Introducing MFP Cohort 41

ASA and the Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) are pleased to introduce the seven new Fellows who comprise MFP Cohort 41. The MFP Advisory Panel met this spring in Washington, DC, to review the large and highly competitive pool of applications. MFP Cohort 41 consists of talented PhD candidates with strong and diverse sociological research interests. The new Fellows will officially begin their participation on August 1, 2014.

The Fellows will attend the 2014 Annual Meeting in San Francisco, where they will take part in a day-long orientation, including a brief history of ASA and a series of research and professional development-themed presentations by sociologists (with several former Fellows). The new Fellows will also participate in a number of required sessions, events, and workshops, including a breakfast meeting with the members of MFP Cohort 40. They will have the opportunity to network with sociologists who share similar interests. MFP Cohort 41 will be introduced individually and as a group during the MFP Benefit Reception on Sunday, August 17.

MFP is celebrating its 40th anniversary year in 2014. Since 2010, MFP has been generously supported in full by Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS), Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD), the Midwest Sociological Society (MSS), the Association of Black Sociologists (ABS), the Southwestern Sociological Association (SSA), and ASA Council, with more recent support coming from the Pacific Sociological Association (PSA) and the Southern Sociological Society (SSS). Support for MFP has also come from significant gifts made by individual ASA members and organizations through the MFP Leadership Campaign in which SWS and the Eastern Sociological Society (ESS) participated as donor organizations.

- Shani Adia Evans
- Ryan Gabriel
- Jackelyn Hwang
- Yvonne Y. Kwan
- Victoria Reyes
- Sasha Maria Rodriguez
- Firuzeh Shokooh Valle

Shani Adia Evans (Council/Leadership Campaign MFP)

Undergraduate Institution: Amherst College

Graduate Institution: University of Pennsylvania

Shani Adia Evans is a doctoral candidate at the University of Pennsylvania. She completed a BA in Anthropology at Amherst College and an MSEd in Education Policy at the University of Pennsylvania. Prior to beginning doctoral study, Shani worked at Research for Action, a non-profit educational research firm, where her projects focused on high school reform and community organizing for education. Shani’s research and teaching interests include education, inequality, race, and qualitative methods. Her work considers the relationship between the organization of schooling and the reproduction of inequality. In her dissertation, which uses qualitative methods to examine college preparation and choice among first-generation college students, she considers how students’ relationships with teachers, and other aspects of their high school experience, may shape their postsecondary trajectories. Shani’s other research focuses on school choice in urban communities, including conducting an ethnographic study of the admissions process at an academically selective public school. She is also collaborating on two papers about school choice processes among urban middle-class parents. Shani’s work is supported by the National Academy of Education/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship.
**Ryan Gabriel (MSS/ABS MFP)**

*Undergraduate Institution:* Utah State University  
*Graduate Institution:* University of Washington

Ryan Gabriel is a doctoral student at the University of Washington. He earned his BA in sociology at Utah State University. While at Utah State, Ryan was in the Sociology Honors Program and President of Alpha Kappa Delta. Ryan has multiple research interests including investigating research that shows an enduring impact of lynching between 1882 and 1930 in the southern United States and contemporary white-on-black homicide. While previous research links this violence to lynching, the mechanisms responsible for the relationship remain obscure. Ryan’s goal is to define and estimate intervening institutional- and population-based mechanisms that contribute to a collective memory of racial domination. In addition, he is a co-founder of the Seattle Urban Research Group (SURG). This group integrates undergraduates, graduate students, and professors in investigating sociological issues within Seattle’s vibrant culture. SURG is currently using quantitative spatial analysis, visual sociology, along with demographic and historical methodology to create an in-depth descriptive study of the stratification associated with racial residential segregation at the block level within select integrated tracts in Seattle. Lastly, for his dissertation, Ryan is researching the residential mobility and attainment of mixed-race couples in the United States.

[Back to Top of Page]

**Jackelyn Hwang (AKD MFP)**

*Undergraduate Institution:* Stanford University  
*Graduate Institution:* Harvard University

Jackelyn Hwang is a PhD candidate in sociology and social policy at Harvard University and a doctoral fellow in the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School. She received a BAS with honors in sociology and mathematics from Stanford University, where she conducted research on the social construction of neighborhoods during gentrification. After graduating from Stanford, she was a project manager for a community-based charter school in West Philadelphia. These experiences inspired her research interest in how racial and ethnic inequality both impacts and is impacted by gentrification and the recent housing crisis. Drawing on innovative forms of data to measure neighborhood characteristics, her dissertation examines the role of immigration in the evolution of gentrification in U.S. cities. In particular, this work sheds light on how race-based residential selection processes and racial and ethnic compositional changes intersect to reproduce neighborhood inequality. Her other projects examine how segregation is associated with subprime lending and the foreclosure recovery. Her research is supported by the National Science Foundation, the Harvard Graduate Society, the Joint Center for Housing Studies, the Taubman Center for State and Local Government, and the Institute for Quantitative Social Science.

