

VERITAS VINCIT

Spring 2016

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Message from the Chair

Dr. Raymond Russell

On May 26, 2016, faculty, staff, and students in Sociology gathered to honor undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty who had won honors of various kinds over the previous academic year. The department's Undergraduate Advisor Ellen Reese opened the event by acknowledging the graduating seniors who had been chosen to receive special honors at graduation. The award for outstanding graduate in Sociology was given to Nicole Li and Asbeidy Solano. The outstanding graduate of the joint major in Sociology and Administrative Studies was Veronica Ramos, and the outstanding graduate in Sociology/Law & Society was Nicole Martin.

Among our graduate students, Lori Walkington has been awarded a \$30,000 fellowship from the CSU system, and Elizabeth Hughes has received a Dissertation Year fellowship from UCR's Graduate Division. Five graduate students were recognized for their excellence in teaching in 2015-2016. Four graduate students shared the award given annually to the Outstanding Teaching Assistant in Sociology: Amanda Admire, Matthew Dunn, Ron Kwon, and Lori Walkington. Dinur Blum was honored with a UCR-wide award for Distinguished Teaching.

Our faculty have also been busy in 2015-2016 earning distinctions of various kinds. Professor Robert Nash Parker spent the year as President of the Pacific Sociological Association. Distinguished Teaching Professor Karen Pyke has now replaced him as the PSA's new President for 2016-2017. Professor Jan Stets is now completing the second of a planned three years as Co-Editor of the journal *Social Psychology Quarterly*. On July 1, 2016, Assistant Professors Tanya Nieri and Sharon Oselin will be promoted to the rank of Associate Professor, and Professor Steven Brint will advance to the rank of Distinguished Professor. On that same date, Professors Augustine Kposowa and Jan Stets will become Co-Chairs of the Department of Sociology. In early June we learned that Professor Augustine Kposowa has received the award for excellence in teaching that is given annually by UCR's College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

Other good news circulating within UCR's Department of Sociology in June involved scholars making commitments to become members of UCR's Sociology faculty one year from now. Dr. Victoria Reyes will become an Assistant Professor of Sociology at UCR in Fall 2017, and Dr. Richard Carpiano will join our faculty as a Professor of Sociology and Public Policy at that same time. Profiles of these new faculty members will appear in upcoming issues of this newsletter.

In closing, I would like to thank all the alumni and friends who have made contributions to the department. In 2015-2016 we used such donations to help undergraduate and graduate students to attend and make presentations at conferences, and to defray costs associated with their research. The students, faculty, and staff of UCR's Department of Sociology are grateful to the many alumni and friends of our department whose gifts help make such support possible.

Raymond Russell

Chair, Department of Sociology, UCR

June 20, 2016

REMINDERS

- **ASA Conference is in Seattle, WA**
- **SSSP Conference is in Seattle**
- **Call for Articles**
- **Editorial Board**

VERITAS VINCIT

Spring 2016 Undergraduate News

Dr. Ellen Reese, Undergraduate Adviser

Sociology Department's Outstanding Undergraduate Awards: The following graduating seniors were given the Department's "Outstanding Graduate" awards to recognize their academic achievements:

Outstanding Undergraduate in Sociology (Co-Winner): Nicole Li has earned one of the top GPAs in her major in addition to serving as a research assistant for Dr. Sharon Oselin. Dr. Oselin reports that Li "was one of the best students" in her Sociology 187 capstone seminar and "an excellent writer." After graduating from UCR, Ms. Li aspires to get a job in the Los Angeles Police Department or another government agency, with the hopes she can help bring about a positive change through her service.

Outstanding Undergraduate in Sociology (Co-Winner): In addition to earning one of the top GPAs in her major, Asbeidy Solano is completing a senior honors thesis which applies identity theory and social identity theory to understand how Asian and Latino college students' ethnic identity and resources influences academic performance given their varying immigration status. Her research, based on original survey data collected among UCR undergraduates, will surely provide valuable information for college administrators and others seeking to increase the academic success of minority students. Ms. Solano has also gained considerable research experience as an undergraduate, working as a lab assistant in the Social Psychology Research Laboratory for several years in addition to providing research assistance on several other research projects at UC-Riverside and presenting her research at several professional conferences. She will be joining the Sociology graduate program at UC-Irvine this fall, where she has been awarded 6 full years of funding including the Eugene Cota Robles fellowship.

