

Sociologue Newsletter

2015 Issue


 Department of Sociology
 COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

WELCOME TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

It's been another terrific year at UT Sociology. Our professors continue to win awards for exemplary teaching and research, and our students are being recognized at numerous levels – outside the University, at the College of Arts and Sciences, and in the community. Allow me to brag a little – our faculty have won 4 Fulbrights in 7 years; 4 national awards for research; 6 UT awards for teaching in the last five years; and 5 UT awards for research in that same period. In addition our faculty have won national service awards, and presidencies of regional organizations. Over the past five years we have served as editors of 3 highly regarded academic journals, and we work on editorial boards of a dozen more.

We have wide interests - faculty have conducted studies in Botswana, Cambodia, China, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Germany, the Horn of Africa, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, Nicaragua, Turkey, Uganda, and Vietnam, as well as across the United States. We are immensely productive, having published over 35 books in ten years, not to mention hundreds of scholarly articles and book chapters. We have hosted national and international conferences on social theory and globalization, social justice and the university, and are set to organize conferences on the environment and new directions in critical criminology. In the past five years, our graduate students have been awarded 10 graduate fellowships. And our undergraduates continue to thrive, win very prestigious awards, and make a difference in our community.

Lots of interesting things are going on: we now host not only Sociology Graduate Student Association and the Undergraduate Sociology Association, we also work with organizations such as United Students Against Sweatshops, Oxfam and UT Student Peace Alliance. We introduce a new class offering internships this year, to provide more undergraduates with career-related experiences in social justice focused placements, in the criminal justice field, in political organizing, environmental needs, and much more. Our public sociology face is increasingly prominent as we organize events such as anti-death penalty teach-ins, and present on changing public policy to groups like the League of Women Voters. We have been rewarded for our work by huge growth in our undergraduate majors, which are now close to 300.

That's what we are up to – and more, as you will see in this edition of our newsletter. What are you doing? Let us know – drop us a line! Stay in touch!

Dr. Jon Shefner

GREETINGS FROM THE HEAD DR. JON SHEFNER



GETTING TO KNOW...DR. MICHELLE CHRISTIAN



Dr. Michelle Christian joined the Department of Sociology in Fall 2013. Now we don't know what we ever did without her talent and energy. Lo Presser sat down with Michelle this past June to talk about what she's been up to.

L: What are you working on these days?

M: Tying up loose ends on a handful of articles for publication. I also just started a research project here in Knoxville that explores race, gender, place, constructions of criminality – having a criminal record – and the ability to secure and maintain employment. We want to know how these factors intersect.

L: That sounds really innovative, especially the part about keeping as opposed to just getting a job.

M: I think so too, and I'm especially excited about the research design. It's a longitudinal ethnography. We plan to follow people for at least five years. When I say 'we' I mean myself and my doctoral student Enkeshi Thom, my colleague on the project. I plan to use this research as a case study in teaching the graduate Field Research class (Sociology 636) in the future.

L: Wow! I know your most recent research was based in Uganda. What links the two projects?

M: In Uganda I studied the situation of domestic workers. The question in common has to do with how work becomes racialized.

L: What else keeps you busy these days?

M: I've continued to work with UT administrators to ethically source UT clothing. We've secured licensing agreements with Alta Gracia, which is the only apparel manufacturer in the developing world to pay a living wage and otherwise honor workers' rights. I've also been having fun with my family. My six year-old Niko had some terrific first-time experiences this summer during a short vacation in Florida, including swimming under water and boogie boarding. Now he's have a great time at day camp. It's a working summer for me but so far a good one.

Wilma Dunaway Receives Distinguished Alumna Award, speaks on “My Journey: Appalachia, Civil Rights Activism and Revisionist Scholarship”

Twenty-one years after receiving her Ph.D., Wilma A. Dunaway returned to the Department of Sociology at UT this past spring as our Distinguished Alumna Award recipient and gave a talk entitled “My Journey: Appalachia, Civil Rights Activism and Revisionist Scholarship.” Dr. Dunaway’s visit spanned three days and included meeting graduate students, small groups of faculty, and an interview with National Public Radio affiliate WUOT. Dr. Dunaway, who received her B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. from the Department of Sociology, said that the visit meant “coming home” to her. The Award was presented by Dr. Shefner prior to her talk April 13, 2015, held at the Howard Baker Center for Public Policy, a fitting venue for a scholar whose career has merged rigorous and cutting-edge scholarship with social justice activism.

