

May 8, 2008

Hello Again -- We're into spring semester exams now, which means the semester, mercifully, is winding down. It has been a busy stretch, but I was determined to get off another edition of my world famous Alumni Updates before summer and here it is!

When last I wrote it was deep winter, right around the holiday season. I ended on something of a somber note, pledging to do something lofty with my modest monthly VA disability payments. For those of you who have been waiting expectantly, I am pleased to report this is one New Year's resolution fulfilled! I've arranged for the Baltimore Station to get my checks, effective this past January. The Station is a local non-profit focused on helping down and out men overcome addictive disorders. Here's a link to their website (<http://www.baltimorestation.org/>) and a brief blurb:

"THE BALTIMORE STATION, INC. operates two unique transitional stations for homeless men recovering from addiction. Using innovative strategies to restore quality of life and productivity to the homeless, job training, employment counseling, medical and legal assistance are provided in a safe and supportive environment. These men are given encouragement that promotes their ability to regain self-sufficiency and become a valuable part of society again."

The Station's facilities are in South Baltimore and Seton Hill and most of their clients are vets, my target population. This small gesture isn't going to solve the world's problems – it amounts to little more than a nice dinner out — but it certainly feels good and the Station's mission is a near-perfect way to re-invest what I get from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

If you're reading this and thinking "what on earth is he talking about?," you've a bit of catching up to do – please see my Alumni Update from December 2007, posted at the Department's Website along with the complete archive: <http://www.soc.jhu.edu/alumni/alumniupdate-12-2007.pdf> . And while you're at the website, peruse the other happenings in the Department – there's lots going on!

Included in the "lots" is Stefanie Deluca's receipt of a coveted Grant Foundation *William T. Grant Scholars Award*. Limited to early career scholars, these awards provide \$350K over five years to support awardees' research plans, with a nice mentoring component. You may recall that last year Stefanie made the short list of finalists, including an in-person interview at the Foundation's NY headquarters. It was a near-miss, but Stefanie is not easily deterred -- she tried again this year and hit the jackpot! She will use this windfall to continue a program of research on the consequences of residential mobility for low income youth. Incidentally, they made just four awards in this cycle, putting Stefanie in rarified territory indeed. We are rightfully proud of her!

We're also proud of two of this year's graduating students for their election to Phi Beta Kappa -- Travis Gosa, who is finishing his Ph.D. and has taken a faculty position at Williams College (graduate students are eligible for induction if their undergraduate school doesn't have a Phi Beta Kappa chapter) and Sara Ginsberg, an undergraduate major and winner of this year's James S. Coleman award, which recognizes the Department's outstanding graduating senior. We don't know exactly where Sara is headed next, but she's looking for a position in direct social service

delivery, most likely through a non-profit. New Orleans is on her radar screen, but as of this writing it remains a work in progress.

Sara's success is a reminder that the Department doesn't just produce fine graduate students. We also have a strong major and invest heavily in it. In fact, Sara, along with another graduating senior, Candido Brown, did exceptional service for the Department this year as the two student members of our Undergraduate Committee. In the fall semester they organized a fine film series around the theme of *Examining Inequalities* (showings included *The Battle of Algiers* and *The Crying Game*) and for the spring semester they organized a wonderful bus tour of Baltimore, viewing the city through a sociological lens (Neil Hertz, a faculty member from the English Department, served as tour guide). Both events were huge successes.

It was announced just last week that another of our majors, Irene Pang, a Junior, has been awarded a Provost's Undergraduate Research Award for a project on the effects of microfinance on urban market women in Ghana. Joel Andreas is working with Irene on that project, while Steve Plank and I are working with her on a second large effort, supported by her Woodrow Wilson Fellowship. This is a four year, \$10K award given to extremely able undergraduates to work in a sustained way on a research project of their design. Irene's study is in the tradition of Coleman's adolescent society, but with an interesting twist. She is examining the process of clique formation at the international high school she attended in Wales. With students arriving from all throughout the world, and so coming together without any previous ties, it is an interesting setting for studying which dimensions of similarity afford the strongest bases of attraction. Irene has been traveling to Wales periodically to administer questionnaires (fall and spring) and conduct focus group interviews from – now get this – her base in Ghana during the Fall semester and Germany during the spring semester, the two locations where she has been doing study abroad this year! Sounds like great preparation for a career as an academic globe-trotter, although it's not yet clear what awaits Irene after her time at the Hop.

