

SPRING
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**MILLSAPS
COLLEGE**

We're building a bigger, better alumni community. E-mail your updates to sandeet@millsaps.edu. Include your name, graduation year and everything what you've been up to and you'll be included in the next edition of the newsletter. Become a part of the alumni network at the Millsaps College Sociology Anthropology Alumni group on Facebook and connect directly with your former classmates and professors.

Dr. Bey Teaches Class on Disney

In the fall of 2010, Dr. George Bey taught "Disney and the American Way of Life." This class, an offshoot of Dr. Bey's more frequently offered class "American Pop Culture" which has a Walt Disney component, focuses on the ways in which Walt Disney and his creations have impacted American society as well as how society has impacted Disney.

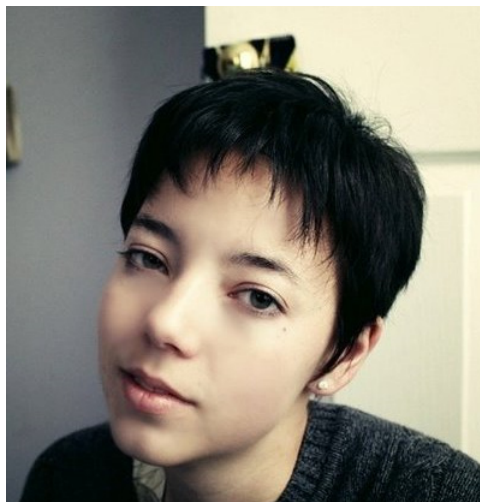
The course was created at the students' request. Students who had taken "American Pop Culture" and realized the importance of Disney's interactions with American society wanted to focus more on these issues in a higher level, seminar-style class. The course takes a historic perspective, exploring Walt Disney the individual, Disney as an industry, and how the company has evolved since Disney's death. Dr. Bey says, "We use Disney as a prism to look at America and the larger issues in American Culture."

Some of the issues addressed in this course include Disney's impact on nature and how

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SOAN Major Spends Semester in Albania



Kailey Rocker

Kailey Rocker, a junior anthropology major, began her semester study at University of Tirana in Albania in mid-February. Kailey's course load is split between language and archaeology, and she is completing an independent study with Lorenc Beiko in Tirana, the capital of Albania. This study abroad experience will also serve as the basis for Kailey's Honor's Project, which will be about a Cultural Heritage Project headed by the Albanian government.

The government is interested in promoting tourism in the area and hopes to turn the town surrounding Drisht Castle, near Shkrodra, into a cultural heritage site. Kailey will be researching people's feelings about the project and their willingness to participate in the program. She will also be exploring the differences in local versus

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Students Attend A-MSA Conference

Every February, the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association (A-MSA) holds its annual conference in order to share and promote sociological knowledge and research. This year, four students, Zachary Davis, Pamela Jackson, Janice Okeke, and Nile Patterson, presented their papers at the conference. The research papers presented were written for SOAN 3220: Class, Gender, and Race and SOAN 4910: Senior Seminar in Sociology.

This year, Zachary Davis won the Undergraduate Paper Competition at the conference. Zach is a senior Public Management major with minors in both Economics and Political Science. His paper, "Stimulating the Divide: A sociological examination of minorities and the American Recovery Reinvestment Act," examines the 2009 stimulus package and its effect on the minority community.

Pamela Jackson's paper is titled "Welfare, good or not-so-good a policy." Pamela is a senior Sociology major.

Janice Okeke is a junior Biology major, Sociology minor. Her paper is titled "A persistent income gap: the causes and consequences of the income gap between blacks and whites."

Nile Patterson's paper, "The future of the middle class," focuses on the decline of the middle class. He explores how the American middle-class rose after World War II and how it has fallen since capitalism has reached a global scale. Nile will be graduating this spring with an English major and Sociology minor.

We'd love to hear from you!

Send your updates to sandeet@millsaps.edu to be included in the next edition of the newsletter!

Be sure to check out our online alumni community by joining the Sociology Anthropology group on Facebook!

Major Studies Abroad continued from page 1

global ideas of cultural heritage and whether or not the government should take the people's opinions on the project into account before proceeding with the project.

Kailey is the first student to participate in the exchange program between Millsaps and the University of Tirana, and Millsaps hopes initiating this exchange will encourage students from Tirana to study here in the near future. As this is a direct exchange, Kailey will be paying her tuition to Millsaps and technically be a Millsaps student studying at the University of Tirana.

Kailey became interested in the semester program in Albania through her studies there in the summer of 2010. Kailey was Dr. Galaty's KECK Fellow last summer and worked with him on the PASH project and was able to tour the university. "Being in Albania sealed the deal. A lot of people I met there encouraged me, and it's a beautiful place," she said when asked about why she decided to partake in this semester study abroad program.