[Back to Top of Page]

**Yvonne Y. Kwan (Council/Leadership Campaign MFP)**

*Undergraduate Institution:* University of California–San Diego  
*Graduate Institutions:* University of California–Los Angeles and University of California–Santa Cruz

Yvonne Y. Kwan is a doctoral candidate in sociology at the University of California–Santa Cruz. Yvonne’s teaching and research interests include race, Asian Americans, language, identity, trauma, and methodology. Her dissertation addresses Cambodian Americans and the transgenerational transmission of trauma, the phenomenon in which unspeakable traumas are passed (un)consciously from one generation to the next. She finds that while feelings, particularly ones associated with pain and suffering, are sensate experiences that are embedded in individual bodies, the origin and meaning of such feelings do not solely come from a single body, but instead from the collective. To better understand such processes, she has pursued ethnographic research at a non-profit Cambodian school in San Jose for the last two years and has conducted interviews with and distributed surveys to 1.5 and second generation Cambodian Americans. Contrary to purely regressive notions of trauma, she believes that trauma may be productive—in a sense that not only allows for engagement with past inequalities but also reproduction of mundane daily activities. Her work is supported by the UC All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity and the UC Center for New Racial Studies.

[Back to Top of Page]
Victoria Reyes (Council/Leadership Campaign MFP)

Undergraduate Institution: Ohio State University
Graduate Institution: Princeton University

Victoria Reyes is a PhD candidate in sociology at Princeton University. She received dual degrees in international studies and psychology from Ohio State University. Her research interests include globalization, economic sociology, culture, urban sociology, and inequality, and revolve around the question “How do meanings, social structures, and history interact in spaces of international exchange?” To answer this, she uses a cultural and relational approach to focus on three issues. First, macro-relationships of globalization: In a 2013 International Journal of Comparative Sociology article she uses globalized travel to argue that inequality between countries is structured by countries’ relative position to one another, and their cultural, social, and historical connections rather than their relative positions within a world-system. In a 2014 Poetics article she shows how cultural wealth is constructed through internal claims of countries and external validation of the international community. Second, using the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines, she examines what she calls “global borderlands” – semi-autonomous, geographic locations based on international exchange – to explore how unequal relationships between countries are understood and played out in face-to-face interactions. Finally, she studies the impact of spatial organization on variable forms of inequality, combining structural explanations with cultural accounts of inequality at macro- and micro-levels of analysis.

Sasha Maria Rodriguez (SWS MFP #1)

Undergraduate Institution: University of Florida
Graduate Institution: Stony Brook University

Sasha Maria Rodriguez is a Caribbean-American lesbian activist and PhD candidate in sociology at Stony Brook University. She received a BA in sociology from the University of Florida, with minors in Spanish and women’s studies. Her research centers on legislative sexual repression as well as activist responses in the United States and Uganda. Her dissertation employs theories of nationalism, homo-nationalism, and anti-imperialism and draws on parliamentary records, bi-national interviewing, and engaged ethnography of LGBTI organizations, protests, and events. Using these data, her research focuses on fostering transnational connections that are against racist and economic violence and, ultimately, for the betterment of sexual and gender minorities of color. Sasha Maria’s other research ventures include a forthcoming, co-authored book project with Darwin Fishman on the political socialization processes of youth of color in New York City. The Dr. W. Burghardt Turner Fellowship and the Faculty-Staff Dissertation Award of Stony Brook University have funded her research.

Firuzeh Shokooh Valle (SWS MFP #2)

Undergraduate Institution: University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras
Graduate Institution: Northeastern University

Firuzeh Shokooh Valle is a doctoral candidate in sociology at Northeastern University. She earned a BA in Latin American studies at the University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras and a master’s in journalism at Northeastern University. As a reporter at one of the main newspapers in Puerto Rico, she covered social movements, violence against women and gender politics, racism, poverty, and migration. She earned numerous national awards for her journalistic investigative work. She has also done volunteer work with grassroots women’s organizations helping them design social media strategies. These experiences sparked Firuzeh’s interest in the intersection of gender, technology, and society as she witnessed the emergence of the Internet and social media as important spaces and instruments for social movement activism. Her dissertation project analyzes how transnational feminist networks, women’s nongovernmental organizations, and grassroots groups in Latin America and the Caribbean negotiate and translate discourses and practices on gender and technology. She has collaborated on publications in the journal Social Movement Studies and has a chapter on the digital strategies of the feminist movement in Puerto Rico in the forthcoming publication Citizen Journalism: Global Perspectives, Volume Two.