These notes, you no doubt by now realize, are part planful and part stream of consciousness. Between mailings I collect emails and other tidbits and pull them out when I'm ready to start, but there's no mental map that gets filled in (and certainly not one on paper!). I pretty much "go with the flow," and today Phi Beta Kappa was on my mind when I started at the keyboard. From there, our UG program just sort of emerged, and I'm glad it did as the Department has much to brag on in this area. I'm told that when some of you old-timers were here the Department didn't have an undergraduate major and for years hardly offered any undergraduate courses at all. If my ruminations make any of you wistfully nostalgic, please do share some recollections from that time to help fill in the record. But even without that detail, it's clear much has changed over the years – we're a full service Department now, and in my humble view much better for it. That said, we are small major, generally numbering in the 30 – 40 range, and likely always will be. Still, wonderful students like Sara, Candido and Irene elevate the Department -- we're proud of them indeed! Candido, incidentally, is off to Harvard next year to do a Master's in the School of Education there.

There's a pleasing development on the horizon regarding graduate funding that I'd like to share. When I arrived way back in 1972, the Department had two NIMH predoctoral training programs in place and we were quite flush. It didn't last long though, as the biologizing of mental health

under the Reagan administration put an end to all that. Since then we've been honoring our commitment to fully fund five years of graduate study for everyone through monies provided by the Dean for TAs, RAs funded by individual faculty research grants, outside awards won by graduate students, and the occasional opportunity elsewhere in the Hopkins universe (for example, for several years recently one student was supported by a traineeship through the Hopkins Population Center, directed by our very own Andy Cherlin). An exception was the AIR Predoctoral Fellowship in Education Research, funded by the American Institutes for Research in DC. AIR ordinarily isn't in the business of giving out money, but they liked the idea of having our students working there as summer interns and it didn't hurt that one of our grads, Laura Salganik (1985), Vice President at AIR and Director of their Federal Statistics Program, had the ear of Sol Pelavin, AIR President and CEO. The AIR program provided two years of funding for one new trainee annually, with a summer internship between the first and second years. It was a lovely program and a fine experience for the five AIR trainees who benefited from it, but the commitment was time-limited and the program ended last year at the conclusion of Mindelyn Buford's two-year term.

With that experience, and what we learned from it, the Department decided to go after an IES (Institute for Education Sciences) pre-doctoral training grant for training in education research. And it looks like we've succeeded! Award letters aren't expected until June, but we heard last month that we have been recommended for funding, which makes it effectively a done deal. The program focuses on quantitative methods, with a set of four required courses beyond those required of everyone, two 18 month research placements (one involving statistical data analysis; the other a randomized trial project), a speaker series, a "short-course" each summer on some advanced topic of interest and, a summer teaching internship placement in the Baltimore City summer school program. The Program is interdisciplinary – a partnership between Sociology, CSOS, the Department of Mental Health in the School of Public Health, and the School of Education -- and it will be housed administratively in Sociology (I am to be the Program Director). There will be a total of 12 Trainees, selected from among doctoral candidates in the three participating programs that grant degrees. They will receive 5 years of support and lots of additional perks (e.g., a laptop, travel money and a quite handsome stipend). This is a splendid opportunity for the Department and its students and it helps keep on sound footing our longstanding commitment to Sociology of Education as an area of Departmental specialization. Assuming the program proves itself, we'll be able to apply for additional training slots during its second year to begin in the third year. I'm sure all you SoE types out there will appreciate the magnitude and import of this.

