Dear Manhattanville Community,

It is with great pleasure that the Sociology–Anthropology Department issues its first department newsletter! I would like to thank our previous student worker Cassia Fletcher ’16 and our current student worker Calia Borden ’16 for their hard work on this project. Your ideas, energy, and work is sincerely appreciated! This issue introduces two new faculty members who have joined us this academic year: Assistant Professor Strmic-Pawl (Sociology) and Visiting Assistant Professor Kristin Hedges (Anthropology). They bring new classes and research interests to our program that help extend our curricular reach in exciting ways. Also included in this issue are highlights from some of the activism, research, internships, and study–abroad experiences that our majors have been engaged in recently. They are busy learning both about how society is structured and exploring how to effect social change. I hope you enjoy this introduction to our department.

— Dept Chair and Associate Professor Beth Williford

New Faculty Spotlight

We welcome Professor Hephzibah Strmic-Pawl and Professor Kristin Hedges to the department. We sat down with both of them for a short interview to get to know more about them.

WELCOME PROFESSOR STRMIC-PAWL!

Q: Why teach Sociology?
A: Teaching Sociology makes people aware of the inequalities in the world. We can become informed citizens so that we can become better citizens. Society seems too large and amorphous to understand, but Sociology provides the tools and methods to effect change in society.

Q: What classes are you teaching this year?
A: In Fall semester I am teaching Race and Ethnicity, Introduction to Sociology, and African American Communities. In Spring, I’ll offer Introduction to Sociology, The History of Social Action, and Social Inequality.

continued on page 2
New Faculty Spotlight (continued)

Q: What have you enjoyed most about teaching at Manhattanville?
A: On a whole, the school has been very open and welcoming, from faculty meetings all the way down to inside the classroom. You are always a little unsure how you will be received when you come to a new school, but it was a very quick and easy process for the students and I to get comfortable with each other. Within just a couple months, we’ve moved to a good place.

Q: Favorite books and favorite authors?
A: Harold and The Purple Crayon, because Harold draws the world he wants to see. My favorite authors are Leo Tolstoy, Maya Angelou, Russell Banks, and other critical race theorists.

WELCOME PROFESSOR HEDGES!

Q: How did you know Anthropology was the field for you?
A: I didn’t. After I got my Bachelor’s, I joined the Peace Corps and went to Kenya and worked with the Maasai tribe. As a public health volunteer, I worked mostly around HIV/AIDS and really had to learn how to work with the culture. I really enjoyed thinking about the connection between culture and health and the importance of understanding that in order to make an impact.

Q: What classes are you teaching this year?
A: In Fall, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology and Introduction to Medical Anthropology. In Spring, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology, Cultures of East Africa, as well as Gender and Health, and Culture.

Q: What made you want to become a professor?
A: At first I didn’t think I would until I tried it. I wanted to originally work more in the public health field working with communities and culture. But I loved inspiring students and watching the lights go off in their heads.

Q: What do you like to do in your spare time? Any hobbies?
A: I enjoy rock climbing, camping, hiking, and I love cooking too!
Sociology Abroad

Sociology student Khalea Baker, spent last spring semester (Spring 2015) studying in London. Following is a reflection and short interview by Khalea based on her time spent abroad.

While studying abroad, every day was an adventure and I learned to deal with the twists and turns of life. My time in London was phenomenal but not without its challenges. Yet, these challenges made me independent and provided me with a deeper understanding of myself and the world. My travels abroad (to London, Barcelona, Edinburgh, Paris and Wales) fostered a love for travel and life in general. Studying abroad has provided me with friendships that will last a lifetime with people from different parts of the world. I can honestly say studying abroad with the University of Roehampton in London was the best decision I made in college.

Q: What classes did you take?

Q: Any advice for students considering study abroad?
A: Be prepared for change; things won’t always go as expected. Learn to be flexible and open to possibilities. Budget and save! With the exchange rates, money disappears quickly. If you are even thinking of studying abroad start saving at this very moment!

Q: What are some important things you’ve learned?
A: I’ve learned that it is important to step out of your comfort zone. Whether that is going abroad, speaking in class or making a new friend.
COMMUNITY GARDEN

Professor Cherry and her SOC 2000: Environmental Sociology class working outside in the community garden. They dug up some "surprise" veggies leftover from planting during the spring semester.

