

## Letter from the Chair: Kenneth (Andy) Andrews



We are excited to share the latest news from UNC Sociology. The past year has included many major accomplishments by our faculty and students including significant career milestones. Kathie Harris was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, an extraordinary accomplishment. Yang (Claire) Yang won the Population Association of America's Early Career Award. Our former chair, Howard Aldrich, received an honorary degree from Mid Sweden University.

Our graduate students won numerous awards, fellowships and published their cutting-edge research in leading journals. Moira Johnson won a National

Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship to study the ways that psychosocial resources buffer the impact of disadvantage on health outcomes. Kari Kozlowski and Charles Seguin won NSF Dissertation Grants. Ali Kadivar, who won the Odum Award last spring, published "Alliances and Perception Profiles in the Iranian Reform Movement, 1997 to 2005" in the *American Sociological Review* last year. Tiantian Yang published "Who's the Boss? Explaining Gender Inequality in Entrepreneurial Teams" with Howard Aldrich in the same journal last spring. Allison Matthews and Autumn McClellan were co-winners of the Department's Everett Wilson Award that recognizes excellence in teaching.

We also marked important career transitions. Howard Aldrich stepped down after 11 years as Department Chair, and Kenneth (Andy) Andrews stepped in to this new role. Andrew Perrin and Karolyn Tyson were both appointed to full professor as of July 2014. Phil Morgan, who directs the Carolina Population Center, was appointed the Alan Feduccia Professor of Sociology. We celebrated Peter Uhlenberg's retirement and his long and distinguished career last spring, and we welcomed Mosi Ifatunji as a new Assistant Professor of Sociology this fall. We also welcome a strong cohort of sixteen new graduate students.

## Spring 2015

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THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

## Kathie Harris Elected to the National Academy of Sciences



**Kathleen Mullan Harris**, James E. Haar Distinguished Professor of Sociology, was elected as one of 84 new members to the National Academy of Sciences, one of the highest honors that a U.S. scientist or engineer can receive.

“The contributions that Dr. Harris has made during her career go far beyond UNC and the scientific community alone,” said Chancellor Carol L. Folt. “Her work is making a profound difference in understanding the impact of environment and genes in the life course of teenagers, and bringing about social change. I am pleased to see her outstanding accomplishments recognized by membership in the National Academy of Sciences.” Kathie is one of 84 new members and 21 foreign associates from 15 countries elected into the academy. UNC now has 13 faculty members currently in the NAS, a private organization of scientists and engineers dedicated to advancing science and

technology and their use for the public good. The academy was established by Congress in 1863 as an official adviser to the federal government, upon request, in any matter of science or technology. Candidates for membership can only be formally nominated by academy members.

Kathie Harris is the director and principal investigator of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). The longitudinal study follows more than 20,000 teenagers into young adulthood. With Add Health data, Harris is studying health disparities, the acculturation of immigrant youth, and the family formation behavior of young adults, including non-marital childbearing, cohabitation and marriage.

Under Harris’ pioneering leadership, the next wave of Add Health is expanding its biological data collection to bridge biological and social sciences in the study of developmental and health trajectories from adolescence into young adulthood. Harris is leading the Add Health project team with cardiologists, geneticists, sociologists, epidemiologists, nutritionists, economists and research methodologists.

Harris’ work and her wide-ranging experience in running large data collection projects have

made her an internationally recognized expert on social inequality and health, and a pioneer in bridging social and biomedical sciences to advance knowledge on the development of health trajectories across the life course. She is currently conducting whole genome genotyping on over 12,000 archived DNA samples of Add Health respondents that will be merged with the extensive longitudinal environmental, behavioral and biological data for a genome wide association study. She has published almost 100 books, articles, chapters and reports in multiple social, biomedical genetic and public health science journals and books.