Another major development on the education front is the organizational maturation of the Baltimore Education Research Consortium (BERC), which Steve Plank co-directs along with colleagues from Morgan State and CSOS. I've mentioned BERC before – how the idea originated in departmental brainstorming sessions about making ourselves more useful locally, which, in turn, initiated a series of conversations with prospective partners, including prospective funders. I won't go through all that again, but BERC has been successfully launched under Steve's able leadership. Its mission is to conduct high quality, policy-relevant research on conditions in the Baltimore City Public Schools. Toward that end, access to City data has been arranged, a funding partnership is in place that's good for at least two years, a small staff has been put together, and two draft reports are circulating that should go public pretty soon.

BERC's administrative home is CSOS, but it is very much a Departmental initiative (in partnership with many others, of course). BERC is a little over a year old at this point and off to a splendid start. Its potential, as they say, is limitless, and as BERC grows, so will its value to the Department, through, for example, research placements for graduate students and IES trainees. BERC has a website under development and I'll send the link along in my next note, but if you're eager and can't wait try googling "BERC Hopkins" every so often and eventually it will come up.

I was about to sketch the Department's presence at the spring round of professional meetings, but I hesitate, as I'm mindful that I sometimes pack too much into these notes – I'm on the 4<sup>th</sup> page already, and still haven't gotten to the "alum" part of what is supposed to be an "Alumni Update!" But lest anyone fear Departmental slippage, rest assured we were well-represented at AERA, the Population Association meeting, and the Eastern and Southern Sociological Society meetings, with a multitude of student and faculty presentations. The latter included a lively "author meets critics" session at the Southern Sociological Society meeting in Richmond organized around Giovanni Arrighi's new book, *Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of the Twenty-first Century*. And Tom Dial (1986) was kind enough to stop by for my presentation on summer learning loss at AERA.

Now, onto your news.

You may remember in my last note I shared with you a side benefit of these occasional mailings – that they sometimes bring together folks who had fallen out of contact. Well, it has happened again! Nancy Fraser-Smith (1972), who until my last note didn't realize Doris Entwisle was still active (still active indeed!), got together with Doris when she was in town this spring for the annual meeting of the American Psychosomatic Society (APS). Nancy is Professor of Psychiatry at McGill University, Senior Research Associate at the Montreal Heart Institute and Researcher at the Centre Hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM) and a past President of the APS, which is “dedicated to the scientific understanding of the interaction of mind, brain, body and social context in promoting health and contributing to the pathogenesis, course and treatment of disease” (Nancy's interest in this area initially focused on psychological and social factors in prognosis in patients with cardiac disease). She goes on to say that "APS and JHU were the two most important influences in the development of my career, and visiting them both at the same time was a true pleasure," adding that Doris "was a wonderful role model and support back then, and she remains the same today" -- sentiments I am sure many in receipt of this note heartily echo. BTW, Nancy and Doris both report they had a delightful afternoon together.

And here's an interesting coincidence, also related in Nancy's note. You may recall that I stumbled on Richard Rubin (1971), an old friend from my early days here in the MD-PhD program, thanks to a note from Daryl Matthews (1977), one of our Md-PhD graduates who saw a notice about Dick's receipt of a prestigious award from the American Diabetes Association. Well Nancy and Richard's paths crossed at a conference in Michigan where she was giving a talk on continuing medication. The two of them overlapped in the Department (then named the Department of Social Relations), and it's interesting how two PhD sociologists who aren't practicing sociology (as such) can cross paths while crisscrossing the county on the conference

circuit. Nancy says the two of them very much enjoyed catching up on news, and I can say the same, as Richard and I did indeed get together for lunch after my last note. And shortly after I saw Richard on our local cable TV during one of their public service inserts. He was talking about risk factors for diabetes, with particular reference to a large clinical trials research study he co-directed which established that a healthy life style – indexed by a weight loss of as little as ten pounds – can delay the onset (or even occurrence, I believe he said) of diabetes in persons at high risk of developing the disease. Apparently the evidence was so compelling that the research program was discontinued mid-stream – they learned what they needed to know. Clearly this is important work, and I can see from both their interests how Nancy and Dick might find themselves at the same place at the same time. But I also imagine that neither of them would have foreseen quite this future when here as students way back in the late 60's – early 70's! I understand Dick's path through the Md-PhD tie-in, but Nancy wasn't part of that program, so I wonder how she started down her particular road???? Hmmmm – it seems we need another note Nancy!