Dr. Dunaway’s talk highlighted intersections between her scholarship and her public activism. Perhaps best known for her award-winning book based on her dissertation research, *The First American Frontier* (1996) which debunks myths of Appalachian isolation and homogeneity while arguing for world-systems incorporation of the region, Dr. Dunaway noted that her four books on Appalachia were all inspired by her personal biography. She is the descendant of an illegal racially-mixed marriage between her Indian great-great grandmother and a white man and another illegal mixed marriage between her father on the Cherokee side of her family and a white mother. She entered UT as a freshman in 1962, the second year the university began accepting minority undergraduates, but suffered discrimination rendering Indians invisible, as when clerks insisted she check “either the white or the Negro box on the [University] form.” These experiences shaped her interest in school desegregation, which she studied for her master’s degree in sociology under Professor Bill Cole, then Chair of Sociology. Cole partially shielded Dunaway from FBI surveillance during the 1960s while setting an example of combined scholarship and activism.



Dr. Dunaway is an ethnographer of the world-system, merging bottom-up and top-down perspectives, and integrating studies of women with analyses of workers with international studies. She steadfastly takes a non-Western position on feminism, emphasizing the links between production and reproduction over separate studies of reproductive rights.

Although now retired from Virginia Tech University, where she spent most of her career, Dr. Dunaway plans to continue research and writing on several projects, including a new work on slavery and joint research with husband and fellow scholar Donald Clelland. In addition, she looks forward to the flexibility to travel and speak in support of activist groups in Appalachia, as well as sharing her scholarship at smaller colleges in the Appalachian region.



Dr. Dunaway having lunch with graduate students

Dr. Samuel E. Wallace July 8, 1935 – March 21, 2015



Dr. Samuel E. Wallace (Sam) was born in Grand View, Missouri, and grew up in Kansas City, Missouri. The first in his family to attend college, he attended William Jewell College for his undergraduate degree, and earned his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in 1959 at age 24 under the direction of Dr. Theodore Caplow. He did post-doctoral education at a research institute in Puerto Rico. He held a research position at the Harvard School of Medicine, and taught at Columbia University, Brandeis University, Queens College, and New York University before assuming a faculty position in the Department of Sociology in 1974 at the University of Tennessee, from which he retired in 2007.

He authored and edited many books, including *Skid Row As a Way of Life* (1964); *Total Institutions*, (editor) (1971); *After Suicide* (1973); *New Englanders: Their Eyes, and Those Who Profess to Care for Them* (1974); *The Urban Environment* (1980); *Suicide and Euthanasia* (1982); *A Sociologist At Large in South America* (1988); *The Ecology of Social Problems* (1996); and *Social Problems: An Ecological Prospective* (2002). Sam was a member of and participant in several professional organizations, including the American Sociological Association and The Southern Sociological Society, and served as President of the Mid-South Sociological Association.

During his long tenure at the University of Tennessee, Sam was an active participant in the broad missions of research, service and teaching. He was a staunch advocate for academic freedom, a practitioner of participatory research, and a dedicated and tireless teacher. Sam’s self-depiction as a cantankerous sociology professor touched on how he viewed his role as an academic. In his research and writing, in his teaching, and in his professional affiliations, Sam sought to bring fresh insight and vision, to entertain the possibility of a better way of seeing the world. He sought to keep our minds baffled.

Sam was an energetic man who fully lived life with an attitude of joy and gratitude. He had many adventures, including living on skid row in Minneapolis, participating in civil rights marches on Washington (including the one made famous by MLK) and protesting the Vietnam war in New York City. He had a great appreciation for fine food, Mont Gay rum, well-written literature, jazz and classical music, the company of friends, family and students, and the beauty of nature.

