

URBAN STUDIES UPDATE

Fall 2016

Newsletter for Alumni and Friends

Director's Letter

Dear USP Community,

As I write this letter it is late July, the week of the Republican National Convention in Cleveland. Speeches about the need for law and order are being delivered to virtually all-white audiences, who respond enthusiastically. Outside the convention hall, protestors with Black Lives Matter signs clash with Donald Trump supporters. Recent polls show that the vast majority of Americans believe that racial discrimination is a significant problem in the U.S. Comparisons are being drawn to the 1968 presidential election, when white fears of social and racial unrest fueled Richard Nixon's campaign. Certainly, there is a palpable sense of social and political divisions of a magnitude not seen in decades. And the places where these collisions are being felt most acutely? Cities, of course. In these turbulent times, Urban Studies could not be more relevant.

It has been an eventful year for the Urban Studies Program, my first year as director. My predecessor **Jasmine Alinder** left big shoes to fill, and I've done my best to continue the good work that she accomplished.

A few highlights:

Our exchange program with University College Dublin is up and running. I had a chance to visit UCD last year while I was on sabbatical living in Ireland in the town of Dalkey, several miles from the university. The campus is located just south of Dublin, about a 15-minute walk from Dublin Bay. It's a very attractive area, a great place to spend a semester, or even a year. If you are a student and would like to find out more information about the exchange program, please contact me or Associate Director **Jamie Harris (PhD '05)**. If you are a faculty member or former student, please consider making a donation to support the program. Our goal is to make this opportunity more affordable to students by providing stipends for travel and accommodations in Dublin.

The Urban Affairs Association (UAA) annual meeting was held in San Diego last March, and USP, as UAA's institutional home, got a big shout-out from UAA Director **Margaret Wilder**. Hundreds of urbanists from across the country and beyond heard Margaret sing the praises of our program. Also at the conference was USP alum **Rob Silverman (PhD '97)**, Professor of Urban and Regional Planning at SUNY Buffalo and vice-chair of the UAA Governing Board.

We had a number of very successful events this year, which you can read more about in this newsletter. One of my personal favorites was our Henry W. Maier State of Milwaukee Summit last November, which brought together a diverse group of speakers, including USP's **Marc Levine** and area state legislators, in a conversation about inequality in Milwaukee (see page 6). UWM Chancellor **Mark Mone** and Provost **Johannes Britz**, both of whom attended the summit, personally conveyed their appreciation to me for organizing this important and exceptionally well-attended event. Look for more of the same this year.

During my first year as director, I have benefited enormously from the wisdom and dedication of the USP staff, especially Associate Director **Jamie Harris (PhD '05)** and Program Coordinator **Carrie Beranek**. Unfortunately, like all other units on campus, USP continues to struggle with the state budget cuts of the current biennium. To maintain the resources necessary to continue the important work that we do, we need your help. If USP has been important in your lives, please tell people about it! Write a letter to the Journal-Sentinel. Send an email to the Chancellor. Thank you for your support and consider making a gift to USP to support student research (see back cover).

Joel Rast

Director, Urban Studies Programs



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Program News from the Associate Director

While the budget situation has been a constant challenge for us in USP, we continue to focus on what's most important: our teaching, research, and community engagement. This Fall semester we welcome six new Master's students (Peter Burress, Jamison Ellis, Shavaughn Lawson, Harrison O'Brien, Isabella Rieke, and Sara Schultz) and two Phd Students (Kat Kocisky and Tathagato Chakraborty). You can see their short bios below. And our undergraduate major and certificate program continue to grow with 17 new declarations this last year.