One connection that unfortunately didn't happen was my scheduled Sunday Brunch with Marilyn Katatsky (1972) and her hubbie during the University's spring alumni weekend. It was all lined up but I had to bail when I discovered a conflict with my Southern Sociological Society schedule the same weekend. You may recall Marilyn from my earlier notes – she circulates in the world of high finance and thought she had left Sociology behind, but somehow I've managed to draw her back into our orbit. She and Rick, who are based just outside Annapolis, had Kathy and me over for their Christmas open house and the on-campus get together was to be a reciprocation of sorts. Now we need a "plan B," and something was said about getting together out on the water this summer – hopefully that will happen.

Renewing old acquaintances is nice, but so too is making new ones, and my notes have facilitated that also. My December mailing mentioned David Gibson's (1979) premature (from my vantage point) retirement from UCSF, but also that he hadn't hung up the spurs altogether. With that, I passed along his interest in a study by Michael Marmot on mortality patterns among folks in the British Secret Service. It struck me at the time as pretty obscure (if interesting) stuff, but it turns out that Salvatore Babones (2003), a generation removed from David, was intrigued by the very same pattern! I know an exchange of correspondence followed and I'm curious where that stands – have the two of you bonded, intellectually I mean? Salvatore, incidentally, reports that he is about to relocate down under (indeed, it might have already happened by now), taking a position as Lecturer in Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Sydney – best of luck!.

Mentioning retirements, it seems I'm surrounded by them! Hank Becker (1973) is the latest. Hank reports that he is now Emeritus at the UC-Irvine's School of Education and about to relocate with wife Barbara to the Southern Part of Heaven (aka Chapel Hill, NC) for what we hope will be a long, blissful retirement. Hank was just finishing up in the Department when I arrived and before heading West he stayed on for a number of years at CSOS (a good many years, as I recall). I've kept up with some of his work on implications of the digital divide for disadvantaged children's schooling and used Hank as an occasional referee for submissions to *SoE* when I was editor. Now I wonder if Hank ever checked in with Richard Consiver (1970), which in his note (sent back in January) he said he was going to do that very evening. It's been

35 years Hank says (!), but the two of them apparently were quite tight back in the day, even driving cross-country together in Richard's VW. Ah, the classic VW. Didn't everyone have one? I drove down to Chapel Hill from Philly in my '65 VW beetle to start graduate school in the winter of 1968 and I was still driving it in the late 70's when it was rear ended and its lawnmower engine shattered into a thousand pieces. It was rusting out, the upholstery was rotting away and the heater would blast hot air non-stop, but my I did love that car! Does anyone remember the classic scene in Woody Alan's movie "Sleeper," when he and this girl discover a cobweb covered 2000 year old beetle in a cave that cranks the very first time they turn the ignition key? That says it all -- those cars would run forever (barring the sort of mishap that deprived me of mine!). Anyway -- best wishes to Hank and Barbara!

Unfortunately, now I have a bit of sad news to pass along. Hank, the techie that he is, tried to help track down several of our missing alums, with but limited success (even in the wonderful era of google, it's not all that easy). His note asked about Shi-Chang Wu (1977) in particular, who, like Hank, had stayed on for a number of years at CSOS after finishing his degree (working in the Carriage House computer facility behind 3505 N. Charles, as I recall), before moving down the road to the Department of Education. Laura Salganik reports that Shi-Chang passed away a few years ago. I don't have the details, but Laura might be able to say more (you can find her at AIR). I suppose this is another service these mailings can provide, so please do share with me any news -- the good and the bad -- you'd like to have passed along.

