

# Newsletter

of the Department of Sociology & Anthropology

## Student Scholarship In Focus:

### 2018 Outstanding Student

Meg Perry, graduating Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelors of Arts in Anthropology, was recognized as the 2018 Department of Sociology and Anthropology *Outstanding Student*. Her performance in the classroom consistently demonstrated her dedication to her chosen discipline as well as the community that surrounds her. She recently presented her academic research at the Annual meeting of the Central States Anthropological Society in April. During her tenure at UT she maintained a focus on community service volunteering with Equitas Health "Care for All" where she was a UTMCM Emergency Room volunteer, she also served as a UT Student Ambassador Volunteer during her Senior year, and as a camp volunteer with Project Esperanza last summer. Following graduation, Meg plans to join Americorps to work alongside Native American groups in Wisconsin after which she intends to pursue graduate studies focusing on Anthropology and Native American Studies.



From left, Students Meagan Bell and Meg Perry were recognized for their achievements at the College of Arts and Letters Honors and Awards Ceremony this past May 4<sup>th</sup>.

### College of Arts & Letters Dean's Essay Prize Winner

Meagan Bell was awarded the 2018 Dean's Essay Prize in Research for her essay titled "Understanding the Moorehead Phase at the Copper Site: Lithic Procurement and Use as Compared to the Cahokian Political Administrative Complex." In short, she focuses on late prehistoric stone tool use associated with Mississippian peoples who lived near modern St. Louis in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries CE. She also wrote a Departmental Honor's thesis focusing on proto-historic

religious identity among Indigenous groups of the Great Lakes. Graduating Summa Cum Laude this spring with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology, Meagan plans to focus on gaining even more archaeological excavation experience through her work in cultural resource management. The following year she intends to continue her studies by pursuing graduate studies in Anthropology, continuing her focus in Archaeology.

# Student Scholarship In Focus:

## Recent Master's Theses:

*Veteran Homelessness: Protecting the Protectors*  
- Ann Marie Sifuentes

As her title notes, Ann's thesis focuses on the continuing trend of homelessness among U.S. Veterans. A Navy Veteran herself and active member of the U.S. Navy Reserve, Ann builds from her own personal experiences and employs an ethnographic approach to underscore the pervasive factors and processes that lead many Veterans to homelessness.

*Don't Kill My Vibe: An analysis of the language used in political hip-hop*  
- James Perrine

James completed his Master's thesis this spring, employing a Critical Race Theory lens in a qualitative content analysis of hip-hop lyrics from Public Enemy to Kendrick Lamar. His study identifies how the hip-hop platform has been used by artists to speak

in protest of social, political, and economic oppression.

Next, James will be attending Bowling Green State University, pursuing a Master's in Philosophy, after which he plans to turn his attention toward a Ph.D. in either American Culture Studies or Applied Philosophy.

## Undergraduate Honors Thesis:

*Gender Disparities in the Inside Out Prison Exchange Program* - Emily Grubbs

A Jesup Scott Honors College student and major in the Law and Social Thought program, Emily explores why women comprise the majority of individuals associated with Inside/Out Prison Exchange Programs. She simultaneously contextualizes attitudes and perceptions held by male and female student participants and provides insight to the lasting impact such programs have on their respective future goals, as related to prison reform.

## Where are they Now?

**Jenna Turco, a recent graduate with her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, reflects upon the path her degree has led her down...**

I began my journey back into academia as a non-traditional, adult student after working as an Intellectual Property paralegal for 8 years. I chose Sociology because of my interest in diversity and the vast scope of opportunities it offered graduated students.

Recently, I was hired as a Resident Services Coordinator for an affordable and low-income housing company named Mercy Housing. This company strives to alleviate poverty and offer a better standard of living to its residents. My job is to connect the residents at my property to services and resources in the area that can help relieve them of their worries.

Through a systematic process of communication, assessments, and community outreach, the residents can thrive. Sociology gave me the skills needed to acquire this position. Understanding diversity and human relationships gives me the ability to advocate and problem solve on behalf of the residents I serve. A degree in Sociology is a great starting point to anyone hoping to find a social services position within their community.