Adapted from obituary by James Black and Michael Betz
Professors Emeriti, University of Tennessee

Ph.D. Student Kyle Letteney Studies Violence and the Civilizing Process at German Literature Archives



In June-July 2015 **Kyle Letteney** traveled to Marbach, Germany for an intensive four-week stint at the German Literature Archives. The research was funded by a McClure grant from the Center for International Studies at the **University of Tennessee**. **Kyle seeks to better understand Norbert Elias’** concept of the civilizing process and to apply it to the dimensions of American violence. While in Germany Kyle had the opportunity to meet with board members of the Norbert Elias foundation, who were intrigued by **Kyle’s use of Eliasian theory to clarify trends in American** violence, including U.S. military intervention, interpersonal violence, mass shootings, and the use of lethal force by American law enforcement. (He also had the opportunity to explore Western Europe, as seen in the stellar photos he took below)

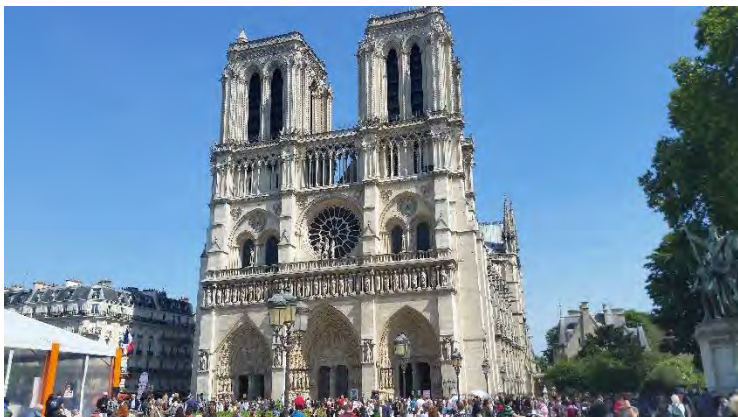
As a result of his archival research, Kyle is writing a chapter in which he argues that America has been historically engaged in a contradictory display of violence both at home and abroad. He suggests that America has become obsessively fixated on securing monopolies of violence (i.e., securing the legitimate authority to use of violence) both at home and abroad to the point where it sees no other way to bring about cooperation and solidarity among **groups**. **The historical modes and trajectories of America’s violence** abroad have led the United States down a path where it is willing to engage in mass violence in other countries in the name of safeguarding Americans while remaining willfully apathetic to the conditions that have contributed to the interpersonal and state violence occurring within its own borders.



Canals of Amsterdam, Netherlands



Town Hall Antwerp, Belgium



Notre-Dame Cathedral Paris, France



Schlossplatz Stuttgart, Germany

Sociology Department Honors 2014 and 2015

2014

Faculty Awards

Stephanie Bohon - Martin L. Levin Service Award, Southern Sociological Society

Hoan Bui – Interdepartmental Collaboration in Scholarship and Research Award, College of Arts and Sciences

Asafa Jalata – Fulbright Award for research and teaching in Botswana

Lois Presser – Excellence in Teaching Citation, University of Tennessee

Jon Shefner – Betty Lynn Hendrickson Professorship, University of Tennessee

Jon Shefner - Distinguished Lectureship Award, Southern Sociological Society

Departmental Graduate Student Awards

Research – Lisa East

Service – Sara Malley

Teaching– Steve Panageotou

Gertrude Hurlbutt Scholarship Awards

Jeffrey Dixon

Jalen Dukes

Outstanding Graduating Seniors in Sociology

Rosemary Dodd

Nicholas Khoury

Alex Wagner

Student Engagement and Leadership Award

Carolina De La Torre Ugarte

2015

Faculty Awards

Michelle Brown –Excellence in Teaching Citation, University of Tennessee

Departmental Graduate Student Awards

Research – Shannon Williams

Teaching – Jules Shelton

Fellowships for Graduate Students

Lisa East – Yates Dissertation Fellowship, University of Tennessee

Jenna Lamphere – Penley-Thomas Fellowship, University of Tennessee

Nikhilendu Deb – J. Wallace & Katie Dean Graduate Fellowship, University of Tennessee