After her semester at the U of Tirana, which goes from March until June, she will be continuing work on the PASH project with Dr. Galaty, where they will do an intensive pedestrian survey of Northern Albania. This will allow them to archaeologically map the northern part of the country and will eventually lead to excavation. The PASH project is also designed to build even stronger communication and cooperation between Millsaps and the University of Tirana.

After her studies and work in Albania, Kailey plans to travel around Greece. "Millsaps gave me the first study abroad opportunity that opened the door and gave me a passion for travel and study abroad."

Disney continued from page 1

they portray it, how Disney constructs other cultures, and the impact on performative labor as well as urbanization, consumption, and contemporary art. The students, along with Dr. Bey, also look at the complex relationship between us as Americans, America, and all things Disney. The ideas of Disney as a religion ("What would Walt say?") as well as Disney World as a place of pilgrimage are explored.

At the end of the semester, the students travel with Dr. Bey to Disney World to do some field research. Evan Parker, a senior anthropology major who took the class, said, "The Disney class was absolutely fascinating. I think Americans are very unaware of the extent to which Disney permeates our culture, and to fully grasp it, one must journey to Disney World. If one of the hallmarks of a globalized landscape is consumption, then Disney World would have to be its capital. That makes it a fantastic venue for anthropological inquiry."

Students Conduct Dig at Millsaps-Buie House

Millsaps College archaeology students are learning how to conduct an archaeological dig while digging into the history of the Millsaps-Buie House in Jackson.

The house now houses the law firm of Hawkins Stracener & Gibson; John Hawkins is a 1990 graduate of Millsaps, and Eric Stracener is a 1987 graduate of Millsaps.

Students in Dr. Michael Galaty's course in Archaeological Method and Theory are excavating four pits in the backyard of the house. The dig provides students hands-on experience in archaeological field research and is preparation for those who plan careers in archaeology. Two students, Anna Church and Frances Tubb, will accompany Galaty to do research in Albania this summer, while others, Erin Sanders and Andy Kennedy, will head to Yucatan with Dr. George Bey.

Dr. Jamie Harris, professor of geology at Millsaps, used a ground-penetrating radar to help students determine where to dig. Using the GPR they were able to find the probable remains of the original carriage house. "We think there will be lots of artifacts in the areas between the home and the carriage house, since there would have been a lot of traffic back and forth," Galaty said.

Students will continue the dig through April each Thursday from noon until 5 p.m. Galaty said he expects students will find artifacts such as bits of pottery, nails, broken bottles, food refuse

and perhaps personal items such as coins, jewelry and toys, like marbles. "We can learn about the life of Major Millsaps and his family from the things they left behind."

The artifacts will be analyzed in the Millsaps College W.M. Keck Center for Instrumental and Biochemical Comparative Archaeology, the only undergraduate lab in the country focused on biochemical archaeological analysis. The Keck Lab has analyzed European and Central American archaeological artifacts

from such places as Albania, Sweden and Mexico, and collaborates with universities and colleges throughout the nation.

The students have yet to uncover any artifacts, but they looking forward to discoveries in the coming weeks. At the end of their dig, the students will have to write a field report describing their methods, findings, and conclusions.

"I really could not be more thrilled about my excavation pit at the Millsaps-Buie House and the Albanian trip this summer," said Frances Tubb, a sophomore at Millsaps. "For a Millsaps anthropology student, there really is not any-

thing more exciting than hands on experience."

Article written by Office of Communications and edited by Erin Sanders, SOAN Department.



Millsaps-Buie House

Student Wins Honor's Prize

On February 5, Evan Parker won the inaugural first place Phi Beta Kappa prize for his presentation of his research at the Millsaps College Honors Conference. The Phi Beta Kappa prizes were determined by members of Phi Beta Kappa through evaluation of both the design and execution of the Honors Projects and the presentation of that material during the Honors Conference. Phi Beta Kappa is a prestigious national honorary dedicated to excellence in the liberal arts and the lifelong pursuit of learning.

Evan's project, "Descending the Stairway to Heaven: The Rapid Abandonment of a Terminal Classic Puuc Hilltop Site" is based on archaeological analysis of artifact assemblages from the small site of Escalera al Cielo

(EAC) in the Yucatán Peninsula. Evan's independent field research was conducted under the auspices of the Bolonchen Regional Archaeological Project.

When asked about his project and the award Evan said, "I have received many congratulatory remarks from students and professors for completing my honors thesis. However, I don't view it as the end of something but as the beginning. This is the first piece of scholarship that I have ever produced, and I will continue to build upon it throughout my career in the academy. I truly believe that this is one of the greatest benefits of doing research as an undergraduate; it has set the tone for all of my future work in anthropology."

Seniors' and Recent Grads' Plans



Jennifer Gandy, who graduated in 2010 with a BA in Anthropology, will start at Texas State University in the fall. She chose Texas State because she is interested in Paleoindian studies and lithic analysis, and TSU allows her to focus on these interests. Since graduating, she has been studying the materials that will be important for her classes.