In 2004, Harris was awarded the Clifford C. Clogg Award for Early Career Achievement from the Population Association of America. She was elected vice president of the Population Association of America in 2005 and went on to become its president in 2008. In 2013, Harris was also awarded the Warren E. Miller Award for Meritorious Service to the Social Sciences, a biennial award from the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research to recognize individual who have had a profound impact on infrastructure and social science research.

## Claire Yang wins the Population Association of America's Early Achievement Award



Claire Yang won the 2014 Population Association of America Early Achievement Award. The award recognizes the career of a promising scholar who is a member of PAA and who received the Ph.D. in the previous ten years. The Award is given biennially to scholars who have made distinguished contributions to population research during the first ten years of their career. Such contributions may be original research published as articles or books, significant newly collected data, or a public policy achievement that broadens the impact of demography. The Award consists of a cash prize and a certificate and was presented this year at the PAA Annual Meeting in Boston.

Yang's nomination was supported

by eminent demographers and social scientists. One leading scholar noted that, "Yang has published more ground-breaking papers in her early career than most scholars do over their entire career. The breadth of her research accomplishments is staggering, as is the quality and quantity of her publications." Another senior scholar praises Yang as "a high achiever" who "will be a future population science leader in the social and biological linkages in health and aging across the life course."

Professor Yang joined UNC's Department of Sociology in 2010 and has engaged in an innovative, acclaimed program of scholarship in population studies, medical sociology, social stratification, and statistical methods. She brings an unusual combination of superb methodological and analytic skills and insight into her research on key social and demographic processes.

Prof. Yang received her PhD from Duke University in 2005. In that same year, she was hired as an assistant professor at the University of Chicago. In 2009, an opportunity for a new tenured position in Sociology arose at Carolina as part of an initiative with the University Cancer Research Fund and the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center. She left Chicago and

joined UNC on July 1, 2010. She was hired with the intent of building interdisciplinary bridges between the social sciences and health affairs in the broad area of cancer research.

Yang's main research interests crosscut demography, medical sociology, cancer, and quantitative methodology. Her overarching goal is to construct an integrative social and bio-demographic approach to better understand and find solutions to problems arising from reciprocal interactions between individuals' social and physical worlds. Building upon her methodological breakthroughs, Yang's recent and current substantive research focuses on trends and patterns of social inequalities in health and aging and the underlying bio-behavioral mechanisms. This active research agenda has produced numerous publications in prestigious peer-reviewed journals, books, external funding from the National Institutes of Health ranging from two to five years, and invited talks across countries.

Her professional colleagues have recognized her accomplishments by electing her to a number of important posts, including the American Sociological Association's Methodology Section Council, as well as the Population Association of America Board of Directors.

## Selected Faculty Awards & Honors

**Howard Aldrich** was awarded an honorary degree from Mid Sweden University during October, 2014.



**Jackie Hagan** was elected Chair of International Migration Section of ASA for the 2015-16 term. Her book, *Skills of the "Unskilled: Work and Mobility Among Mexican Immigrants*, will be published over the upcoming year by University of California Press.



**Christopher Bail** won the "Best Published Article Award" from the "Communication and Information Technologies Section". Bail also won a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to study the cultural messaging of health advocacy organizations.



**S. Philip Morgan** was awarded an endowed professorship as the Alan Feduccia Professor of Sociology. He continues to serve as Director of the Carolina Population Center.