College of Arts & Sciences Outstanding Senior Awards

Marisha Dotson

Valerie King

Tadd Minton

Gertrude Hurlbutt Scholarship Awards

Erica Davis

Hannah Summers

McKayla Travis

Outstanding Graduating Seniors in Sociology

Imani Johnson

Anthony J. Knowles

William Mitchell

Student Engagement and Leadership Award

Robert Cooter

Valerie King

Gregory Rodgers

Alumni News



Rahim Manji: Two UT Degrees Provided a Strong Foundation

Rahim Manji graduated with a Bachelor's of Arts in College Scholars (2006) from the University of Tennessee Honors Program and a Master's degree in sociology (2011), also from UT. He obtained both degrees under the guidance of mentor and long-time friend, Lois Presser. This past year he graduated from New York University School of Law, where he was a Dean's Scholarship recipient and an editor of the *Journal of International Law and Politics*. In fall 2015 Rahim joined the prominent New York law firm Davis Polk & Wardwell as a corporate associate. His future goal is to work in the field of international development, focusing on human rights and education.



Tayte Olma: Promise Realized

A native of Rockfall, Connecticut who came to UT to study sociology as an undergraduate, Tayte Olma stood out as intellectually curious and sharp, one of our stellar majors. After graduating in 2011 with the BA in Sociology and concentration in criminal justice, Tayte earned her Master's degree in criminal justice at the University of Cincinnati, concentrating in law enforcement and crime prevention. During that time she assisted Dr. Bonnie Fisher on projects related to criminal victimization. After earning the MS she worked on several projects at UC's Corrections Institute including a study for which she interviewed inmates and prison administrators in Ohio about prison-based educational programming. Tayte recently entered the third year of the Ph.D. program at the University of Cincinnati and is working as a course facilitator for the online Master's program. She has also started research with Dr. Ben Feldmeyer, formerly at the University of Tennessee, which will involve looking at the relationships among immigration, crime, and religiosity. Tayte also met her fiancé, Matthew Logan, at Cincinnati. Together they have moved to Redlands, CA where Dr. Logan has taken a tenure-track position at California State University in San Bernardino. Tayte will be working for UC and finishing her degree from afar, with a dissertation focused on immigration and crime. We wish her the best of luck in these endeavors.



Alex Wagner: Service at Sea

Alex Wagner left the rigors of his final exams at UT (BA 2014) for the rigors of the U.S. Coast Guard Boot Camp. He has been involved in disassembly and repair of more than 75 buoys up the coast from Charleston, NC to New York City, and ice breaking along the Hudson River when the area got hit hard by a series of ice storms. His short-term plan is to become a boatswain and Petty Officer. He notices sociological aspects of the security protocols governing the social relations between his and other crews of other boats and ships on the water. After the Coast Guard, he hopes to join a federal law enforcement agency such as the ATF, the U.S. Marshals, or Customs. In his spare time he works out and reads for pleasure.

Alex Wagner (BA 2014) pictured second from left on the Hudson River in New York.

Randy Wessel: Making a Difference

Randy Wessel came to UT Sociology as a graduate student in September 1976 and completed his MA in August of 1978. **He earned his Bachelor's degree at Marquette University, where he became skilled in computer technology and research methods.** On discovering **Randy's technical skills**, Sociology faculty Neal Shover and Stephen Norland hired him as a research assistant. Soon after Department Head Don Ploch hired Randy to serve as his assistant in teaching fellow graduate students how to interface with the computer in graduate level statistics courses.



While earning his MA Randy spent summers in his native Chicago and worked for the Institute for Juvenile Research (IJR) with the late fellow UT grad Anthony Meade. After three years of working summers at IJR, he was enlisted to help with a study of the transition children make from childhood into early adolescence within the context of a junior high school setting in the Chicago suburbs. Randy worked on both quantitative and qualitative sides of that project – assisting in the creation of the surveys of the cohort and the community, and riding with four police departments observing how adolescents were processed.

A move to Wisconsin reconnected Randy with computers, an area he has worked in ever since. He is currently an independent network consultant with an emphasis on small businesses. His sociological background informs volunteer work he has been **engaged in since April of 2011, for which he enters prisons with 'circle' programs emphasizing "emotional intelligence" as part of The Wisconsin Truth Project and The Jericho Circle Project.** "Inside" and "outside" men get an opportunity to learn how to communicate in ways they may not have learned in their families of origin. **Randy observes: "Men often share the mixed emotions of getting released from prison with not being able to connect with their Wednesday night 'brothers'."** Randy Wessel is a model of how our graduates make 'making a difference' an essential part of their lives.



