

Hello All, and Happy Spring Thaw.

Here in B'more there's still a chill in the air, but we're at least making progress. It was a brutally cold winter, and the older I get, the more I seem to feel it. But as the saying goes, it's better than the alternative!

Kathy and I are just back from a week on the road – a couple of days at Memphis and then in New Orleans for the Southern Sociological Society meeting. I've reached the privileged stage of being able to pick and choose, and I must say that this time I chose wisely. There will be more on that shortly, but I want to launch this edition with something really big shout-out, one long overdue:

Henry Perry (1977) was recognized with the Ronald McDonald House Charities Award for Medical Excellence in November 2013 for his work with Curamericas Global (<http://www.curamericas.org/>), which he founded. The award comes with a gift of \$100,000 (like I said, a really big deal!), which Henry donated to Curamericas Global. Some of you may recall the entertainment I get in playing with Henry – e.g., that he must be the most threadbare PhD-MD-MPH in the history of modern medicine – but what Henry really is is a saint. And Mirlene too, his wife, for putting up with all of Henry's do-gooder passions. Here is a link to Henry's brief acceptance speech: <http://www.curamericas.org/news/31>. Pushing my lame humor to the side, let me confess that I am awed at Henry's commitment to helping create a better world. We are proud of you Henry, all of us!

Now, back to Memphis and NOLA. This Southern swing began in Memphis at the invitation of Wanda Rushing to join her undergrad seminar in a discussion of *The Long Shadow*. Wanda is on the Memphis faculty (and incoming President of SWS) and I was delighted to join her and her class. Kathy and I also were delighted to spend a couple days with Wanda and her hubbie Marty Levin, Department Chair at Memphis and one of our very first PhDs (1967). They are great hosts and we discovered there's more to Memphis than Beale street and close proximity to Graceland. The Civil Rights Museum was simply amazing. It is built around the Lorraine Hotel where MLK was assassinated and is a treasure trove of information about the often bloody civil rights struggle. Kathy and I were reminded of the many heroes of that revolution, mostly young and mostly anonymous. The experience was extraordinarily moving.

From Memphis it was off to New Orleans for a bit of business, good eating, plus good company and lots of fond memories. The business was an Author-Meets-Critics session, with four very generous critics. Karolyn Tyson and Angel Harris were kind enough to contribute, along with two of my Hopkins buds: George Wilson (1995) and Rick Rubinson (aka Ricky Rubinson). After, Kathy and I had lunch with George (who shared the blockbuster news that his marriage is imminent!) and dinner with Rick. Rick was a junior member of the faculty back in the day and we shared some good memories. My only regret is that Debbie Holtzman, Rick's wife and one of our PhDs (1985) wasn't able to attend. That will happen in Chicago.

Catching up with George and Rick alone would have made the trip a memorable one; add in Adia Harvey (coffee), Larry Griffin (lunch) and Stephanie Slaters (coffee), and it was over the top. With Larry (1976) it was two retirees commiserating over all the aches and pains – that plus some truly wonderful reminiscences. Larry was one of my first students, and we continued to collaborate for a number of years after, doing pretty conventional status attainment research. But he quickly outgrew that, moving into Southern social history and issues of large social change. He was what today we would call a "mature student," I believe just a year younger than I, and our thinking about when to step down is well aligned: we both wanted the time to do other things while healthy enough to take them on. Larry retired from Georgia Southern; before then, he had been on the faculty at Indiana, Vanderbilt and UNC-CH.

My meet-up with Adia (2004) was, to some extent, to assuage my guilt – I wasn't able to attend her seminar when she visited the department last year and before then I had to miss a book signing party that her parents were hosting (can't recall which of Adia's many books it was, but it had to be a good one, as they all are!). To ease my conscience wasn't really what motivated our getting together, but it did help some. Rather, I was really eager to hear about her upcoming move to the University of Washington at St. Louis. Yes, that University of Washington, the one that eliminated Sociology as I recall around 20 years ago. It was a bad move at the time, and now it is being fixed. Adia will be joined by two other senior hires and together the three of them will guide the department's expansion, eventually to include a PhD program. What a wonderful opportunity and what wonderful recognition for Adia, and richly deserved I might add: her most recent book, *No More Invisible Man: Race and Gender in Men's Work*, has been awarded the Richard A. Lester Prize from Princeton University for its outstanding contribution to Labor Economics and Industrial Relations and the Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship award from the Race, Gender, and Class Section of the American Sociological Association. Wow!