Ben McNair, class of 2011, plans to spend the next year teaching English in South Korea. Graduating with a major in Anthropology, Ben is excited to explore the cultural and political practices in South Korea. "I'd been thinking about teaching English for a while," Ben said, "and when I started investigating opportunities in South Korea it seemed like the best option." Grad school may be in the future for Ben, but first he will once again be going abroad.

Evan Parker, Anthropology major who will be graduating in May 2011, will enter the Department of Anthropology at Tulane in the fall of 2011 as a Ph.D. candidate. He plans to study Maya archaeology with Dr. Marcello Canuto, a Maya archaeologist who works at the site of La Corona in Belize, as his advisor. Evan chose Tulane for several reasons including research assistantship, a great group of incoming graduate students, and opportunities to work with cultural anthropologist and linguists. "That means I will get the full four field approach to studying Mesoamerican cultures, both in the present and in the past."

Catherine Scott has been living in Houston since she graduated in 2010 and working at the Museum of Natural Science since January. She was recently accepted into the Ph.D. program in Archaeology at Boston University and will start in the fall of 2011.

Students Attend SAS Conference

In late March, Dr. Julian M. Murchison, Erin Jordan, and Ben McNair travelled to Richmond, Virginia for the Southern Anthropological Society conference. Erin, Ben, and Dr. Murchison all presented at the conference.

Both Erin and Ben's papers were based on research done for their Honor Projects. Erin Jordan presented her paper, "The Sixth Stage of Grief: the Art and Aid of Storytelling in Tanzania." She was also the chair of the Arts as Ethnographic Method session. Ben McNair presented his paper, "Argentina's War of Words: Clarín, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, the Free Press, and Democracy."

Dr. Murchison's paper, "Examining Polyontologism through a Comparison of Spirit Possession in East Africa," examined his ethnographic work in southern Tanzania in light of recent work by Janet McIntosh on the coast of Kenya, especially ideas presented in her book *The Edge of Islam*. Dr. Murchison also served as chair of the session on "Anthropology and Islam today".

While at the conference, Julian, Erin, and Ben took the opportunity to enjoy a meal of Ethiopian food at a local Richmond restaurant before returning to Jackson.



Ben McNair

Where Are They Now?

Want to know what SOAN alumni have been up to? Read on to find out what previous graduates have been doing since their time at Millsaps.

ROY H. RYAN

'52 Roy enrolled in Seminary at Emory University's Candler School of Theology. After graduating, he returned to MS as a Methodist Pastor. "My training in Sociology and Anthropology certainly helped me in my work as a pastor and later as an adult Christian educator in The United Methodist Church's General Board of Education/Discipleship in Nashville, TN." Roy completed his Ph.D. at Vanderbilt in 1976. He retired in 1990 and has since developed two courses that he taught in community colleges and United Methodist Churches. He and his wife of 58 years, Doris, now live in Tupelo.

SHANE TOWNSEND

'00 For the past three years, Shane has been with U.S. Wheat Associates, an international non-profit trade organization. He most recently served as the Director for the Philippines and the Assistant director for South Asia. His wife, Abby, and he plan to relocate to Austin, TX in May, where they will join Baltimore-based graphic design and consulting firms.

BRIAN WALLACE

'05 Brian is the managing director of teacher support and development for Teach for America-New York City. He manages a team that is responsible for the training and professional development of first and second year teachers in low-income schools. "This spring has been particularly inspiring as we've seen several of our students gain acceptance to college when just a couple of years ago they were on a path to dropping out." He has also recently joined Bold, a classic New York hardcore band and toured Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia with them.

CHARLES RICKER

'61 In 2006, Charles became the first employee of BrightSource Energy, a solar power company that is working to change the way that electricity is generated and oil is produced. BrightSource is currently building the world's largest solar power plant in the Mojave Desert of California, which will go into operation in 2012. This summer, the company will complete construction of the first solar plant designed to produce steam for enhanced oil recovery for Chevron Oil. "I believe my Sociology studies gave me an understanding of people that has enabled me to organize, manage, and work effectively with others."

MELANIE MARTIN-PEELE

'95 Melanie is the Director of Evaluation and Center Services at the Ethel Donaghue Center for Translating Research into Practice and Policy at the University of Connecticut Health Center (UHC). She is also pursuing a graduate degree in mental health counseling. She worked in Wuhan, China for a year after graduation teaching English. Upon her return to the US, Melanie obtained her MA in Sociology and Women's Studies from the University of Connecticut. She worked as a health researcher at the UHC since the late 90s. Melanie married Holly Martin-Peele, in 2008, and they now live outside of Harford, CT.

MILLSAPS COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

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Did you know?

At least fifteen Sociology/Anthropology majors will be travelling abroad this summer to various countries, including Tanzania, Albania, the Yucatan, and France.

Also, five of the eleven students who are currently finishing up their semester study in the Yucatan are Sociology/Anthropology majors.

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