Rising inequality—at its highest point since 1928—is one of the biggest social challenges facing the United States today. Disparities between those who fare well and those who do not depress market growth, threaten democracy, **render the US less competitive, and compromise America's collective intellectual capacity.** Research comparing societies with high levels of inequality (like the US) to those with low levels illustrates that countries with large disparities experience more physical and mental illness, violence, illegal drug use, crime, and teen childbirths. These societies also have lower average math and literacy scores, and social mobility is impaired. Disadvantaged minorities and the poor suffer from poorer quality health, shorter life expectancies, larger barriers to employment, and disproportionate exposure to hazards.

UT Sociology has plans in the works to tackle these problems head on. In Fall 2014, the Department of Sociology, with partners across the campus and across the nation, entered a multi-stage National Science Foundation (NSF) competition to build a Science and Technology Center (STC) to better scrutinize the conditions that produce and exacerbate inequality. The proposed Center for Advanced Study and Computational Analysis of Disparities and Equality (CASCADE) would provide an advanced computing platform to better interrogate the cornucopia of social science data currently available. Led by UT sociologist (Associate Professor) and principal investigator, Stephanie Bohon, CASCADE would create new computer technology and statistical methods to allow researchers to link geodatabase raster data of environmental conditions to human microdata, study multiple waves of income data in new ways, and develop faster methods of calculating healthy life expectancy, to name a few.

To compete in the STC competition, the Department of Sociology first had to submit a white paper to UT and beat out other UT departments such as Physics and Biology in order to compete for the University. Having received the nod in September, the UT team (which also includes faculty from Geography and the Joint Institute for Computational Sciences) crafted a 159-page pre-proposal to NSF. In February, the CASCADE team heard that their pre-proposal had been selected among the top 26 (of 259 entrants) to submit a full proposal to NSF. The 253-page full proposal was submitted to NSF on June 16, and Bohon will hear in September whether or not CASCADE is in the top 10 selected for a site visit. If funded, the \$24 million Center will open on June 1, 2016.

If CASCADE is ultimately selected as one of NSF's three new STCs, it will be led by UT Sociology. Other research partners in the project include Sociology Departments from Brown University, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of North Carolina; population centers at the University of Texas-San Antonio, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Washington; Economics Departments at the University of California-Berkeley, the University of Georgia, and Cornell University; and Statistics Departments at Stanford University and Penn State University.

Faculty Updates



From left to right: Victor Ray, Asafa Jalata, Michelle Brown, Hoan Bui, Robert Duran, Scott Frey, Lo Presser, Robert Jones, Stephanie Bohon, Harry Dahms, Jon Shefner, Sherry Cable, and Paul Gellert at the Highlander Center in New Market, TN, with Michelle Christian behind the camera!

Stephanie A. Bohon

Stephanie Bohon's work has gone in two directions this year. First, her work on immigration controversies in the United States and Europe culminated in the publication of a book, *Immigration and Population*, by Polity Press. The book is co-authored by UT Ph.D. (2013) Meghan Conley. Second, her work on inequality resulted in two multi-million dollar proposals to the National Science Foundation on which Bohon is the principal investigator. The first, "Space-Time Classification of US Neighborhood Dynamics: Methods and Algorithms for Big Data," would create a partnership between UT Sociology and the Minnesota Population Center to study racial and economic change across US neighborhoods from 1970-2010. A major contribution of this work would be to standardize neighborhood boundaries across time in order to facilitate the study of social change as it relates to time and place. The second is a proposal for an NSF Science and Technology Center to advance the social science study of inequality using supercomputers. Both proposals are under consideration at the time of this writing. Bohon also serves on the editorial boards of *Organizational Research Methods* and *Social Currents*, and in October she became the President of the Southern Demographic Association.