Please join me in congratulating our Urban Studies Grads:

Undergraduate Majors (BA):

Natalie Bantleon, Lloyd Brown, Jamison Ellis (Cert.), Alex Malchow, Harrison O'Brien (see grad student spotlight), Alvin Olson, Ryan Peterson, Vince Rolbiecki (Cert.), Emmajean Snook (see alumni spotlight), Samuel Tooke

Master of Science:

Madeline Riordan (Advisor: Arijit Sen) – Thesis Title: “Grassroots and Community Activism Within Milwaukee’s Black Community: A Response to Central City Renewal Efforts in the Walnut Street Area, 1960s to 1980s”

Lindsey St. Arnold (Advisor: Jenna Loyd) – Paper Title: “Addressing Environmental Hazards at Day Care Centers Through the Board of Zoning Appeals Process In The City of Milwaukee”

Sierra Starner-Heffron (Advisor: Joel Rast) – Paper Title: “Get a Lot for Less: A Case Evaluation of the \$1 Vacant Lot Pilot Program in Milwaukee’s 15th Aldermanic District”

Alexander Snyder (see alumni spotlight) (Advisor Amanda Seligman) – Thesis Title: “Freeway Removal in Milwaukee: Three Case Studies”

PhD:

Antonio Guajardo, Jr. (Advisor: Joe Rodriguez) – Dissertation Title: “Incorporation of Latino Police Officers into the Milwaukee Police Department: How a Group of Latino Police Officers Shed the ‘Blue Shield’ for a Latino Identity”

Michele Radi (Advisor: Amanda Seligman) – Dissertation Title: “On A Foundation Wide in Scope: The History of Mount Sinai Hospital, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1903-1987”

Ashkan Rezvani Naraghi (see alumni spotlight) (Advisor: Jennifer Jordan) – Dissertation Title: “From Mosques to Squares: The Formation and Transformation of the Public Sphere and Public Space in Iran”



Jamie Harris, Associate Director and Undergraduate Studies Coordinator

Save the Dates!

- » *We are planning an event mid-September to address the recent unrest in Milwaukee. Look for more information about this important event on our website.*
- » *Urban Studies Fall Lecture, Friday, October 28, 2-3 PM, Greene Hall*
- » *10th Annual Henry W. Maier State of Milwaukee Summit – Topic: Affordable Housing in Milwaukee: What is working, what isn't?, Thursday, Nov. 17, 4:30–6:30 PM, Zelazo 171*
- » *22nd Annual Student Research Forum, Friday, April 28, Noon-6 PM, Student Union Alumni Fireside Lounge*

Keep Up-to-Date:

Check out our new website: uwm.edu/urban-studies

Looking for student, faculty, and alumni news? Given space constraints in the newsletter, news items will be posted only on the website and updated quarterly at: uwm.edu/urban-studies/category/news/



Fall 2016 - Incoming Student Bios



Peter Burress (new MS student) – Originally from Sister Bay, Wisc., I graduated last May from Carroll University with a BS in Psychology and Organizational Leadership. While at Carroll, I spent my spare time in campus and work activities surrounding community engagement and social justice. I am thrilled to be continuing my education at UWM where I plan to develop a more comprehensive understanding of social and economic issues specific to Milwaukee. With my degree, I hope to find work that allows me to help the city maximize its potential.

Tathagato Chakraborty (new Phd student) – I received my BSc (Hons.) degree in Geography from University of Calcutta and Master of Arts (MA) degree in Geography (First Class, Gold Medalist) from Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, India. I was a lecturer at Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS-Pilani) in the department of Humanities and Social Sciences for four years (2012-2016) prior to joining USP at UW-Milwaukee. As an urbanist, I would like to focus on issues related to the urban development in the South and South-East Asian countries, from a multi-disciplinary perspective. My aim is to help develop the urban conditions for the Global South, either by being an academician or a policy maker. The doctoral program in this department would prepare me to achieve this goal by allowing me to venture out in different disciplinary and methodological perspectives required to address urban problems adequately and holistically.



