

*The Department of
Sociology and Anthropology at*
MUHLENBERG

COLLEGE

presents

*The 8th Annual
Senior Research Symposium*



Tuesday, May 1st 2012

*The Department of Sociology & Anthropology
Welcomes You!*

Dr. Janine Chi, Associate Professor of Sociology & Chair

Dr. William Abruzzi, Associate Professor of Anthropology


Dr. Ben Carter, Visiting Assistant Professor of Anthropology

Dr. Anne Esacove, Assistant Professor of Sociology

Dr. J. Christopher Kovats-Bernat, Associate Professor of Anthropology

Dr. Krista Bywater, Assistant Professor of Sociology

Mrs. Tracy Kline, Department Secretary



Schedule of Events

Introductory Remarks

Dr. Anne Esacove

PRESENTATIONS

- ◇ **Farm To School: Profiling an Emerging Movement**
Karissa McCarthy (Sociology)

- ◇ **Getting Burned: Student Understanding of Sexual Assault at Muhlenberg College**
Rebecca Glassman (Sociology)

Concluding Remarks

Dr. Janine Chi



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Welcome to the Eighth Annual Senior Symposium in Sociology and Anthropology.


The two seniors who are presenting today not only worked diligently this semester preparing their research, they also went the extra step to consider the practical implications of their analytic findings.

Throughout the term, we have focused on the *process* of research rather than the product of the research. In doing so, Karissa and Rebecca learned how to address a wide-range of issues that invariably arise when conducting research. They supported each other with advice, constructive critique and enthusiastic encouragement. Today they have the opportunity to share a summary of what they learned during the course of their projects.

With a spirit of collegiality that represents their relationship, Rebecca and Karissa offer the following advice to juniors considering taking Senior Seminar next year:

“I walked into my Senior Seminar class with a weary sense of excitement as well as an utter certainty that I was doomed to fail. I knew my research topic and my goals for this project, but beyond that, I truly had no idea where this process would lead me. Now I can say, with utter certainty, that this has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my time at Muhlenberg. Senior Seminar was the ideal opportunity to rigorously apply what I had learned in all of my sociology classes, rendering this project incredibly challenging and exhausting--which I quickly learned is exactly how it should be. For those who are considering senior research: do it. I gained so much confidence and strength from challenging myself in this way, and Senior Seminar is an amazingly supportive environment to do so. Thanks to those who have made this experience so special, and good luck to those who follow!” - Rebecca Glassman

“Working on a senior thesis has given me the opportunity to explore a topic I am passionate about and hope to pursue professionally post-graduation. After a year of research it is truly gratifying to recognize my intimate knowledge on the subject. By no means though has reaching this point been easy. Conducting independent research has

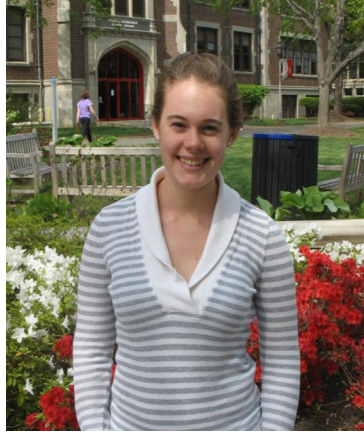


been a huge undertaking and required constant attention and persistent effort. Faculty have pushed me to think critically about my data and to carefully articulate my findings. The process has been a true test of my academic will. But in the most challenging moments of my project, it has been my curiosity and commitment to the subject of investigation that has kept me going. To rising-seniors who will begin their own research, I stress that possessing this passion is essential to a successful project. Acknowledge your curiosities and honor your passions. They are not only the fuel that will carry you through the difficult points in your work, but also the source of truly meaningful research questions.” - Karissa McCarthy

The department is proud of these students. We are happy to be able to offer this opportunity for Karissa and Rebecca to share what they have learned in this senior capstone experience with their classmates, friends and family. Thank you for supporting them.

Best of luck seniors!
Anne Esacove

Honors Presentations



Karissa McCarthy, Sociology

Farm To School: Profiling an Emerging Movement

Starting in 1996, school districts across the country have been implementing Farm to School (FTS) programs to reorganize the school meal in ways that protect the environment while restoring local economies, and improving the health of their students. Since then programs have enjoyed dramatic growth nationwide. Given its rapid emergence and local grassroots character, the movement is anything but uniform – programs reflect the uniqueness of their locality. How then do a variety of individual programs operate as a unified, national movement and what effect does this organization have on the movement’s ability to achieve its agenda outcomes? My research explores this question by considering the various ways in which FTS participants characterize the problems FTS seeks to address, the solutions appropriate to solve these problems, and their rationale for involvement. Seventeen qualitative interviews with movement participants – farmers, food service directors, teachers, parents, government officials, and community partners – in the Mid-Atlantic region reveal that FTS programs are united around four, commonly agreed upon solutions: (1) local procurement, (2) school gardens, (3) curriculum-based education on food, agriculture, and nutrition, and (4) experiential learning opportunities such as farm field trips. Findings offer insights for FTS leaders in regards to the trajectory of the movement, as well as propose a unique alternative to understanding social movement organization.



Honors Presentations (cont.)



Rebecca Glassman, Sociology

Getting Burned: Student Understanding of Sexual Assault at Muhlenberg College

This year, the Muhlenberg administration has revisited the issue of sexual assault on campus, with the policy undergoing a number of revisions in accordance with Title IX. Within the student body, however, there appears to be sparse conversation about sexual assault, despite requirements that certain student groups participate in educational programming. Through interviews with students who have participated in this programming, this research proposes that students' attitudes about sexual assault can be understood as narratives of why sexual assault occurs, how it can be avoided, and what responses are available. These narratives reflect an individualized conception of sexual assault on campus that explains this sparse conversation among students and appears to be built on the assumption that rape is an inevitable danger. This research will provide suggestions for how to refocus this perception and address sexual assault at its structural roots, positing prevention as not only an ideal, but also a plausible method for eradicating rape on campus.



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