Award, given to the graduating major or majors who, in the opinion of the faculty and students of the Department of Sociology, have shown in his or her work the clearest understanding of human social behavior, was awarded to Kayla Hamel. Emma Craig received the Sociology Service Award, given to the graduating senior who, in the opinion of the department and its students, has made, through service, the greatest contribution to the sociology program and to Washington College.

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## Faculty Spotlight



**Dr. Yost** has wrapped up her first year at WAC. This Alabama native has thoroughly enjoyed her new eastern shore lifestyle.... crabs, bocce, festivals, cold weather (though she defines that as anything below 65 degrees) and all. A co-authored book detailing her research on how technology can be used to better well-being and health in older adults was published this fall- "Designing Technology Training for Older Adults in Continuing Care Retirement Communities." Dr. Yost and colleagues continue to publish off their 7-year study on the impact of technology on older

adults. She is looking forward to continuing her research on well-being in older adults through an Adopt-a-Grandparent Program this year. The program will pair older adults and Washington College students for intergenerational activities. She will also be working with local Agencies on Aging to help communities better understand the needs of their aging populations. In her first year at WAC, she taught Introduction to Public Health, Global Health Disparities, and Research Methods among other courses. Her main charge, the Public Health minor, is off to a

great start and she is looking forward to expanding course options, signing up more minors, and incorporating field experiences in the coming year. This summer she participated in the Teaching Undergraduate Global Health Summer Institute at Allegheny College where she worked alongside other Public Health and Global Health professors from liberal arts colleges to better understand how to expand the course options and partner with other institutions to grow the minor.



**Dr. Durso**, the WC GIS lab, and the Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence (MSCFV) have received nearly a million dollar grant to study ways in which we can make victims of domestic violence on the Eastern Shore safer by increasing their access to resources and offering new services. The grant has helped MSCFV to open new offices in order to expand outreach and hire new case managers to assist clients. The funds also sponsor a two-year data collection and analysis effort to identify challenges victims encounter in trying to leave abusive relationships and recommend evidence-based strategies for addressing such challenges. This research is based on interviews with current clients of MSCFV about their history of domestic violence and their experiences

seeking help. These interviews shed light on ways victims are affected by informal social networks in their communities, the current opioid crisis, social and physical isolation, social media and internet use, and economic challenges. Responses and insight from victims in these interviews will inform survey research in order to collect additional data. In conjunction with the interviews and surveys, she has been working with the GIS lab to map where MSCFV clients are located throughout the Eastern Shore (aggregated to the Census tract and county-level to ensure client privacy). With this information they can then overlay client location with map layers that provide a spatial analysis of how far away victims are from resources (such as hospitals, police, or public transporta-

tion routes) or look at demographic data such as unemployment and poverty rates. Together these three data sources, interviews, survey responses, and maps, have provided a more comprehensive understanding of why victims may delay or resist seeking help due to social or structural barriers. Study findings are being used to determine ways in which MSCFV can increase their visibility in the community through social media and offline methods such as redesigning fliers with more explicit information and putting them in bathroom stalls in local businesses and restaurants. During year two of the grant, data analysis will continue in an effort to create additional strategies for reaching out to more victims in the community.

## Senior Capstones



### Melissa Barry

#### *Transparency of Sexual Assault Policies Among a Sample of U.S. Colleges and Universities*

Sexual assault has been a major problem across the United States for many years, but especially on college campuses. This study assesses the different characteristics of colleges to determine how transparent a college is. The study's sample is 60 colleges across the U.S. examined through mixed methods. There is no overall transparency variable result, but the study does express different predictors for certain dependent variables.

in the program are distributed across statuses such as age, parental status, and geographic location. It uses both quantitative and qualitative research methods to look at the impact of age, children, and geographic location have on help-seeking in general and participation in Maryland's program specifically. Overall, it concludes that victims in their twenties and thirties make up most of the participants (62.9%), that most have at least one child (70%), and that rural counties do lower enrollment rates than urban counties.



### Emma Craig

#### *Maryland's Address Confidentiality Program: Examining Effectiveness Throughout the State*

This study examines the effectiveness of Maryland's Address Confidentiality Program, a domestic violence program in Maryland. It looks at how participants

### Allie Grillo

#### *The Different Frames of Intimate Partner Violence*

Three major institutions are designed to support those reporting intimate partner violence: the medical field, the social work field, and the criminal justice system. Each institution uses a different definition which affects the intervention, treatment, and prevention of intimate partner violence. Using Goffman's Frame Analysis and a qualitative approach, this research evaluates these institutions to see if there is a collaborative stance and if the collaboration produces best outcomes.