## New Faculty Projects

### **Karolyn Tyson - “Educational Inequality in the Age of Obama”**

Karolyn Tyson was recently awarded a major grant from the Spencer Foundation for her study - “Educational Inequality in the Age of Obama”. Tyson is examining the relative silence among black Americans surrounding curriculum tracking that leads to racial segregation within schools. For years tracking has produced segregated classrooms: blacks disproportionately in low-track, remedial, and special education classes and whites overrepresented in high-track classes. Despite being ubiquitous in public schools throughout the country, we hear little from black communities about how they perceive and understand this reality, which some call racialized tracking. Through an in-depth qualitative study, Tyson will shed light on several important questions including: How does a group formerly subjected to an overt system of legalized oppression and segregation perceive and respond to an institutional practice that (re)produces segregation and disproportionately disadvantages them years after the formal barriers have been removed? In a country that ostensibly aspires to be post-racial and in which color-blind ideology is becoming increasingly mainstream, how do blacks make sense of racialized tracking? What are the conditions under which blacks view tracking as a “racial problem” or discrimination? What factors work to limit or control blacks’ resistance to tracking as discriminatory? Tyson will spend the 2014-5 year conducting a community-based ethnographic study in one small, wealthy, suburban school district where racialized tracking is pronounced. She uses participant observation, in-depth interviewing, and focus groups to investigate how race structures formal and informal life in the area and how those arrangements inform the meanings people attribute to institutional policies and racialized patterns.

### **Chris Bail -“Civil Society Organizations, Social Media, and Public Attention”**

Chris Bail was awarded a major grant from the National Science Foundation for his study - “Civil Society Organizations, Social Media, and Public Attention”. This project aims to explain how non-profit organizations, advocacy groups, social movement organizations and other civil society organizations attract public attention via social media—one of the most rapidly growing modes of communication today. Though hundreds of thousands of civil society organizations produce social media messages each day, only a small fraction of these “go viral”—or reach broad segments of social media users beyond their core audience. To explain this process, Bail develops a novel theory that combines insights from cultural sociology, social psychology, and social network theory. It also develops an innovative app-based technology in order to examine this theory. Civil society organizations are recruited to use this new technology to monitor visit traffic to their Facebook pages. The app mines this information into an aggregate database that enables civil society organizations to learn from the successes and failures of their peers. In return for this service, the civil society organizations agree to share their data in order to produce what will be the largest study of how organizations reach new audiences via social media to date. This new methodology thus enables, safe, efficient transmission of very large amounts of high quality social science data and provides a cost effective, scalable mechanism to address declining survey response rates that also provides a public good.

## American Sociological Association Paper Award Winners



**Jonathan Horowitz** won awards for two different papers at the 2014 American Sociological Association meetings.

"Doing Less with More: Cohorts, Education, and Civic Participation in America" won the Graduate Student Paper Award from the Section on Aging and the Life Course.

Abstract: Scholars often claim that civic participation in the United States is 1) declining in more recent cohorts, and 2) that education is a constant intra-cohort predictor of volunteering. I test both claims using age-period-cohort models. The analysis suggests two major findings: First, the early Baby Boomers represent the highest level of civic participation, with a decline afterwards. Second, the relationship between education and civic participation has declined as college degree attainment increases over cohorts. Taken together, these findings suggest that a college degree's importance for civic participation is devalued by higher rates of university attendance, challenging commonly held assumptions about the effect of higher education on civic participation.

Jonathan's paper "Oh, the Places I'll Go! Possible Selves, Persistence Narratives, and Activist Identity" won the Mayer N. Zald Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship (Graduate Student Paper) Award.

Abstract: What are the experiences that make some activist identities stronger than others? The present study uses primary questionnaire and interview data to investigate how sex, race/ethnicity, and organizational affiliation structure activist identity in a sample of college student activists across diverse institutions and issue areas. I first use multi-level models to analyze the quantitative variation in the importance of activism to a participant's possible self; I then analyze how activists represent their identities in qualitative narratives about persistence. The present findings suggest that collective memory and ideology shape distinct identity "profiles"; help to clarify the relationships between individual activist identities, collective identity, and group membership; and suggest a new possible direction for the study of activist persistence.