Jamison Ellis (new MS student) – I am originally from Sheboygan, Wisc., but have lived in Milwaukee for the past eight years. Over those eight years Milwaukee has become my home, and I have greatly enjoyed my time in city. I particularly enjoyed my time as an undergraduate at UWM. In the summer of 2015, I graduated with a BA in history and a certificate in urban studies. During my final three years at the school, I also had the amazing opportunity to work as a research assistant for the Wisconsin Farms Oral History Project. As a member of this project I researched the effects of urban agriculture in the Milwaukee area, and interviewed a variety of members of the community involved with urban agriculture organizations in the city. The work that I did for WFOHP is a significant reason why I am returning to school for my Master's this coming semester. Over the course of the next two years, I hope to get closer to my goal of either becoming a professor, or working for a nonprofit organization involved with urban agriculture. As a history undergrad, I always gravitated towards urban history and I believe that urban studies is just the next step in helping me understand how cities operate and why that is the case. [Jamison will also be working as a PA in Urban Studies].

Kat Kocisky (new Phd Student) – I am most recently from Chicago, Ill. where I graduated with a MA in Geography & Environmental Studies from Northeastern Illinois University. Previously, I earned a BA in English Education and French from Illinois State University. I've spent some time teaching high school English as well as ESL courses abroad, and worked in communications with the not-for-profit organization, Alliance for the Great Lakes. In the Urban Studies PhD program, I hope to research the intersection of urbanization and the natural environment. I am interested in researching how green space is valuable to urban communities, and how underserved communities can effectively mobilize for environmental justice. Eventually, I would like to teach at the college level, and become more involved in community groups that seek to make cities more people-centered, equal places to live. I am especially looking forward to exploring Milwaukee and its parks by bike. [Kat will also be working as a PA in Urban Studies]



Shavaughn Lawson (new MS student) – I am originally from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I am a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater with a Bachelor's of Science in Sociology. As an undergraduate, I participated in research with my mentor Dr. Chandra Waring, which aided in my acceptance into the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. My research focused on the racial and gendered dynamics of higher education specifically in the realm of leadership. This work was later published in a special issue of the *Sociological Imagination Journal*, entitled Be Seen but Not Heard, the Other Side of Tokenism: An Undergraduate Woman of Color's Perspective (Lawson 2014). My main scholarly aim is to explore the experiences of minorities in urban educational settings with regard to the internalization of social constructions, oppressions and access to resources, or lack thereof. Pursuing a Master of Science in Urban Studies will prepare me through vigorous coursework and adequate training to better understand the city that I want to serve and lastly, achieve my ultimate goal of earning a PhD.

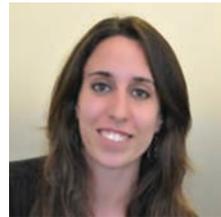


Fall 2016 - Incoming Student Bios (continued)



Harrison O'Brien (new MS student) – It may be hard to believe, but the Urban Studies Program is what brought me to UW-Milwaukee in the first place. I have had so many monumental experiences in and out of class, whether it was working through urban theory in Urban Studies 150 and 250 or applying all I had learned outside of class while working on my capstone project in Urban Studies 600. For my capstone project, I was able to interview housing service providers in Milwaukee County in order to understand the relationship between the homeless and housing service providers. The Urban Studies Program gave me the critical lens I needed to understand the complex issue that is homelessness. One of the biggest factors in my success in the program was the faculty who I had the pleasure of getting to know. The Urban Studies faculty expanded my intellectual landscape far beyond what I thought was possible. Every class I was involved in became a critical part of my understanding of urban studies. Now I will be bringing all the things that I learned during my time as an undergraduate to the Master's Program in Urban Studies at UW-Milwaukee. I had an easy time choosing where I wanted to go for my graduate education. I am ecstatic at the prospect of expanding on the theories and concepts I learned as an undergrad and continuing to grow with the Urban Studies Department. Beyond my education, the Urban Studies Program has made me feel at home. [Harry will also be working as a PA with the Urban Affairs Association (UAA), just down the hall from the USP office.]

Isabella Rieke (new MS student) – I'm a native New Yorker, graphic designer, and lover of bikes, Motown and advocacy. In 2011, I received my BA in Political Science and History from Boston University, and I have spent the past four years working at New Visions for Public Schools, a remarkable nonprofit education reform organization in New York City. At UWM, I look forward to further exploring the wide-reaching implications of urban poverty and inequality, and the role of community activism and nonprofits in policy-making. [Isabella will also be a TA in History]



Sara Schultz (new MS student) – My name is Sara Schultz and I am happy to return to my hometown of Milwaukee to pursue my MS in urban studies. I earned my BA in history and global studies from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Through my graduate studies I hope to develop an interdisciplinary understanding of urban life and collaborate with other passionate individuals to shape sustainable and equitable urban spaces.