### Aakriti Gupta

#### *Consumption Behavior in the Luxury Brand Industry*

This thesis is an interdepartmental study for Business Management and Sociology. This research aims to understand the consumer behaviors, especially the consumer motivations to purchase luxury goods. The research looks at strategies and external environment that the companies in the industry operate in order to understand their consumers. A sociological perspective is used in understanding the different kinds of luxury brand signals and symbols that consumers value.



### Kayla Hamel

#### *The Relationship Between Hooking Up and Self-Esteem: Correlates and Consequences of Casual Sex Among College Students*

It is commonly believed that college students who engage in sexual hook up behaviors may have lower self-esteem than those who don't. However, data from a survey of 114 college students revealed that a majority of college seniors had

hooked up in the previous semester and that respondents who had participated in some form of casual sexual activity on campus reported higher levels of self-esteem. This was true for both men and women, challenging the impacts of sexual double standards among college students.



### Caitlyn Kirby

#### *The Construction of Femininity and Masculinity of Student Athletes*

This case study analyzed the construction of femininity and masculinity of student athletes. Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews with student athletes from men's baseball, women's softball, men's tennis, and women's tennis. The results showed patterns in training in a public setting, presentation of masculinity and femininity, and perceived institutional differences. From the data collected, inequality surrounding gender can still be found among athletes and athletic institutions.



### Emili Stopak

#### *Body Dissatisfaction in Women: Mental Health Approaches*

This research seeks to prove the salience of body image and beauty ideals for women's mental health, as well as proposing solutions for addressing the issue. Through reviewing sociological literature, conducting interviews and content analysis, and drawing on sociological theory, information is developed to improve training for mental healthcare providers.



### Angie Towery-Tomasura

#### *Don't Tread on My Opinions! How and Why Does the Way We Interpret Material Culture Change Over Time?: A Case Study on the Gadsden Flag*

This case study of the Gadsden flag uses collective memory theory and symbolic interactionism to study society and the individual within society and how their interpretations and communication of symbols changes based on time, content, and other social factors.



### Amber Whitby

#### *Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Student Achievement: An Evaluation of Effective CRP Practice and Student Outcomes*

This study seeks to uncover patterns of achievement among students labeled as disadvantaged through the use of culturally relevant pedagogy. This research demonstrates the connections between effective CRP practice, strong teacher-student relationships and interactions, and positive student outcomes.



WC Sociology is on social media! Check us out and stay in touch through our Washington College Sociology Linked In group and the WC Sociology Facebook page.



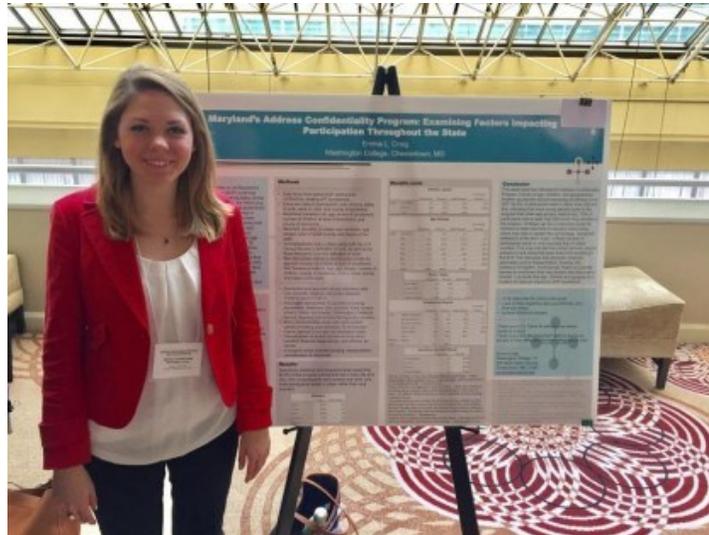
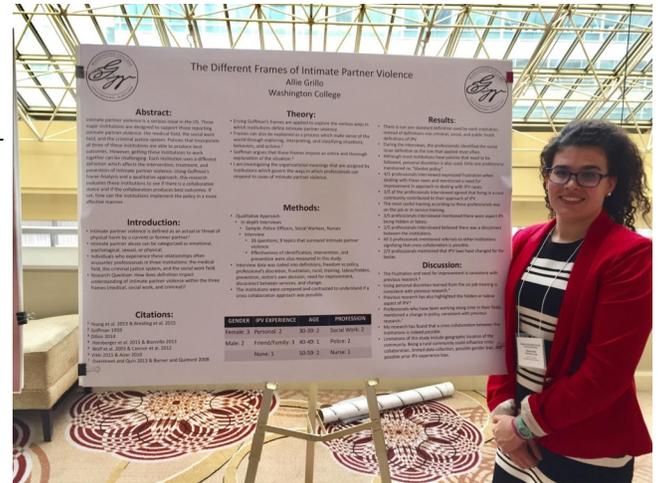
# Students attend Eastern Sociological Society annual meeting

Four students accompanied faculty to the annual ESS meeting held in Philadelphia in February, 2017. Allie Grillo, Emma Craig, and Emily Stopak presented posters of their SCE research. Rachel Martinez presented a paper she is collaborating on with Professor Erin Anderson.