## National Science Foundation Fellowships and Grants



**Moira Johnson** won a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship for her project titled “A Helping Hand? The Impact of Mastery on Health Trajectories for Low-SES Adolescents”. The fellowship provides generous support for three years of intensive research. Johnson’s proposal highlights the need to further explore psychosocial resources that may provide a protective health effect for people from a low-SES background. In particular, the project will examine the biological mechanisms underpinning the buffering effect of an internal sense of control (mastery). Research questions to be addressed include: When do opportunities to gain mastery occur over the life course? Once individuals cultivate a sense of mastery, how does it impact health in high-stress settings? Analyses will center on a longitudinal life-course approach with contextual neighborhood, family, and individual-level data. Results will have implications for future interventions to improve health trajectories in at-risk populations.

## National Science Foundation Grants



**Kari Kozlowski** won a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant to support her research.

**Abstract:** The purpose of this dissertation is to discover how students learn how to “do” school effectively. In other words, what behaviors, habits, and strategies do students learn and employ in the classroom to achieve academic success? Prior research suggests that these learning behaviors are not only important for student achievement, but might also help explain racial achievement gaps. Why and how schooling behaviors could be patterned by race remain unanswered, though prior work suggests that this phenomenon may be explained by student-teacher cultural capital differences and/or teacher bias against or toward particular students. Through classroom observations in four first grade classrooms (approximately 80 students),

as well as interviews with a subsample of students, parents, and teachers of varying race and socioeconomic backgrounds, this dissertation examines if, how, and why students’ schooling behaviors are racialized. Specifically, it examines 1) what kinds of schooling strategies are necessary for success 2) how students and teachers view those strategies similarly or differently 3) how students develop their sense of what it takes to be successful 4) how students make sense of their interactions with their teachers and the messages teachers communicate to them, and 5) how teachers interact with, assess, and evaluate students on the basis of their skills. Results from this research will contribute to our understanding of the roles of cultural capital and teacher bias in minority student education.



**Charles Seguin** won a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant to support his research.

**Abstract:** This proposal investigates how the national news media talked about lynching in the US between 1880 and 1950. Preliminary results and prior historical work suggest that lynching was originally discussed by the media as a natural response to the crimes supposedly committed by lynching victims. Over time, however, the media came to discuss lynching as a barbaric and uncivilized practice. This research asks why such a shift in media discourse took place, and what the consequences of this change in media discourse were. Specifically, we investigate whether the NAACP’s anti-lynching campaign helped change media discourse. We also investigate whether media criticism of lynching in specific communities reduced the chances that a lynching would happen

in those communities again. While the lynching era has long since passed, this proposal will tap into questions of the relationship between racial violence and media discourse that remain relevant.

## RECENT PHD STUDENTS

**Colin Campbell** is currently a National Poverty Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Wisconsin's Institute for Research on Poverty. He is in residence in the Assistant Secretary of Planning and Evaluation in the US Department of Health and Human Service, where he conducts poverty-related research. His dissertation - “Three Studies on the Determinants and Consequences of Poverty” - committee was chaired by Arne Kalleberg.

**J Micah Roos** is a postdoctoral fellow in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Berkeley. The fellowship is funded through the Institute for Educational Sciences (in the U.S. Department of Education) and the program mission is to offer advanced statistical and methodological training for the next generation of education researchers in the social sciences. His dissertation ‘ “Knowledge, Science, and Religion in the United States: An analysis of factors that contribute to acceptance and rejection of contested knowledge at the intersection of science and religion” - was co-chaired by Ken Bollen and Andy Perrin.

**Tiantian Yang** is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Duke University. Her dissertation – “How do organizations shape entrepreneurship? Explaining employee entrepreneurs' entry and performance” – was chaired by Howard Aldrich.