Mentioning lost alums, and on a more cheery note, Binnie Bailey (yes, the very same!) sent me a clipping from a local paper (the Towson Times) reporting that Susan Radius (1977), director of Towson's MA program in health sciences, has been elected to the Executive Board of the American Public Health Association. Well there's another name, like with Dick Rubin, long-gone, but apparently still local. And maybe like with Dick Rubin we can reconnect before too long. In the meantime, here's a hearty "good for you Susan!"

And there are more Kudos to be bestowed. Pam Stone (aka Cain, 1979) has been elected VP of the Eastern Sociological Society, whose annual meeting next year will be in here in town -- come on down (or up, or over)! And Pam's 2007 book *Opting Out? Why Women Really Quit Careers and Head Home* was showcased in a very flattering review by Phyllis Moen in the February 15, 2008 issue of *Science*. That's wonderful recognition, and on top of the glitzy DC coming out party for Pam's book that I mentioned in an earlier note. All that warrants double kudos!

George Wilson (1995) checks in from the sunny south (Miami) to report that he has been appointed Deputy Editor at ASR. Adia Harvey (2004), now Adia Harvey Wingfield after her marriage last summer (hearty congrats!), reports that she has a new book about to hit the streets, "Doing Business with Beauty: Black Women, Hair Salons, and the Racial Enclave Economy," which Adia says, and I knew, traces back to her dissertation research. In it Adia examines the intersections of race and gender in shaping Black women's entrepreneurial experiences, resulting in what Adia calls a "racial enclave economy." Sounds like an interesting read, and for anyone who might want to track it down, Rowman & Littlefield is the publisher. Another big Kudo to Adia!

Tom Rodriguez (2000), also writing from the warm climes of Florida, sends regards to all. His note is short on details, but it all sounds good, with publications in press and several recent conference presentations. I suppose that's something of a tease, as we'd like to know more, but even this sort of general update is welcome here – just to know how our friends are getting on. Tom, incidentally, says he looks forward to these occasional notes and I've heard the same from others – thanks, Tom, for your kind feedback.

And of course I couldn't have one of these mailings without mention of my bud Henry Perry (1977)! Henry and his wife Mirlene live in Baltimore now, but just temporarily while he's on sabbatical from his position at Future Generations ([www.future.org](http://www.future.org)). Just after his return to the area, we got together over crabs at Obrycki's – how B'more can you get! Henry recently sent along a draft report of a large project reviewing the effectiveness of community-based health care in improving children's health, part of a three volume series. I'm sure he'd be happy to share this project with others – for a copy, you can check in at [hperry3@earthlink.net](mailto:hperry3@earthlink.net).

Tom Dial proudly announces the arrive of his sixth (!) grandchild Phoebe Maria Dial on Feb. 18 and Jake Lowinger (degree pending) his daughter Rachel (I believe his first) on January 9. And there were a couple deliveries as well to students still in residence: Angela Estacion and Aldwin are the proud parents of Phillip Samuel Lewis, while Suzumi Yasutaki and Chris have welcomed little Lin into their lives. That's news I'm happy to share!

And this just in – while at the keyboard a note arrived from Mark King (2005, now Bilal Mansa). Mark will be stopping by the Department mid-June and is trying to get together a group to catch up on news. It appears it will be over lunch, and part of the conversation I'm sure will be about the new name. Mark lives a life full of adventure and seeing him is always a treat – looking forward to it!

Those of you who have made it to this point are either: a) into pain; b) loyal to a fault; or, c) both (the two are hardly mutually exclusive). In either event, please read on.

The upcoming year will the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sociology at Hopkins (Social Relations into the 80's) and there is much to celebrate. We're still working on an appropriate way to do that, but the upcoming ASA meeting in Boston will be a good place to begin. Bedelia Richards (2008), our agent in the area, is scouting out suitable, off-site locations (that is to say, away from the conference hotels) for our third annual departmental reception. It promises to be a very special occasion and I hope lots of you will be there. Stay tuned – more information will follow.

Best to All,

Karl