There's no parentheses next to Stephanie Slaters' name, as Stephanie withdrew from the PhD program and resigned her IES Traineeship to return home to New Orleans and take on what only can be described as her "dream job." Stephanie is Managing Director of Human Capital Investments at New School for New Orleans. It won't surprise that hurricane Katrina essentially wiped out the New Orleans public school system. NSNO is committed to its reconstruction, and strengthening, and Stephanie is a key player. Her portfolio focuses on the teaching staff, providing them with the resources and supports to revitalize NOLA's schools. It is a big, important job, and we commend Stephanie for taking it on. Our loss, yes, but a big win for the children of New Orleans!

Moving beyond my personal spring break, I've other news to share.

YingYi Ma (2007) visited the department last fall to present on some of her current research and we caught up on news over dinner. Yingyi has been named the Inaugural O'Hanley Faculty Scholar, Maxwell School, Syracuse University, recognizing excellence in teaching and research. She also shared a link to an Op Ed piece of hers in the China Daily, "Being Chinese away from China." Here is the link: http://europe.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2014-08/23/content_18474098.htm. And a second one too: "Learning to be more like each other." Op-ed published on China.org (http://www.china.org.cn/opinion/2012-01/23/content_24455525.htm).

Mentioning Op Eds, Mike Levien also has one deserving of your attention: <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/lead-article-dispossession-development-and-democracy/article6853389.ece>. Addressing land dispossession in India, it appeared in The Hindu, which I am told has a larger circulation than *The New York Times*! Kudos to both Yingyi and Mike.

Kevan Harris (2012) is on the move, transitioning from his postdoc at Princeton to an assistant professorship in Sociology at UCLA, as well as an affiliation with UCLA's International Institute, where he will teach an undergraduate interdisciplinary course on global development. Kevan tells me LA is home to the country's largest Iranian-American population, earning it the nickname "Tehrangeles." Sounds like a great fit, and we most certainly wish Kevan all the best! LA also is home to a gem of a little restaurant, Salt's Cure. That has nothing to do with Kevan, Iran, or Iranians, but it warrants a mention anyway, as it's near and dear to me!

Liza Dayton (2012) also is transitioning from a postdoc, her's on the west coast at Stanford's Center for Educational Policy Analysis. In the near term, Liza will devote the bulk of her time to using her MOM degree, centering on Caroline, who at this point should be around two. But liza is far from

pulling out of the game. Hardly. With a book contract from SUNY Press to expand on her dissertation research on first-generation college students, she'll have plenty to keep her occupied during those precious nap-time moments!

Phil Hough (2007) reports in with news of yet another addition to the family, Phillip Andrew Hough, Jr. (or Rephil), who checked in October 14 of last year. That brings the Hough household total to four. With all that, Phil continues "working hard and cranking out research on Colombia." Hearty Congratulations.

And likewise to Bedelia Richards (2008) and Frank Stulka (1996 MA).

With Bedelia, it's for her little one Nala, who was 13 months when Bedelia wrote, but probably by now has reached puberty (it only seems that long between notes! In fact, Bedelia's note arrived March 2, following a missed connection at the Easterns in NY).

And Frank wrote to tell me about his son Jacob, who is 23 – that's years, not months! Frank is a proud papa and rightly so, but the mention of Jacob is a reminder of how much time has passed since Frank was wandering the halls as a graduate student – Jacob came along during Frank's third year in the program.

Frank has been with the Department of Labor for most of the years since. Here's his update:

"Congress gave us new authorizing legislation for our primary workforce development investments in July (the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act), so we are busy developing regulations, implementation and technical assistance plans, and trying to lead our network of state and local workforce agencies through the process of reimagining their structures and services to make the most of the opportunities this law provides. That ends up being a lot of work that is both exciting and exhausting at the same time. In August, I was promoted to "Regional Director, Office of State Systems." This means that now, in addition to having oversight responsibility for the workforce development system in our 11 states, I also have the Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs."

Like Stephanie above, Frank also has a large portfolio, and it makes me think of all our other Alums who are out and about doing the hard work of sociological practice. Let's hear from some of you so I can share your experiences in the next edition of our little newsletter. We all know what academic sociology is all about, but there's a whole other world of "hands on" sociology that's largely hidden from view. We as a department have always valued practical applications of sociology, which can be found in just about every nook and cranny. Let's put a spotlight on some more of it, and do a bit of bragging.

Relatedly, I've also heard that Laura Salganik (1983) is retiring from AIR, having served most recently as Senior VP and Director of Quality. Laura's career embodies exactly what I have in mind, and perhaps I can coax a little something from her for our next Update.

We've covered a lot already and there is tons that could be added about happenings in the department. I'll save that for later, obliging another note before everyone scatters for the summer.

In the meantime, stay well and stay in touch. Please do keep those notes coming. They mean a lot to me personally, and it is a great joy to be able to share them with our scattered about Hopkins family.

Best,

Karl