Outstanding Undergraduate in Sociology/Administrative Studies Major: Veronica Ramos took classes at Mt. San Jacinto College for five years from 2009 to 2014 before entering UCR as a Sociology/Administrative Studies major in Fall 2014. Her GPA rose every quarter, allowing her to earn her BA in Fall 2015 with a cumulative GPA of 3.875 (the highest in her major). She performed especially well in her Sociology classes, earning an A+ in Soc 158: Sociology of Religion, and As in most of her other Sociology classes.

Outstanding Undergraduate in Sociology/Law & Society Major: In addition to earning one of the highest GPAs in her major, Nicole Martin is completing a senior honors thesis entitled, "Race and Police Violence in the United States," which she will be presenting at the 2016 meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems this summer. Last summer, she received the UCDC Summer Public Service Fellowship through which she served as an intern for the Minority Business Development Agency for the U.S. Department of Commerce. She has also been selected for being a high achieving undergraduate UC student who has shown dedication to civic engagement and commitment to public service. In addition to serving as the Co-President of the Sociology Honors Club and Co-President of the Black Student Law Association (which she helped to establish), she served as a peer mentor for the African Student Programs office, and a peer coordinator for UCR's UCDC Academic Internship program. After graduating from UCR, Nicole plans to apply to law school so that she can be trained to practice public interest law.



Sociology major receives Mellon Mays Fellowship! Mirella Deniz-Zaragoza has been selected to receive a Mellon Mays Fellowship, a two-year fellowship program through which she will work on an original research project, which she will begin this summer.

Undergraduate Participation in the 2016 PSA meeting: This spring, the Sociology Department approved funding to send a delegation of 7 undergraduate students to participate in the 2016 meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association in Oakland, CA. The student delegation, all Latino, was organized by their graduate student mentor, Roberto Rivera and included the following students: Marcel Acosta, Odalys Bravo, Mayra Ceballos, Monica Cervantes, Rubyd Olvera, Ciel Rivas, and Brandon Uloa. Odalys Bravo, who presented her research on Chicana feminism, reports that, "Being a first generation college student, never did it cross my mind that I would be able to attend a conference and present on a topic that I am truly passionate about. At first it was a bit intimidating being an undergraduate student at a conference filled with graduate students and well known professors, but in reality everyone was so welcoming." Ciel Rivas said, "I enjoyed the diversity that was present and the comfort I was given by traveling with other fellow undergraduate students." Other UCR undergraduates, such as Asbeidy Solano and Christine Munoz, also participated in this year's PSA meeting.

Sociology Department Receives a Capstone Development Grant: The Sociology Department received a capstone seminar development grant from the Undergraduate Education Office at UCR for the 2016-17 academic year. The grant will be used to hire a graduate student researcher to further develop its upper-division capstone courses and to fund the participation of its senior thesis students in the 2016 meeting of the California Sociological Association, which will be held at the Mission Inn in Riverside this November.

Riverside Undergraduate Sociological Association (R'USA) and the Sociology Honors Club News: USA is open to any student with an interest in Sociology. The Sociology Honors Club is open to any Sociology, Sociology/Administrative Studies, or Sociology/Law & Society major with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or above. In the 2015-16 academic year, the Sociology Honors Club and/or USA organized various events, including a "meet and greet" event for Sociology majors, several career-related workshops, and a panel discussion on applying to graduate and professional schools.

The new R'USA officers for 2016-17 are:

President - Haydee Yonamine
Vice President - Carolina Sanchez
Secretary - Alisha Salcedo
Public Relations- Hugh Tieu

For more info about R'USA events and meetings, contact: Haydee Yonamine (hyona001@ucr.edu) or Hugh Tieu (htieu002@ucr.edu)

The new Sociology Honors Club officers for 2016-17 are:

Co-President- Mayra Ceballos
Co-President- Alejandra Nuevo
Vice President- Maru Vazques

For more information about the Sociology Honors Club, contact: Mayra Ceballos (mceba003@ucr.edu) and Alejandra Nuevo (anuevo001@ucr.edu).

Sociology Senior Honors Research/Senior Thesis Projects: A total of 4 Sociology graduating seniors completed their senior thesis projects this 2015-16 academic year through the Sociology 199H: Sociology Honors Research and Sociology 195: Senior Thesis courses. Their names, thesis titles, and advisers are listed below.