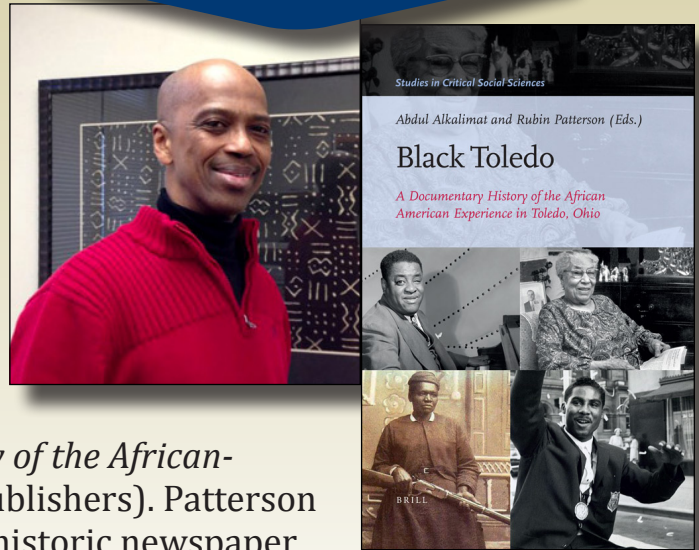


# Departmental Hosted Events

## *Africana Studies Hosts Lecture on Local African American History*

Left, Guest lecturer Rubin Patterson; Right, visited UT to provide a lecture about his co-edited volume on Toledo's African American History.

UT's Africana Studies program, directed by Professor Angela Siner, hosted an evening lecture highlighting the culmination of several years of research efforts about Toledo's historic African-American community. Former UT Sociology Professor Dr. Rubin Patterson (presently of Howard University) was invited to campus to share the key insights from this research encapsulated in the recently published volume *Black Toledo: A Documentary History of the African-American Experience in Toledo, Ohio* (Brill Publishers). Patterson and colleagues' work derives from regional historic newspaper articles, census data, and numerous treatments of the historic experience in Toledo, specifically highlighting African-American history. Ultimately *Black Toledo* represents a successful culmination of both academic and local community efforts to preserve Toledo's cultural past. The evening included a lecture by Dr. Patterson who shared several excerpts from the volume followed by a public question and answer session offering direct engagement. Several local community members and leaders, including Ohio State Senator Edna Brown, attended the event.



Professor R. Khari Brown (center) with UT Sociology & Anthropology Professors (from left), Dwight Haase, Monita Mungo, Karie Peralta, and Shahna Arps



## *Guest Lecturer from Wayne State Discusses Religion, Race, and Politics*

Department students and faculty welcomed Wayne State University Associate Professor of Sociology R. Khari Brown who gave a guest lecture here this past spring. A leading expert of religion and American politics, Dr. Brown is also affiliated with the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan where he serves as an adjunct research scientist. He serves on the board of the Religious Research Association and the editorial board of the *Politics and Religion Journal*. His talk was titled "Race, Sermons, and Policy Attitudes."