*"I had a great experience while attending the Eastern Sociological Society. I was given the chance to present my thesis project. At the conference, I has many professionals and other students ask questions about my research. These questions allowed*

*me to defend and argue for my thesis results. Thanks to these questions I was able to refine my research. These questions also prepared me for the thesis presentation in May. I was able to polish and perfect my presentation skills. Because I already presented in front of professionals, presenting in front of the faculty and class seemed easy. The experience also helped me with my future educational goals. I was approached by several grad school admissions officers while at the conference. These professionals spent a few minutes explaining their programs and then gave me their business*

*cards for future contact information. The professionals were easily approachable and open to any questions I had about their programs. The conference gave me a chance to practice my networking skills. Because I had a valuable experience, I would recommend all seniors to go." - Allie Grillo, '17*



Above: Emma Craig, '17, presents her Senior Capstone Research poster; Rachel Martinez, '18, Emma Craig, '17, and Allie Grillo, '17, at the Eastern Sociological Society Undergraduate Student Research showcase; Rachel Martinez, '18, presents on gender and leadership research collaboration with Dr. Erin Anderson in a paper session at the ESS annual meeting.



## Internship Spotlight



**Kayla Hamel, '17**

Kayla interned at the Kent County Behavioral Health office during her senior year:

*"Through this experience, I am able to shadow a social worker and gain hands-on experience interacting with clients. My supervisor is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, which is what I hope to one day be as I continue my academic career at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. Being an intern at KCBH has allowed me to observe clinical techniques for treating a wide range of mental health disorders. I am also able to interact with a diverse population of clients, as I travel to the middle schools to assist with school-based therapy, and I see a variety of ages, abilities, and diagnoses in the office. Not only am I able to shadow my LCSW supervisor, but I am also able*

*to sit in on sessions with nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, and professional counselors. This allows me to view the wide range of career opportunities in the field of mental health, and understand how each profession works together to become a team of support for the clients. Through my internship at Kent County Behavioral Health I have learned the exact nature of the job of a social worker, as well as the specific responsibilities of the career. This experience has helped me to solidify my career goals and has better prepared me for the coursework I will encounter in graduate school."*

## Alumni Spotlight

**Hilary Sama, '07**

Hilary recently completed a Masters of Public Health degree at Johns Hopkins University and is currently working as a research analyst for Insight Policy Research, supporting research and evaluations for federal nutrition programs.

In her Path to Passion she shared, *"The Social Inequalities and subsequent Intro. to Social Welfare courses I took [at Washington College] provided me with a solid foundation for the work I do now evaluating federal nutrition programs to improve quality of life for low-income populations...I was proud of the senior capstone paper I wrote but I did not realize at the time how impactful and useful that experience would ultimately be on my career. I wrote a background and case study on cooperative housing, a project that required extensive primary and secondary data collection. It was my first real experience with conducting in-depth interviews, a research method that I now use regularly. "*



Check out Hilary's blog at:

<https://thecapitolhil.com>



**Alpha Kappa Delta**  
**International Sociological Honor Society**



*The purpose of AKD is to promote human welfare through the association of an intellectual fellowship group interested in developing scientific knowledge that may be applied to the solution of social problems.*

New and experienced members of WC AKD enjoyed a luncheon at the Lemon Leaf Café to celebrate the end of the year.



Congratulations to the 2017 new inductees: Kaitlyn Ecker, Aakriti Gupta, Courtney Stewart, Angie Towery -Tomasura



**Sociology on the Senior Cruise**

Professors Erin Anderson, Rachel Durso, and Libby Yost were pleased to participate in the 2017 commencement activities, including joining our graduating seniors for the Senior Cruise on the Potomac River.

## Faculty Research

### Publications

Cotten, Shelia R., **Elizabeth Yost**, Ronald Berkowsky, Vicki Winstead, and William Anderson. *Designing and Implementing Technology Training Programs for Older Adults in Continuing Care Retirement Communities*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press- Taylor Francis Group. 2016.

**Anderson, Erin K.** 2017. "A Quest for Culture in the Campus Community." American Sociological Association's Teaching Resources Innovations Library for Sociology.

**Anderson, Erin K.** 2017. "Presentation of the Profile Self." American Sociological Association's Teaching Resources Innovations Library for Sociology.

