

Fall 2014

Well, maybe not in the wider world, but in the Hopkins Universe we're on something of a roll. If you doubt me, check out the latest issue of the Arts and Sciences magazine: <http://krieger.jhu.edu/magazine/>

On Pp. 4 - 5, there is class photo of this year's new faculty appointments, with our three hands down the most photogenic of the bunch: Julia Burdick-Will, Ryan Calder and Meredith Grief. The page after follows with a write-up on the second cohort of Bloomberg Distinguished Professors, three total, one of whom – Steve Morgan – we share with the School of Education. So far so very good, but keep reading – there's more.

Pp. 17 through 23 showcase faculty research on poor urban families, which it seems we fairly well own – there is Kathy Edin and Tim's Nelson's work on low-income fathers, Andy Cherlin's research on the marriage gap, Stefanie DeLuca's housing voucher work, and our BSS capstone statement *The Long Shadow*. So as not to appear too sociology-centric, the author also highlights issues from Robert Moffitt's (economics) PAA Presidential Address, which points out some of the perverse features of government benefits for the poor.

And even that's not it! Flip a few more pages (to p. 33) and there is a write-up on a large grant received from the Department of Education – the first ever for Hopkins! – in support of foreign language training at the undergraduate and graduate levels. How is that relevant? It's very much so, as the effort was spearheaded by our very own Sydney Van Morgan (Senior Lecturer and Director of International Studies), who was working on the grant application before her appointment had even been finalized! (btw, Sydney and I have something: first name email aliases!)

The last couple of years I've been writing endlessly about all the energy and excitement surrounding faculty appointments in the department. Well, here is proof positive that I haven't been exaggerating one iota. Much of this success traces to the department's entrepreneurial spirit, taking advantage of the opportunities that came our way: Kathy Edin's and Steve Morgan's Bloomberg appointments, our partnership with the School of Education that made Julia's Burdick-Will's appointment possible, and Ryan Calder's hire by way of an interdisciplinary Islamic Studies search. And there could well be more, as like searches are under way now in Africana Studies and Latin American Studies, with sociology candidates on the short list for both.

It's all very exciting, but also quite challenging. As you might well imagine, these successes didn't happen on their own, and they do stress the department in various ways, the most notable being the space squeeze on the fifth floor of Mergenthaler. In fact, it looked as though we had hit our limit on suitable faculty office space until Andy Cherlin came to the rescue by allowing us to steal roughly three feet of his office so the office adjacent to his could be expanded to suitable dimensions for Ryan.

That's one bullet dodged, and Andy also bailed us out on a second. With my retirement, the department needed a successor as chair. That's always been a challenge for us – we're small (and remain small even with all the new hires) and unlike at many places, the job isn't especially coveted. Beverly Silver was the most likely candidate, but Beverly had already deferred a much deserved sabbatical to help launch the Arrighi Center and the Department's new undergraduate International Studies track. We could not in good conscience ask her to do more, but I had one foot out the door and someone had to take on the job. That someone turned out to be Andy, who stepped forward to stand in for a year as Interim Chair.

And what did Andy get in return? Lots of thanks for sure, but also notice that it was the Department's time to be reviewed by the Academic Council! This is routine, but it doesn't happen on a fixed schedule and we did not know this was to be our year until after Andy had signed on the dotted line. Ah well – the expression “no good deed goes unpunished” sometimes seems all too true. But Andy rose to the occasion, as we knew he would, guiding the department through an excellent self-study.

And a little side-note here. I had mentioned in my last Alumni Update that we had hit 50 UG majors for the first time in the department's history. Well, it seems that was a tad premature, but now it is certifiable. That's quite a milestone for us, and it happened largely on the popularity of two terrific initiatives in our undergraduate programming: the strength of the new International Studies Global Social Change and Development track and the new Social Policy Program, which has tracks in Sociology, Economics and Political Science. This is all very exciting. We have innovated, strengthened and expanded our undergraduate offerings and as a result, strong students are finding their way to us.

I hope that lots of you will want to keep up with these and other developments in the department. Doing so, I am pleased to say, no longer requires waiting for these occasional mailings. The Department's website has been spiffed up visually, but what's more important, we're doing better at keeping the content (reasonably) current. Make it your 'go to' place for faculty news (including postings about faculty in the news), news about our terrific graduate students and their many accomplishments, programming developments at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, and postings that we think will be of interest to our alums. Do check it out, and if you do, let us know what you think. We are happy to accept compliments, but also welcome suggestions for making the website even more useful as a resource for all of us.