Michelle Brown

The past year Michelle Brown taught her first graduate seminar in Contemporary Sociological Theory, a rewarding experience for both teacher and students as she was honored with the **2015 UT Chancellor's Excellence in Teaching Award**. Under her leadership the Department's Undergraduate Committee continued to strengthen recruitment efforts, annual assessment strategies, and expand sponsorship of various undergraduate organizations including Oxfam, the Student Peace Alliance, and the Sociology Student Committee. At the community level, Brown has developed vibrant connections with the Rethinking Prisons/Revising Justice Initiative at Vanderbilt University, Tennesseans for Alternatives to the Death Penalty, and national and regional decarceration and anti-violence organizations and coalitions. She continues in her role as co-editor of the Sage publication *Crime Media Culture*, criminology's leading media journal. She is also working hard on co-editing *The Routledge International Handbook of Visual Criminology* (co-edited with British colleague Eamonn Carrabine), the first visual criminology reader which assembles over 40 leading and emergent international scholars in the field. She has also assumed the US editorship of the Visual Criminology book series with Palgrave MacMillan. Finally, her research efforts were recognized with the best article prize in 2015 for the prestigious journal *Theoretical Criminology*.

Hoan N. Bui

Hoan Bui's research interests include immigration and crime as well as women's reentry. Her work in the area of immigration and crime focuses on understanding how the social context of immigration influences women's experiences of and reactions to domestic abuse, and how immigration adaptation affects delinquency among different racial and ethnic groups. Currently she is investigating the effects of immigration adaptation on alcohol consumption among youth from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, with an emphasis on the role of socioeconomic context. Her work in the area of women's reentry seeks to improve understanding of social, economic and familial consequences of incarceration experienced by female ex-offenders as well as barriers to social integration facing this segment of the population. The question of how gender shapes reentry experiences is also the focus of a current book project. Bui's paper on domestic violence in Zimbabwe, which she co-authored with UT doctoral student Ahmet Fidan, has recently been accepted for publication by the journal *Violence Against Women*. Bui also contributed a chapter on how social and familial contexts of immigration adaptation influence delinquency to the edited book *Transitions: The Development of Children of Immigrants*, published by the New York University Press (2015).

Sherry Cable

Sherry Cable is studying hydraulic fracturing, known as fracking, in the Upper Ohio River Valley of the United States, with a focus on the leasing of public rather than private lands, and on both regulation of and resistance to fracking. Cable presented her preliminary findings on lack of mobilization against fracking in the Valley at the American Sociological Association's annual meetings in August 2015. Under Cable's guidance UT doctoral student Kayla Stover is developing her dissertation project on the strategic uses of science in policies that regulate energy mineral extraction. Cable and Stover have also co-authored a chapter, tentatively titled "Motherhood, Stigma, and Empowerment: Women's Environmental Activism in the 20th Century," for the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of US Women's Social Movement Activism* (2016). Sherry Cable serves as a member of UT's Quality Enhancement Plan Team and Chair of the QEP's Research Team. The QEP team is charged with developing a plan that meets requirements for SACS Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement for the University to achieve re-accreditation. The plan, which emphasizes experiential education, has secured SACS approval and is in its implementation phase.

Michelle Christian

In Michelle Christian's second year as an Assistant Professor she completed older research projects, launched new ones, taught her first graduate seminar on Field Methods, and engaged in social justice projects. Three articles from the collaborative research program, Capturing the Gains, are in various stages of publication. One article on race, gender, and tourism in Kenya is forthcoming in *Global Networks* and two others on labor in Africa and private global governance are under review. An article on racial neoliberalism is forthcoming in *Current Perspectives in Social Theory*. In August 2014 she collected data on domestic work in Uganda and recently began a new collaborative research project on labor, race, gender, and the stigma of criminal records in East Knoxville. In her undergraduate course Globalization and Justice she employed innovative teaching tools around global justice campaigns and worked with the VolShop to bring Alta Gracia (the only living wage garment factory) back to UT as an athletic apparel supplier, and continues to work with the VolShop and UT administration to achieve more ethical supply chains on the products UT sources from abroad. Lastly, with colleagues across UT she formed UT's first faculty Critical Race Collective that supports critical race studies.