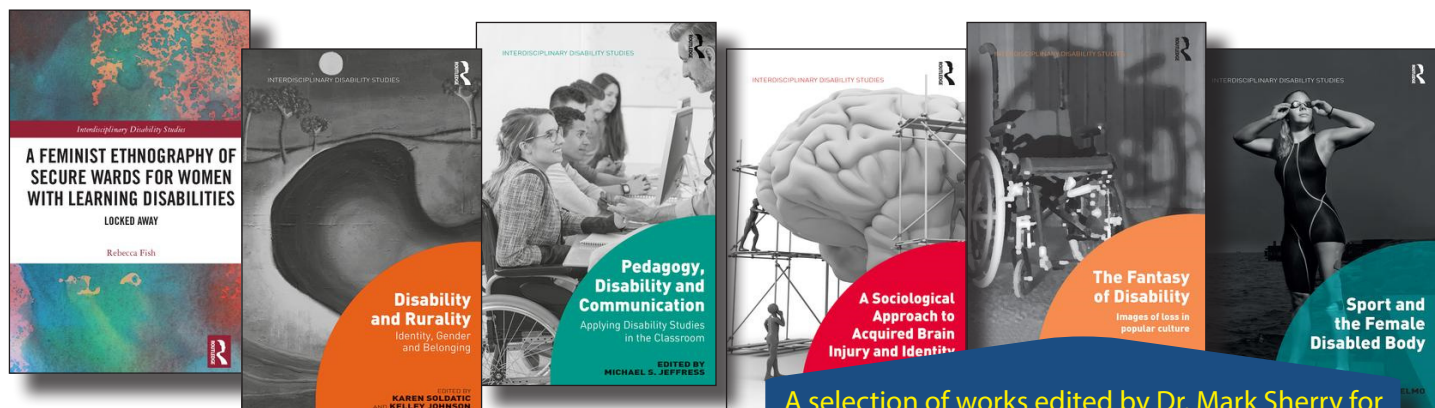
## Faculty in the Spotlight

### Jerry Van Hoy, Ph.D.: "UT Outstanding Advisor"

Associate Professor of Sociology Jerry Van Hoy was acknowledged for his years of service to students this past April. He was awarded a *UT Outstanding Advisor Award*. Co-director of the Program in Law and Social Thought and director of the Master of Liberal Studies Program, Van Hoy has been with UT for 17 years and previously received one of UT's Outstanding Teacher Awards back in 2013.

As reported in the UT NEWS: "He flips the notion that advising is purely transactional on its head by listening to students' needs and concerns. He helps students develop

academic plans that work for them, addressing weaknesses and creating pathways to not only graduation, but to a life after college that students are excited about," a nominator wrote. Another noted, "As a recent graduate, I faced some distressing events during my capstone project. Dr. Van Hoy provided objective feedback to let me know the problem wasn't unusual, the troubling issues were not caused by me, and that they were not insurmountable. His advice was calming and reassuring. He was sensitive, diplomatic when needed, and direct as required."



A selection of works edited by Dr. Mark Sherry for the Routledge *Interdisciplinary Disability Series*.

### Mark Sherry, Ph.D.

As a senior academic in the field, Professor Mark Sherry stresses academics' responsibilities to the profession – locally, nationally, and globally. He gives many prestigious international talks. He has just returned from giving a keynote speech at Torun University in Poland, and in recent years has spoken in London, Leeds and Lancaster (England), Orebro University (Sweden). He also advised the English National Union of Students on their disability hate crime strategy. Additionally he gave a lecture over Skype for the University of Helsinki. Sherry will be speaking in Canada and in Malta coming months.

"It's an honor and privilege to read the work of emerging and established scholars before it is published," said Professor Mark Sherry about his role as Series Editor of the Routledge *Interdisciplinary Disability Series*. Recent titles in the series include:

- *International Perspectives on Teaching with Disability: Overcoming Obstacles and Enriching Lives*, edited by Michael S. Jeffress
- *Sport and the Female Disabled Body*, by Elisabet Apelmo
- *The Fantasy of Disability: Images of Loss in Popular Culture*, by Jeffrey Preston
- *A Feminist Ethnography of Secure Wards for Women with Learning Disabilities: Locked Away*, by Rebecca Fish



## Seamus Metress , Ph.D.

As Professor of Anthropology Seamus Metress approaches his 50<sup>th</sup> year at the University of Toledo, we recognize the unabated passion for anthropology and social activism Dr. Metress brings to the discipline, the University, and the greater Toledo area.

A founding member of the Anthropology program, Dr. Metress continues teaching and writing while staying up to date in a number of varied fields that include settler colonialism, environmental anthropology, and Irish/Irish American studies. He has authored, co-authored, edited, and contributed to more than 40 publications, the most recent titled *The American Irish and Their Story: America's First Unwanted Immigrants*, written with his wife, Professor Emeritus, Eileen Metress.

His career is underscored by several research foci regularly published throughout his career. These include Irish-American society in the Toledo region, Irish immigration into North America, and an historical and contemporary focus on the role of Irish women in the American labor movement. Additionally, he champions his research at the crossroads of human biology and culture that is highlighted in an upcoming volume: *A Biocultural History of Health and Disease: From the Paleolithic to the Anthropocene*.

## Melissa Baltus, Ph.D.

Resident archaeologist and Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Melissa Baltus was recognized for her continuing scholarly work for the last three years by UT's President Sharon Gaber, Provost Andrew Hsu, and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. Awards for *Outstanding Contributions in Scholarly or Creative Activity* were bestowed upon 26 recipients from all across UT. Her

The Irish in Toledo



History and Memory

Professor Seamus Metress delivers a lecture on April 20th at Lourdes University on the history of the Irish immigration to America.



He and his wife continue their association with Honor the Earth, RAVEN (Respecting Aboriginal Values and Environmental Needs), and Coal River Mountain Watch; all representing groups fight the many consequences of both settler and internal colonialism. Seamus and Eileen remain stewards of two acres of North American native plants on their property, here in Toledo, which has been certified as a National Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation, a Monarch Waystation by both Monarch Watch and the Monarch Venture Program, and a Butterfly Habitat by the North American Butterfly Association. In 2017 they were honored to have the late Dennis Bennet of the Lakota Nation visit their gardens filled with plants that were used by America's indigenous peoples for medicines, food, beverages, dyes, textiles, and construction.