Now let me step back just a bit. I simply had to launch with the A & S magazine as it arrived literally yesterday and is such strong affirmation of the department – our role in the School and its intellectual vitality. Had it not been for that, I would have begun with an apology, as it has taken me far too long to get around to this mailing. As you know, the department kindly has allowed me to continue with our Alumni Updates, a privilege that I do not take for granted.

I retired at the end of the last school year. Gone, but I trust not forgotten. In fact, I am still very much around (although no longer every day): as a member of The Academy at Hopkins (a holding place for retirees who wish to stay connected; my cozy little Greenhouse office is next to Mel Kohn's) and as Sociology Research Professor, a title required so that I can continue as Director of the IES Predoctoral Training Program, which is in its sunset year with just two Trainees remaining (However, we also have a renewal application pending with IES, and on the strength of Steve Morgan as the proposed Director, I have to think our prospects are good – stay tuned for news on that front in the spring). And as of last week, I also have an appointment as Professor at the Hopkins School of Education.

The Professorship is a courtesy, and a pleasing one. It comes about because Steve Morgan and I are planning a conference on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Coleman report. It will take place at the School of Education in October of 2016 and it is coming together quite nicely. The Russell Sage Foundation has committed a special issue of its new journal to the conference proceedings and we've already locked in a stellar cast of participants (I'll give the details in a later note). This appointment gives me legitimacy at the School of Education, and if our pending application to the IES is successful, it also will allow me to stay involved with the training program.

So I am keeping plenty busy professionally (and I've no complaints on the personal side either, where life indeed has been somewhat more relaxed), but that's hardly an excuse for neglecting my

obligations to you. About all I can say is that transitioning from old to new has taken a bit of getting used to. I'm now feeling more settled routine-wise, and this mailing represents that. It is overdue, but at least I have gotten to it before we ran out of 2014! My goal is for one or two additions to the library in the spring.

Now, on to announcements.

Rina Agarwala's 2014 book *Informal Labor, Formal Politics, and Dignified Development in India* (New York: Cambridge University Press) was recognized by the ASA Sociology of Development Section with its book award for 2014; Rina also was recognized last year internally, having been promoted to Associate Professor, with tenure – good job Rina!

And one of our newbies, Julia Burdick-Will, received the Ed Section's 2014 Coleman award for the year's outstanding journal article, her 2013 Soc of Ed paper "School Violent Crime and Academic Achievement in Chicago." Trust me, friends, sociology of education remains alive and well in the department!

And not to be outdone by the faculty, Sahan Savas Karatasli received the Theda Skocpol Dissertation Award from the Comparative-Historical Section of the ASA for his project "Financial Expansions, Hegemonic Transitions, and Nationalism: A Longue Durée Analysis of State-Seeking Nationalist Movements." An awesome accomplishment!

Students who have moved on since my last note include Barbara Condliffe, who is a Research Associate in MDRC's K-12 Education Policy Area, Wei-ting Chen at Banyan Communications, and Mike Reese, who stays local with his promotion to Instructional Technology Manager at the Eisenhower library.

We also have two babies to welcome, if somewhat belatedly:

Elizabeth, born to Lingli Huang & Shaohua Zhan on January 11<sup>th</sup>

and Elizabeth Talbert's William, who arrived August 1<sup>st</sup>

Some of you are on the move too.

Bob Manning (1989), of course, as Bob seems to be one adventure stacked on another. Since our last mailing he has relocated to the Prince Mohammad bin Fahd University in Damman, Saudi Arabia. He arrived as department chair and director of the MBA, but with teaching duties too – his first in six years, he says! But blink, blink, in less than a month Bob found himself elevated to the Deanship of the Business College, the University's largest with nearly 2000 undergraduates. And to add to the excitement, two accreditation reviews landed on his desk. It's always a whirlwind with Bob, and this one has the potential to trigger sandstorms!

Cindy Truelove (1989) has a rather different kind of professional change to report, relocating to the Center for Collaborative Policy (<http://www.csus.edu/cpp/>) at Cal State Univ.-Sacramento to found their water-energy collaborative policy practice. The Center for Collaborative Policy, she reports, brings the tools of consensus-building, mediation, conflict resolution, policy research and strategic planning to improve policy outcomes through collaborative governance and policy-crafting. This new appointment builds on Cindy's years as a senior policy analyst in the field of Climate Change research, where she worked on the development of integrated water-energy policy and regulatory frameworks. Her reach now extends throughout California and the American West. And it is a high profile reach indeed. As an example, along with former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, Cindy was a

keynote lecturer at the American West week at the Chautauqua Institution in New York, which she kindly says is “a nice example of the many things the Department’s alums are doing to bring comparative international development, Climate Change, and policy innovation research together!”