Harry F. Dahms

In May 2014, Harry F. Dahms co-organized with Jon Shefner the annual conference of the International Social Theory Consortium (ISTC), which doubled as inauguration of the interdisciplinary graduate social theory certificate and the Committee on Social Theory at UT. Soon thereafter, both began preparing volumes to be published in the series, *Current Perspectives in Social Theory*, which Dahms has been editing since 2008. Both volumes are based on papers presented at the conference and will appear in fall 2015, one edited by Shefner, the other by Dahms. With the support of Eric Royal Lybeck, a current PhD student at Cambridge University in the UK who received his Master's degree at UT, Dahms also organized the 2015 annual conference the ISTC in Cambridge, which took place in June 2015, with the theme "Reconstructing Social Theory, History, and Practice." Dahms gave the opening keynote address, and in addition to Eric Lybeck, Alex Stoner (PhD, Sociology, UT, 2013) and three current UT Sociology Ph.D. students working in theory, presented papers as well. Dahms also gave a keynote address at the 4th Symposium for New Directions in Critical Theory at Iowa State University in Ames, in May 2015.



Dr. Robert Durán and his wife Charlene Shroulote-Duran

Robert J. Durán

During the past year, Robert Durán has been putting finishing touches on several articles focusing on officer involved shootings in Denver, Colorado. An article was accepted with *Du Bois Review* and two others are under review. In summer 2015 he undertook exploratory research on the topic of officer involved shootings in several cities in the South. Three book chapters that he authored on policing have been published. Durán received an Honorable Mention from the 2014 Association for Humanist Sociology Book Award for his book *Gang Life in Two Cities* (Columbia University Press, 2013). He submitted two additional articles to journals regarding policing along the US-Mexico border and geographically comparative ethnographic methods. He has also contracted to participate as expert gang witness in several forthcoming criminal cases in Knoxville. These days he is preparing no fewer than three book contracts.

R. Scott Frey

Scott Frey's recent work focuses on the human causes, adverse consequences and their distribution, and human responses to environmental problems in several different geographic settings: the Ogallala Aquifer Region of the U.S. Great Plains (water depletion and consequences for the region), coastal Bangladesh and India (ship breaking and attendant health, safety, and environmental risks), and Vietnam (the environmental and health legacy of Agent Orange, the causes and adverse environmental and socioeconomic consequences of agricultural pesticide use, illegal wildlife trafficking, and rice farmer responses to climate change). He recently published on these issues in the *Journal of World-Systems Research* and the *Journal of Political Ecology*. He is currently writing a book (for Routledge) examining how and why core-based hazardous products, production processes, and wastes are displaced to the peripheral regions of the world-system. His research clearly takes him around the world: in the past year he presented a paper on animal trafficking in Vietnam at a conference in Vientiane, Lao PDR, conducted research on Agent Orange, climate change, and pesticide use in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam, and worked on renewing a Memo of Understanding between UT and Royal University in Phnom Penh, Cambodia that will facilitate future collaborative research.

Paul K. Gellert

This spring Paul Gellert completed four years as Director of Graduate Studies during which time the graduate curriculum was completely reviewed and revised, with a new course on pedagogy for teaching assistants and the requirement that doctoral students complete two areas of specialization. He oversaw implementation of a new model of recruiting graduate students annually, including a two-day recruitment event with outside keynote speakers. Excellent cohorts of graduate students continue to be recruited and to receive Graduate School fellowships. Now Gellert is ramping up the intensity of his research on the political economy of resources with a comparative project on coal in Indonesia and Appalachia in the third/final year of support from the UT Chancellor's Jefferson Prize. He published an article in the *Journal of Contemporary Asia* on neoliberalism and education in Indonesia, and (with Indonesian colleague Andiko) an article in *The Journal of Asian Studies* on the rule of law and forestry. A forthcoming article on oil palm plantations and accumulation by dispossession will appear in a volume of *Current Perspectives in Social Theory* edited by Jon Shefner. With Scott Frey, Gellert is organizing a conference on ecologically unequal exchange to be held at UT in fall 2015.