# Incoming Graduate Cohort

## Akram Al-Turk

Millsaps College –BS Chemistry  
 UT – Austin – MA Global Policy Studies  
 Interests: Organizations, Social Movements/  
 Collective Action, Political Sociology/Sociology  
 of the State; Comparative/Historical

## Katrina Branecky

Vanderbilt University BA – Neuroscience  
 Interests: Health and Illness/Medical Sociology

## David Braudt

Brigham Young University – BA Economics,  
 MS Sociology  
 Interests: Advanced Quantitative Methods; Strat-  
 ification; Migration/Residential Mobility and Pop-  
 ulation Distribution; Organizations; Social Move-  
 ments/Collective Action

## Joseph Crane

University of North Texas – BA Sociology  
 Interests: Political Sociology/Sociology of the  
 State; Culture; Social Psychology/Micro/  
 Emotions; Race and Ethnicity; Comparative/  
 Historical

## Nathan Dollar

Western Carolina University BA Sociology &  
 Spanish  
 Colorado State Univ Ft Collins MA Sociology  
 Interests: Migration/Residential Mobility and  
 Population Distribution; Race and Ethnicity;  
 Stratification; Social Movements/Collective Ac-  
 tion; Work/Occupations and Labor Market

## Samuel Fishman

Hope College – BA Sociology and History  
 Interests: Fertility/Mortality and Population  
 Growth; Stratification; Religion; Family; Life  
 Course and Aging

## Alanna Gillis

Furman University BA Sociology  
 Interests: Migration; Family

## George Hayward

Pennsylvania State University BA - Sociology,  
 Communication Arts  
 Interests: Religion; Culture; Family; Race & Eth-  
 nicity; Fertility/Mortality and Population Growth

## Stella Min

University Colorado Denver – BA Sociology and  
 Economics  
 Interests: Fertility/Mortality and Population  
 Growth; Family; Stratification; Health and Illness/  
 Medical Sociology; Life Course and Aging

## Max Reason

Univ Nebraska Lincoln – BA Sociology/German  
 Interests: Health and Illness/Medical Sociology;  
 Society and Genetics; Life Course and Aging;  
 Stratification; Migration/Residential Mobility and  
 Population

## Renee Ryberg

Johns Hopkins University Baccalaureate –  
 BA Psychology, Sociology  
 Interests: Life Course and Aging; Social Move-  
 ments/Collective Action; Advanced Quantitative  
 Methods; Social Psychology/Micro/Emotions;  
 Stratification

## Anna Rybinska

Szkota Glowna Handlowa – BA Statistics,  
 Economics  
 MA Statistical Analysis and Data Mining  
 Interests: Family; Fertility/Mortality and Popula-  
 tion Growth; Life Course and Aging; Advanced  
 Quantitative Methods

## Brionca Taylor

University of Florida – BA Sociology  
 Interests: Race and Ethnicity; Stratification;  
 Comparative/Historical; Social Movements/  
 Collective Action

## Janelle Viera

Swarthmore College – BA Sociology/  
 Anthropology  
 Interests: Race and Ethnicity; Stratification;  
 Migration/Residential Mobility and Population;  
 Culture

## Caiping Wei

Huazhong Univ Of Sci & Technol – BE Electron-  
 ics and Information  
 Interests: Society and Genetics; Advanced  
 Quantitative Methods

## Undergraduate Awards & Honors

In 2013-2014 academic year, three sociology majors completed the senior honors thesis. All three students also presented posters at the 2014 Eastern Sociological Society meetings in Baltimore, MD.

### **Amanda Baldiga**

Thesis Advisor:  
Professor Anne Hastings  
“I do something different  
and extraordinary”: U.S.  
Abortion Providers and  
Positive Identity Work”

### **Miriam Celnarová**

Thesis Advisor:  
Professor Lisa Pearce  
“Zambian Breadwinners  
Leave for the City: Rural-  
urban Migration and the  
Zambian Family”

### **Zachary Stamper**

Thesis Advisor:  
Professor  
Kenneth Andrews  
“Unfriended: The Role of  
Computer-Mediated Com-  
munication in Maintaining  
Long-distance Friend-  
ships”