Undergraduate Research & Creative Achievement Fair

Karla Boza ’15 presented her research Valuing the Urban Hydroscape: Perceptions and Importance of Urban Water

Jelani Price ’17 and Calia Borden ’16 presented their research Sex Trafficking in the United States

Manhattanville College's 5th Annual Undergraduate Research & Creative Achievement Fair took place in April of last spring semester. The event occurs each year to celebrate the many academic achievements of the undergraduate student body. Last year's event boasted over 70 student presenters with a varying array of presentations. Pictured above are three Sociology students presenting their work to fellow students and faculty at the fair.
SPOTLIGHT INTERNSHIPS

STUDENT/FARM WORKER ALLIANCE

ANGEL MORALES ’15

In August 2014 I decided to attend the Student Farmworkers Alliance’s (SFA) yearly national student/youth Encuentro (gathering). It was a decision that changed my outlook on organizing, social justice, and my own place in the sociological imagination. SFA operates as an ally to the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW). The CIW started out as a group of tomato farmworkers working together to better their life and working conditions. They saw the power structure of the agricultural industry and realized that at the top were not corporations, but consumers. They began to work with consumers like students, youth, faith groups etc. to exert pressure on corporations to sign their Fair Food Agreement: to pay an extra penny per pound to double wages and only buy Florida tomatoes from farms that provided shade, water, clean bathrooms, breaks, a guaranteed minimum wage and zero tolerance for sexual harassment, verbal and physical abuse, and modern day slavery. Twelve corporations have signed including McDonalds, Burger King, and Walmart. Thousands of workers and their families have seen their lives improve.

Upon arrival to the Encuentro I met CIW and SFA members who greeted me warmly. After a round of introductions I was asked to do various tasks: Write out the agenda on poster board and be in a teatro, a dialogue free skit on the CIW’s fight for fair food. I was taken aback by how quickly I was “brought-in” to the weekend: I wasn’t just attending, I was participating. That went for everyone, everyone had an important part to play in what we were doing. This horizontal power structure was different from my experience not only in other organizations and movements but my whole life. In our post-industrial, post-colonial, neo-liberal and capitalist society, I was taught my position was determined by those above and below me, not those around me. Being in a space so apart from this felt organic, the energy flowing was almost overwhelming at times.

At the time of the Encuentro I had been involved in activism for some time through Manhattanville’s Connie Hogarth Center for Social Justice. I had also been through several years of Soc/Anth classes covering everything from class, race, ethnicity, labor, immigration, sexuality, gender, social movements etc. Being in Immokalee, seeing the harsher atrocities and pain that our “isms” inflict on the ground level, while at the same time the beauty, love and power that can be sown by community, brought this all to life. It also made me reflect upon my life, my forgotten indigenous roots, my family’s multiple migrations. I always just accepted it as part of societies natural progression: individualism, greed, oppression, separation was just part of human nature. In a system which at every moment enforces your powerlessness, understanding what is happening in Immokalee changed the narrative for me.

I realized that as a consumer, student, immigrant, Latino and human I had power. When our minds and bodies work together that power is multiplied, and we have the ability to affect real systematic change at the level it is happening in Immokalee. I also learned that while it is important to fight the struggles and oppression I face, I must work in solidarity with other struggles at the same time. Liberation is not something granted to one group of people, but an intersecting fight on multiple levels. When farmworkers, or students, or immigrants, or minorities achieve true freedom, we will all have freedom: a collective liberation. In this spirit I have continued my work with the SFA, becoming a 2015 Steering Committee Member. I recommend any student studying Sociology/Anthropology to attend the 2015 Encuentro, or to get involved in activism at any level. It will make the textbooks and literature come to life, and will propel you not only to work for the liberation of other humans, but of yourself and your mind!
SPOTLIGHT INTERNSHIPS

MY SISTER’S PLACE

CASSIA FLETCHER '16

I knew I wanted to intern at My Sister’s Place after Kym McNair, MSP’s training coordinator visited my Women in Society class (WGS 1040). Through the Hogarth-Sacks Scholarship I was able to spend a summer working alongside Kym and other dedicated women, although there were a few men.

I first went through “Sister In Law” training. We participated in numerous exercises, learning how to accompany, not only My Sister’s Place clients, but also any one who would otherwise go alone. I was especially interested in meeting women of all demographics, all interested in combating both domestic violence and human trafficking, which undoubtedly occur in Westchester County.

I attended a monthly MSP staff meeting. It was rather like a potluck gathering, not than the formal meeting I expected. The MSP staff discussed ways to stay positive in spite of the disheartening reality of domestic violence that their work seeks to address. To me, this was especially meaningful. I was reminded to find fun activities outside of my Sociology studies, which often feel heavy.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

CALIA BORDEN ’16

This summer, I received the opportunity from the Connie Hogarth Center for Social Action to work at an internship with the Community Governance and Development Council (CGDC) in Yonkers, NY. CGDC is a recently established non-profit community development organization dedicated to the improvement of Southwest Yonkers. CGDC aims to combine education, urban planning, community economic development, and participatory democracy into a program for community empowerment for the citizens of Southwest Yonkers.