Asafa Jalata with his wife, Zeituna Khalil, in Botswana

Asafa Jalata

During the 2014-2015 academic year Asafa Jalata was a Fulbright scholar teaching and conducting research in Botswana. He taught two courses at University of Botswana, Gaborone: Sociology of Development (undergraduate) and Globalization, Culture and Development (graduate). He also collected data from secondary and primary sources including newspapers and government documents and conducted intensive interviews for a comparative book tentatively entitled *Cultural Capital and Democracy in Botswana, Oromia and Ethiopia*. Several scholarly articles based on this research are on the way. In the same academic year he published or co-edited the following books: *Phases of Terrorism in the Age of Globalization: From Christopher Columbus to Osama bin Laden* (in press, Palgrave), *The Macha-Tulama Association: Its Importance in Oromo History* (with Mohammed Hassen) and *Social Justice and the University: Globalization, Human Rights and the Future of Democracy* (with Jon Shefner, Bobby Jones, and Harry Dahms). Other recent publications on the global political economy themes that Jalata has developed throughout his career – African underdevelopment, colonial capitalism, state terrorism, racism, and liberation movements – have appeared in *The Journal of Oromo Studies*, *the International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, *the Journal of Oromo Studies* and *The Journal of Pan-African Studies*.

A Fulbright grant took Dr. Asafa Jalata to Botswana during the 2014-2015 academic year. There he taught Sociology Development courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels at the University of Botswana, Gaborone. He also conducted research on the evolution of democracy in Botswana and Ethiopia. That work hones Jalata's expertise on the political economy of Africa in the world system.

Robert Emmet Jones

Robert (Bobby) Jones' current research and publications examine issues pertaining to sustainability, renewable food systems, community resilience, urban forestry and social and environmental justice. He has worked with others to develop research studies and grants to identify the barriers and bridges to relocalizing food systems and growing green economies in East Tennessee and Southern Appalachia. Recently along with new UT Ph.D. Tobin Walton, Jones submitted two articles to leading journals in the area of environmental sociology, on a new scale to measure ecological identity. They have also presented several papers on this scale at national conferences. In addition, Jones continues his work on the development of a new sustainable major at the University of Tennessee.

Lois Presser

Lois (Lo) Presser has recently turned her attention to two major research projects, both in the area of the narrative criminology perspective she pioneered. On how stories influence the harm that we do, she has a new book in the works, tentatively titled ***Narrative Immersion in Mass Violence and Everyday Injury*** (to be published by the University of California Press). This book will use empirical examples of terrorism, counterterrorism, and playful torture of animals to clarify the way stories inspire, excite or, alternatively, pacify us. On the role that stories play in ***opposing*** harm, she is exploring the logics of ethical veganism alongside current Sociology Ph.D. student Christine Vossler and former Ph.D. student Jennifer L. Schally, now at Penn State University, Harrisburg. Presser received a grant from the Culture & Animals Foundation to support that research. Her 2013 book ***Why We Harm*** (Rutgers University Press) was recently honored as a ***Choice*** Outstanding Academic Title of the American Library Association. As Associate Head of the Department Presser is especially active in projects related to Department development and physical space.

Victor Ray

During the past year Victor Ray had several articles published or accepted for publication. A forthcoming article in the ***ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*** with his colleague Carson Byrd (University of Louisville) examines the ultimate **attribution error in the age of genetics to show how racial concerns influence whites' understandings of genetics**. With Eduardo Bonilla-Silva and Louise Seamster (both of Duke University), he published a book chapter examining the connections between white privilege and imperialism under President Obama. His paper on race in the military is forthcoming in an edited volume on critical diversity. He also began a research project on discrimination in the sharing economy (with Louise Seamster and Matthew Hughey) that was funded by an American Sociological Association/National Science Foundation Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline Grant. Victor was featured in several media venues including the Sirius XM National Radio Show ***The Briefing***, the Knoxville TV station ***WBIR***, and the ***Nashville Ledger***. In April 2015 Ray published a letter to the editor of the ***New York Times*** related to his research on discrimination in the military.

Jon Shefner

Jon Shefner continues to work on two main projects. The Greek and Eurozone crises demonstrate how important and current the issue of austerity is, and Jon is working on that topic as his next book. Related to that project, Jon will be giving public lectures on global austerity **and alternatives in his role as the Southern Sociology Society's Distinguished Lecturer, an award given him in 2015**. Shefner is also working on the Green Economy Project, which is a public sociology effort to build the regional green economy as a way to address environmental degradation while creating more jobs with secure career ladders and good wages. Shefner hopes to return to Latin America in his second term as Department Head. His time will be more open as he becomes an empty nester, with daughter Sophia graduating from UT and son Isaac entering UT as a freshman.