Thank You Friends for Supporting Student Research!

All of us in Urban Studies would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our donors whose gifts go directly to support graduate student research.



- Jeff Eagan (MS '78)*
- Robert Koenig (MS '81)*
- Suzanne Ludlow (MS '86)*
- Edmund T. Mazur Jr. (MS '72)*
- Brian F. O'Connell (MS '82)*
- Kenneth Robinson (MS '80)*
- Dr. Linda Scheible (PhD '91)*

- Dr. Robert M. Silverman (PhD '97)*
- Linda Sunde (MS '87)*
- Barry Tate (BS '63)*
- Harry Weiner (MS '75)*
- Aaron Wolfe-Bertling (MS '79)*
- Steven R Yaffe (MS '78)*
- Nancy Yttre (MS '93)*



Alumni Spotlight In Their Own Words

Emmajean Snook, BA '16



I moved to Milwaukee at 18-years-old to do an educational nonprofit, and then ended up staying to pursue a degree in Urban Studies and Political Science at UW-Milwaukee. Urban Studies has allowed for me to articulate and comprehend what I was seeing around me: the intense segregation of Milwaukee, the distressed middle school environment I worked at, the peculiar racial divisions between co-workers, and how the urban space that we see today was shaped by local, state and federal policies. Urban Studies permitted me to study geography, sociology, criminal justice, political science, urban planning, and history all in one – a true interdisciplinary major. The culmination of my major was my senior capstone project, where I spent an intense amount of time in the archives studying why early political fragmentation occurred in metropolitan Milwaukee (what were the political, social and economic reasons? What actors played a substantial role? What theories are applicable and what are the gaps?).

As for my future plans as a graduate, I don't believe I'm done learning yet—but I want to pursue knowledge in my own way, in other forms. I'm looking to travel out of the country again, hopefully to Chile – a four-month study abroad in Morocco showed me how much travelling allows for self-reflection, growth and understanding. (Also see 2016 Scott Greer Award winners on p. 6)

Alexander Synder, MS '16

The Urban Studies Program has had a huge influence in the way I view and approach today's urban problems. First, USP gave me a much stronger sense of the time and resources needed to catalyze enduring change; I feel that my approach to problem solving is much more strategic today than three years ago. Second, I am much more attentive to differences of ethnicity, race, gender, and class. To be sure, these were differences I took into consideration before entering USP, but not necessarily to the degree I do now. USP gave me a deeper knowledge and understanding of the ways various national and local decisions have helped some, but hurt many others. I will carry this deeper awareness with me as I do my part to build healthier and happier urban environments.



Beyond all this, USP became a vehicle to further explore two of my professional interests: transportation planning and urban history. Ultimately, I combined both interests in a master's thesis that explored the urban freeway teardown movement in Milwaukee. I am currently living in San Francisco and seeking work that draws on my transportation planning, public history, or communications skills and knowledge.

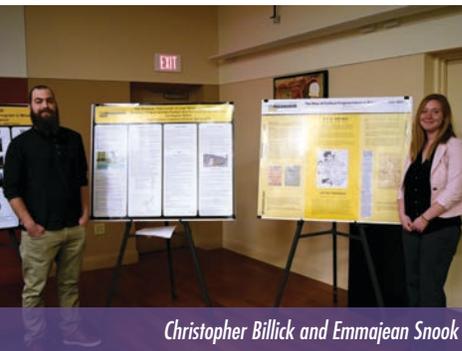
Ashkan Rezvani Naraghi, PhD '16



As a PhD student, I spent five years in the Urban Studies Program. Although my background was in architecture and urban design, the program and its well-structured curriculum fundamentally transformed my understanding of the cities and their spaces. For my PhD dissertation, I investigated the formation and transformation of the public sphere and the production of political public spaces in Tehran, the capital of Iran, in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Through the insightful support and guidance of my advisor, Professor Jennifer Jordan, I deeply engaged with the social theories of space. However, studying Iranian urban society, I realized the incompatibility of these models and theories with the Iranian context. As a result, through socio-historical analysis of Tehran and Iranian urban society, I developed a new model for the public sphere and investigated its relationship with political public spaces of the city.