It was a great opportunity to work side by side with LaMont Badru, the founder of CGDC, in learning the ins and outs of what it takes to run a small non-profit organization. I helped substantially with the beginning stages of CGDC’s Community Planning and Needs Assessment report. It will be a report based on a collection of survey data from the community members of Southwest Yonkers on what they felt were needs in the community. I helped with analyzing and summarizing the compiled survey data, as well as helped LaMont with the planning of an upcoming Community Assembly Workshop. This event will bring in experts or other experienced professionals in the fields addressed in the Needs Assessment survey and they will come together with the community to talk about models for community solutions to the issues citizens are facing in Southwest Yonkers.

I learned an exceptional amount from my time spent with CGDC and am so grateful I had the opportunity to contribute my skills to such a valuable organization.
Sociology student, Karla Boza ’15, attended the People's Climate March in New York City last September with Professor Williford's SOC 3000 Latin American Social Movements class and the Connie Hogarth Center. The following is a reflection written based on her experience there.

I was excited about all of the events that would be taking place during Climate Week, which is why I was so glad to hear that we would be attending the March for class credit. Climate change and environmental issues are causes that are very important to me. And are the issues that I have been active in during college. The current climate crisis is something that has impacted people of El Salvador greatly, I am passionate about this issue in part because I feel such a strong tie to my country’s well being.

The bands, groups of people, and poster-making stations we encountered were so incredible that I soon got separated from the Mville group. I was with another friend and we decided instead to navigate through the March ourselves, since we knew it would be really hard to catch up with the rest of the Manhattanville community. By doing so we had the chance to interact with various groups throughout the People's Climate March. We marched with the anarchists, the nuns, those protecting the pollinators, and those fighting for birds, among others. The atmosphere and passion felt that day is something I will never be able to describe to anyone who wasn’t there.

– Karla Boza ’15
Sociology-Anthropology Faculty Activity

Professor Elizabeth Cherry

recently completed a book manuscript, forthcoming with Ashgate Press, entitled Culture and Activism: Animal Rights in France and the United States. She will be presenting a paper from her new research project on birdwatching as an environmental activity at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society in Boston, MA, in March 2016.

The paper is entitled "Birdwatching and the Social Construction of Nature."

Professor Kristin Hedges

is presenting a paper in November at the American Anthropological Association meeting in Denver. The title of the paper is: From Cows to Land: How National, Local, and Community Politics Are Changing Women’s Land and Property Rights in Maasailand

Prof. Hedges is also launching an ethnobotany project among the Maasai in Kenya. This is a community requested project that will take a participatory action approach. They will be trying to document traditional medicinal herbal use among the Maasai elders as the information is being lost due to rapid westernization and loss of access to land.

Professor Eric Slater

for the last two years, has been working on a campus novel, which follows the lives of a handful of characters as they navigate changes at work specifically and in their lives more generally. Fiction is a new medium for him, and working through it has been a great learning experience.

Professor Hephzibah Strmic-Pawl

will be on several panels at the annual conference of the Association of Humanist Sociology (AHS), October 21–25 in Portland. AHS endeavors to make sociological research and teaching more critical, reflexive, and accessible to a wider audience.

Prof. Strmic-Pawl organized a panel for an Author–Meets–Critic for the book, Working to Laugh by James M. Thomas: in his book he takes a critical look at how race, gender, and class inform comedy and reify stratification. Prof. Strmic–Pawl also organized a panel on the future of sociology and how we can create transformative sociology to help create a more socially just world. The third panel, Critical Reflections on Humanist Sociology and Social Change is a conversation among several scholars on making our teaching and research reflect a humanist perspective.

Professor Beth Williford

recently published an article with Mangala Subramaniam about the frames used by social movement organizations at two different points in a transnational network. The article examines how the ‘transnational field’ shapes the frames and how they are received by intended audiences. This case of resistance to neoliberal globalization prioritizes the voices of indigenous peoples in the Global South. The article is titled: “Transnational Field and Frames: Organizations in Ecuador and the US.” Research in Social Movements, Conflicts, and Change. 38: 37–67.

Prof. Williford is also in the early stages of two new research projects in the areas of political sociology and visual sociology.
SPRING 2016

SOC-ANTH COURSE LIST

ANTH.1050 Cultural Anthropology
ANTH.3024 Gender, Health & Culture
ANTH.3040 Cultures of East Africa
SOC.1001 Introduction to Sociology
SOC.1004 Introduction to Social Work
SOC.2076 History of Social Action
SOC.2078 Social Problems
SOC.2091 Social Science Research
SOC.3003 Classical Social Theory
SOC.3007 Globalization & Social Change
SOC.3030 Sociology of Inequality
SOC.3186 Indigenous Peoples

(Left to right: Prof. Strmic-Pawl, Prof. Williford, Prof. Slater, Prof. Hedges, and Prof. Cherry)