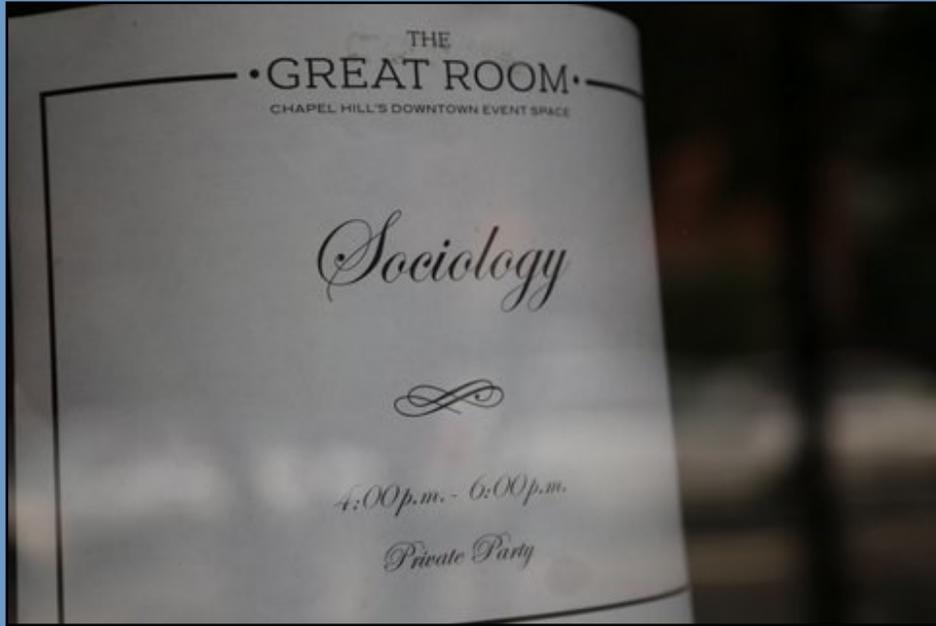
## The 2014 Howard Odum Undergraduate Award was awarded to Amanda Baldiga.

In Spring 2014, we inducted seven sociology majors into the Alpha Kappa Delta International Honor Society:

Amanda Baldiga  
Jessica Cabrera  
Miriam Celnarová  
Jennifer Denning  
Rae Francis  
Jillian Froelick  
Allen “Mike” Jones  
Anya Kylie  
Airianne Posey

The induction ceremony was held at City Kitchen in Chapel Hill, N.C.

## Department Celebrates Howard Aldrich's Eleven Years as Department Chair



The Sociology Department celebrated Howard Aldrich's eleven years as Department Chair in September with a reception at Top of the Hill. The event had a wonderful turnout of current and former faculty, graduate students, and colleagues from around the University. Glen Elder, Lisa Pearce, Arne Kalleberg, Andy Andrews, and Jonathan Hartlyn offered reflections on Howard's exemplary leadership. Glen Elder praised Howard's efforts to promote teaching and his development initiatives that have given the Department a stronger financial foundation for the future. Lisa described Howard as the ultimate "super-fan" for UNC and Sociology. Arne Kalleberg provided an exhaustive list of "do's" and "don'ts" for interacting with Howard. Andy Andrews argued that Howard's term was remarkable, not only for his accomplishments as Chair, but also maintaining a tremendous teaching and research program that included over 50 publications and 150 talks around the world. Jonathan Hartlyn, the Senior Associate Dean for Social Sciences, reflected on Howard's tireless efforts to promote Sociology over the past eleven years.





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If you have questions about giving to Sociology or would like additional information, contact Ronda Manuel, Associate Director of Development, Arts and Sciences Foundation, at [ronda.manuel@unc.edu](mailto:ronda.manuel@unc.edu) or (919) 962-7266.

# Alumni Updates

UNCurrents would like to know what our alumni are up to. Please fill out the form below to let us know about your current position, exciting award, or any other news worth sharing. We will publish this information in the next issue of UNCurrents.

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**Web:** <http://sociology.unc.edu/>



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News or Events You Would Like to Share \_\_\_\_\_

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