After my dissertation defense, my short-term goal is to rewrite my dissertation as a book manuscript and explore the possibility of its publication. However, for the years to come, I would like to go back to my country, Iran, and use my knowledge both in academia and professional work. In the end, I would like to say a few words about the Urban Studies Program for its newcomers. This program shows you a vast landscape of knowledge about cities; it enables you to carve your research in the way you wish. The people in this program are absolutely supportive. They do their best so you can accomplish your goals.

We are Pleased to Announce the 2016 Scott Greer Award Winners



Christopher Billick and Emmajeane Snook

At this year's USP Student Research Forum, two undergrads and one graduate student received the Scott Greer Best Poster Award: **Christopher Billick** (USP Major) for his poster: "The Streetcar that Could?: A Case Study of the Milwaukee Streetcar Project and the Factors that Account for its Approval," and **Emmajeane Snook** (see alumni spotlight) (USP Major) for her poster: "The Rise of Political Fragmentation in Metropolitan Milwaukee, 1892-1935."

Sierra Starner-Heffron (USP MS Student) received the Graduate Best Poster Award for her poster: "Get a Lot for Less: A Case Study Evaluating the \$1 Vacant Lot Pilot Program in Milwaukee's 15th Aldermanic District."

Ashkan Rezvani Naraghi, (see alumni spotlight) (USP PhD Candidate) received the Scott Greer Award for Outstanding Research in Urban Studies for his paper: "The Street-less Revolution: The Spatial Configuration of Iran's 1906 Constitutional Revolution."

Two students were awarded the Urban Studies Dissertation Research Grant Award for promising research in their dissertation topics: (funding for this award comes directly from contributions by alumni and friends of Urban Studies)

Meghan McDonald Carlson, PhD Candidate, Urban Studies, (Advisor: Robert Smith). Dissertation Title: "Exploring Perceptions and Experiences with the Criminal Justice System: Black and Latino Teens in Milwaukee, Wisconsin."

Shuayee Ly, PhD Candidate, Urban Studies (Advisor: Rina Ghose). Dissertation Title: "Hmong Mutual Assistance Associations in Wisconsin: Transitioning in a Neoliberal Environment."



Sierra Starner-Heffron



Ashkan Rezvani Naraghi receiving award with advisor, Prof. Jennifer Jordan

2015-16 Major Events Recap

Urban Studies Programs' Milwaukee Summit on Inequality is a Standing-Only Event

On November 19, a record turnout of more than 130 students, faculty/staff, and community members (including 30 who filed into an overflow space equipped with video and audio), turned-out for Urban Studies Programs' ninth annual Henry W. Maier State of Milwaukee Summit at the UWM Hefter Center. This year's theme was, *Inequality in Milwaukee: How big a problem is it, and what can be done about it?* A panel of civic leaders, Milwaukee-area state legislators, and UWM faculty discussed the sources of growing inequality, how Milwaukee compares to other cities, and what programs or policies might help address this growing problem. Panelists included: **Rep.**

David Bowen, Assembly District 10, **Sheila Cochran**, COO/Secretary-Treasurer of the Milwaukee Area Labor Council, AFL-CIO, **Rep. Dale Kooyenga**, Assembly District 14, **Prof. Marc Levine**, UWM History and Urban Studies, and **Timothy Sheehy**, President, Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce. **Prof. Joel Rast**, Urban Studies Director and Associate Professor of Political Science and Urban Studies, moderated the discussion. **UWM Provost Johannes Britz** gave the introductory remarks.