### Presentations

**Rachel M. Durso**, J. Craig Jenkins, Andrew W. Martin, and S. Matthew Stearmer. "Share if you Agree: Investigating Social Media Users' Motivations for Posting Political Content Online." Presented at the Southern Sociological Society Annual Meeting, Greenville, SC.

Wei Chang (Student at College of William and Mary), **Elizabeth A. Yost**. "*Cross National Study on Building Aging Communities in Japan and the U.S.*" Presented at the Southern Sociological Society Annual Conference. Asheville, NC.

Ronald W. Berkowsky, **Elizabeth A. Yost** and Shelia Cotten. "*Attitudes Towards ICTs in CCRCs: Impacts of Training Interventions.*" Presented at Gerontological Society of America Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA.

**Anderson, Erin K.** and Rachel Martinez. "Scouting for Leaders: women, Girls, and Leadership Development." Presented at the Eastern Sociological Society annual meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

Jehl, Brianna, Tia Murphy, **Erin Anderson**, K. McCurdy. "The effect of children's gender on mothers' comforting behavior following jealousy simulations." Poster presented at the Eastern Psychological Association Annual Meeting, Boston, MA.

**Dr. Rachel Durso** was the 2016 keynote speaker at the Westheimer Peace Symposium at Wilmington College, Wilmington, OH

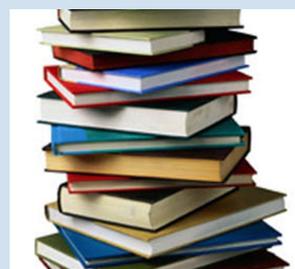
**Dr. Rachel Durso** was a co-organizer of the Digital Sociology mini-conference at the 2017 Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

## Recommended Books

*The Potlikker Papers: A Food History of the Modern South* by John T. Edge

*Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right* by Arlie Russel Hochschild

*Modern Romance* by Aziz Ansari and Eric Klinenberg



# Sociology Events

WC Sociology Hosted or Co-Sponsored several on-campus and community events in the 2016-2017 year.

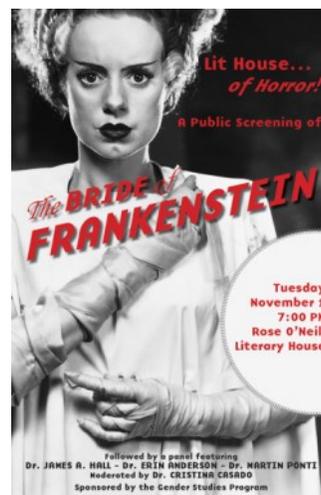
## *The Bride of Frankenstein*

Professor Anderson joined colleagues from English, Modern Languages, and Gender Studies to discuss the film, the horror genre, and the role of gender in this classic film.



## *Diversity Day*

WC Sociology joined with several other programs and departments on campus in bringing Timothy Kane, George Washington University's Associate Director for Inclusion Initiatives, to campus for Safe Spaces trainings, Student Leader Community Building, and a dialogue on "Contemporary Movements and Their Impact on Campus Communities."



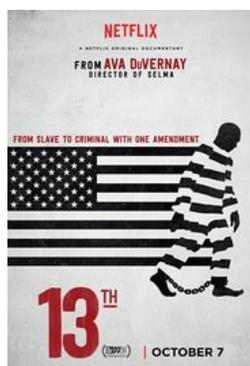
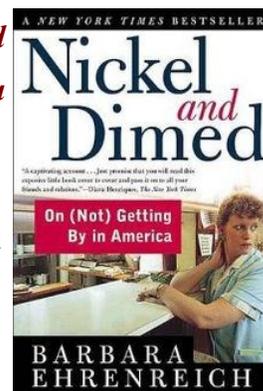
## *1984*

First published in 1949, George Orwell's dystopian novel rose once again to best seller status in January 2017. Theaters across the country screened the film adaptation of the book on April 4, the day of "awakening" for Winston Smith, the main character. Washington College Sociology joined with the Departments of English, Music, and Theatre for a screening and discussion of the film.

## *The Way We Worked*

### *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*

As part of the Washington College and Smithsonian Museum On Main Street collaboration the Department of Sociology co-sponsored the campus talk by award-winning columnist and author of more than 20 books, Barbara Ehrenreich. Ehrenreich spoke about the period she lived and worked in low-wage jobs as research for her book as well as more contemporary experiences and consequences of work and exploitation in the U.S.



## *13th*

Professor Durso led community members in a discussion of this critically acclaimed documentary on the "intersections of race, justice, and mass incarceration in the United States." The film was screened and discussed at the Centreville branch of the Queen Anne's County Library.