Mentioning speeches, here is one I recommend to one and all: Dave Baker’s (1982) TEDxFulbright talk “The education revolution and our global future:” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sv3CLr84UJU>. It’s an absolute delight, and refreshing to have someone comment favorably on educational issues.

Claudia Scholz (2005) was inspired by my mention of Susan Dauber’s (1993) change of jobs in my last mailing to send a note about hers: “I have been working in a position similar to Susan’s for the last 7 years. After only 5 semesters in a tenure-track position at a big state school I decided that it was not what I wanted, so I took an administrative job at a liberal arts college nearby. I like to say I was “alt-ac” before it was cool! As Research Programs Coordinator at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas I was responsible for helping with faculty grant proposals, coordinating the summer undergraduate research program, implementing federal regulations and devising training programs on research ethics, grantsmanship and related topics. After taking a hiatus from teaching after adopting our two children, I developed an undergraduate course last fall on Grant-writing and Fundraising. Several of my students are now interning with local nonprofits putting their new skills to use.”

That’s the position Claudia has left behind. She now is Director of Sponsored Programs at Spelman College, an HBCU in Atlanta. There she is in charge of faculty research development and grants administration, but she hopes also to squeeze out a bit of time to get back into the classroom.

And who says that the job search has to be a drag? Not when it affords opportunities to reconnect: “The best part,” Claudio reports, “was visiting with Bruce Podobnik (2000) while I interviewed at Lewis & Clark College and with Bilal (Mark) King (2006) at Morehouse during my Spelman interview.” Now how cool is that. Congratulations Claudia, and best wishes.

That goes also for Becki Herman (1998), who has left AIR for a position as Senior Researcher and Chair of Education Policy at RAND. That’s a big change, but it’s not taking Becki away from the area. She’s based in the RAND offices in Arlington.

I saw Travis Gosa (2008) recently, always a treat. He came to Hopkins as a guest speaker in the African Studies Rap Session program. My last note included links to several of Travis’s forays as a public intellectual. I think it fair to say that those of us who worked with him here were fairly shocked when he floated the idea for a dissertation on rap lyrics (oppositional culture imagery therein). It was the surprise, not the issue. His was a wonderful dissertation and Travis now is at the vanguard of academics interrogating the historical and cultural context of Rap.

We had a terrific reception at ASA last year. It was, in a sense, my victory lap, and I took the liberty of inviting several colleagues of long standing with no particular ties to the department. It was a great occasion, with current students, faculty and alums well represented. But of course not everyone who might have wished to attend, was able to. One of those is Richard Conviser (1970), whose note included this quite lovely compliment: “I wanted to write to thank you for your ongoing work in creating a community among Hopkins Social Relations alumni. You have created something where nothing previously existed. Most of all, I regret missing the face-to-face reunion some years ago which, if memory serves, happened to fall on a weekend on which I was playing in a symphony concert in Montana.” Ah yes, the music, which we know from earlier notes is one of Richard’s deep passions. He continues: “I’m still teaching, about 20 students at the moment, about 1/3 of whom are adult beginners (as old as 71, nearly rivaling my own 70 years); playing chamber music, now in four

ensembles -- two piano trios, a string quartet, and a duo with guitar; and composing, currently focusing on violin duets that I can use to teach technique to students (I am now working on number 40 out of my goal of 48).”

Good for you Richard! His experience helps make the point that retirement can be very rewarding indeed, and it doesn't necessarily have to be “same old.” I'm hoping to do a bit of spreading out myself, but I'm not quite there yet: for me, “same old” is still fulfilling, but sprinkled liberally with more free time to experiment.

That's it for now. As you can see, we're back in business. The powers that be have allowed me to retain my Hopkins email address ([karl@jhu.edu](mailto:karl@jhu.edu)), so please, let's have my inbox overflowing with tidbits to share in the spring.

Until then, here's wishing everyone a Happy Turkey-Day and Holiday Season, and a happy, healthy New Year.

Hold the presses – that's not quite it. I just this minute received a call from Mary Washington (1998), our sociologist delegate in Annapolis. The timing is quite eerie. Kathy and I have been in Mary's corner since Day 1, and she was calling to ask if we would be willing to serve as members of the Host Committee for an upcoming event. I jumped at the opportunity, but the role entails helping her with fundraising – it's a “give or get” commitment is how she put it. I said fine, but I added that since I'm no longer on payroll, I would much prefer fulfilling our obligation by way of the “get” option. So be forewarned, those of you who also count yourselves as friends of Mary, and possibly supporters also, can be expecting to hear from me again before too long in that rather different capacity.

That's really it for now – cheers to all!

Karl