Web clips of the event can be viewed at the following link:
<https://uwm.edu/urban-studies/milwaukee-summit-2015/>





2015-16 Major Events (continued)

The 21st Annual Student Research Forum showcased student research, community engaged scholarship, and transdisciplinary projects in a Milwaukee neighborhood. On April 30 in the UWM Union Alumni Fireside Lounge, Urban studies majors enrolled in the Capstone Seminar and graduate students from different programs presented their semester-long research during a juried poster session (see Scott Greer Award winners on p.6).

In addition to concurrent paper sessions during the afternoon, there was also a panel discussion of the **Urban Collaborative on Race, Place and Health**, a tri-course project with urban studies faculty and their students engaged in research in the **Washington Park** neighborhood. The **Urban Collaborative** is designed to facilitate interdisciplinary conversations about race, health, and urban development in the city. Three seminar courses, Geography and Urban Studies (*The Internal Structure of the City*, Prof. Anne Bonds), Public Health (*Qualitative Approaches in Public Health*, Prof. Jenna Loyd) and Architecture (*Embodied Placemaking*, Prof. Arijit Sen), collaborated in order to examine the dynamics of race, place, and health in Milwaukee's Washington Park neighborhood. Students in each of the courses developed projects focused on Washington Park on such topics as food deserts and insecurity, urban inequality and community health, economic development, housing, and environmental justice.

Dr. Timothy Weaver (Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Louisville), gave the keynote address: **The Rise of the Private City: Unfettered Capitalism and Urban Transformation in American and Britain**. Dr. Weaver holds a PhD in political science and a graduate certificate in urban studies from the University of Pennsylvania. His research concerns urban political economy, the politics of class and race, the role of ideas in political development, and the rise of neoliberalism. He is author of *Blazing the Neoliberal Trail: Urban Political Development in the United States and the United Kingdom* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016). A reception and dinner with award winners followed his talk.

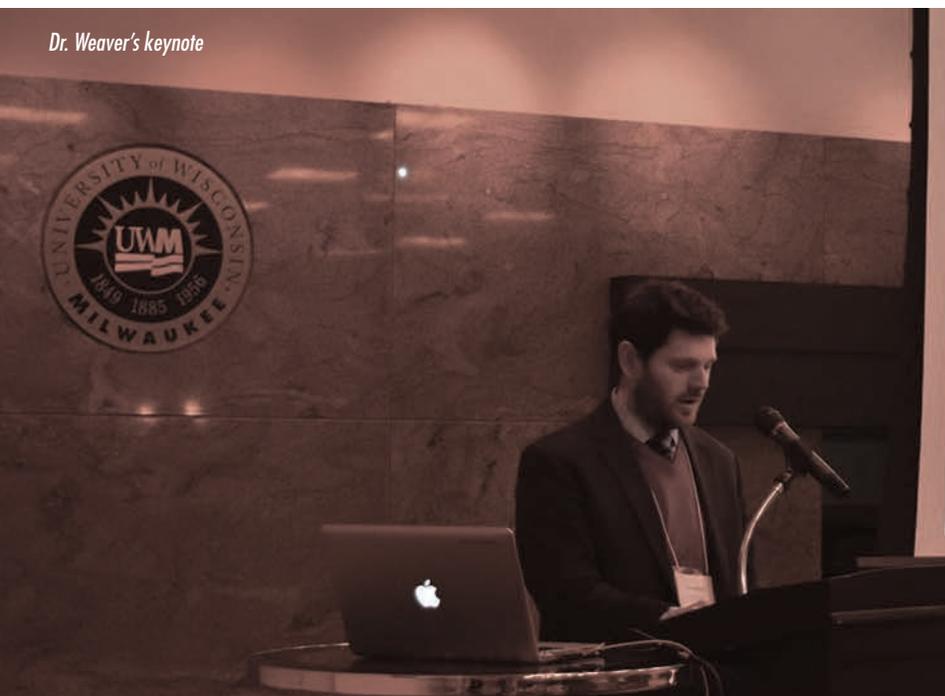


Student research poster session



Urban Collaborative panelists

Dr. Weaver's keynote





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