Approaching his 50th year at the University of Toledo, Seamus says that his teaching, writing and activism are facets of a career, not a job. Therefore, any planned retirement is not on the horizon.

continued research focuses on the Native American city of Cahokia (near modern St. Louis) and its surrounding metropolis. Her collaborative efforts with her colleagues will be highlighted in an upcoming PBS documentary *Native America* to be aired this fall, underscoring the intersection of modern science and Native oral history that highlight the ancient and lasting cultures of Native peoples in the Americas.

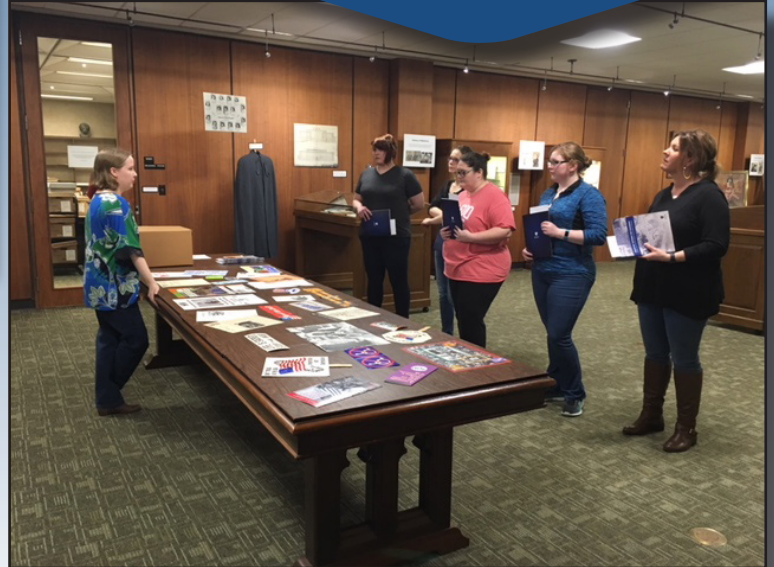
# Beyond the Classroom Walls:

*An ideal place to gain more practical experience...*



Anthropology Society members gathered outside of University Hall this spring to practice their stone tool making skills. Archaeologist Dr. Melissa Baltus provided a practical demonstration, after which the students engaged in the processes themselves.

Graduate students Elissa Vaitkus, Alina Bocicor, Tiffany Runion, Kelsey Gallaher, and Krista McCarthy Noviski, learn about documenting the histories of communities and organizations from UT's archivist, Lauren White, in the Canaday Center as part of Dr. Karie Peralta's Applied Sociology seminar.



## Message from the Chair

This past academic year our Department of Sociology and Anthropology saw a change of leadership as former Chair Dr. Patricia Case took on her new role as Assistant Dean in the College of Arts and Letters. Stepping into the role, Dr. Dwight Haase, Associate Professor of Sociology shares a few words about his vision of our department and the path ahead:

As social scientists, we try to explain that which seems inexplicable – things like poverty, oppression, and urban demise. To make sense of these phenomena we try to understand societies – now and throughout history and pre-history, here and around the world. We try to understand people. We try to understand us. We excavate, examine, survey, interview, experiment, and observe. We listen. This is how we learn, faculty and students together.

We apply what we have learned to whatever we do in life – not just on campus, but anywhere. Our alumni work in government, business, nonprofits, education, and healthcare. They are activists, advocates, managers, teachers, providers, analysts, and consultants. Most importantly, they are citizens of this planet. It is our hope that our endeavors to understand humanity will empower us in our daily lives to make this planet better, more just, and more sustainable for all people around the world.

It is an ongoing endeavor, but along the way we are scoring successes that remind us we are headed in the right direction. So far in 2018 we already have seen our students presenting in national conferences and win highly coveted awards on campus for their scholarship and service. Meanwhile, our faculty members are publishing, presenting around the world, and winning awards.

In this newsletter we like to celebrate those accomplishments, and at the same time we hope that news of our latest successes will inspire us all to achieve more in the future and continue to make this a better planet.

- Dwight Haase, Ph.D.  
Chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology  
College of Arts & Letters