Mariana Campino

Thesis Title: Latino/a students' perceptions of other racial/ethnic groups

Faculty Adviser: *Adalberto Aguirre*

Nicole Martin

Thesis Title: Race and Consequences: An Examination of Police Abuse in America

Faculty Adviser: *Augustine Kposowa*

Asbeidy Solano

Thesis Title: The Second Generation: Variability in Academic Success of Immigrant Youth

Faculty Adviser: *Jan Stets*

Nancy Yanez

Thesis Title: Racial Disparities in Health: Analyzing the Factors that contribute to a Difference in Life Expectancy Rates between Whites and Minorities.

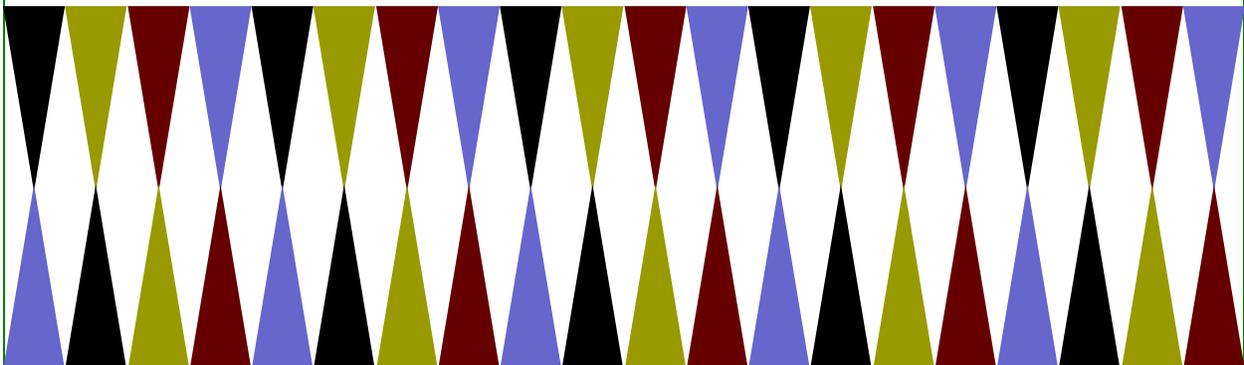
Faculty Adviser: *Christopher Chase-Dunn*

For more information about enrolling in the Sociology 199H: Sociology Honors Research course for 2015-16, students should contact the Sociology Undergraduate Adviser, Ellen Reese (ellen.reese@ucr.edu). Students must be a graduating senior have an overall GPA of 3.5 or above or consent of the instructor to enroll in Sociology 199H.

Sociology Internships: Sociology majors have opportunities to obtain course credit for both research internships and internships in the community.

Sociology 197: Research Internship (1-4 units; S/NC) is a directed research course open to upper-division undergraduate students through which you assist a faculty member with their research. You enroll through a paper form (available from Student Advisers) with consent of a ladder-ranked faculty (those listed as faculty on the Sociology department website).

Sociology 198-I: Individual Internship is a course through which you can obtain professional and field experience by volunteering for a local organization, such as a local non-profit organization, a business, service center, or labor union. Up to 15 upper division students in Sociology who have earned a C grade or better in Soc 1 (or Soc 1H), Soc 4, and have completed at least 12 units of upper division sociology course work are eligible to enroll in this course. For more information about the Sociology 198-I course, how to find potential site supervisors, and how to enroll in this course, please see: http://sociology.ucr.edu/undergraduate_program/Sociology198-I.html



Reflections on the Rise of the Right

Augustine J. Kposowa

The past few years have witnessed the rise of right wing parties in some liberal democracies in the West. The most surprising of these is the Austrian Freedom Party, whose motto is 'Austria first'. Its leader, Norbert Hofer narrowly lost Austria's May 2016 election by gaining 47.9% of the vote. If he wins following the expected recount of the votes, Mr. Hofer would become the first far-right head of state to lead a European nation since the end of the Second World War. In France, The National Front, led by Ms. Marine Le Pen has been gaining votes across the country since 2012, and it is quite conceivable that in the country's next presidential elections, the party could come to power. In Britain, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), once dismissed by detractors as some fringe party, heavily backed the successful referendum to leave the European Union. Although its firebrand leader, Mr. Nigel Farage has recently resigned in the wake of continuing fallout of the referendum, UKIP's general message about putting Britain first will likely continue to resonate in some circles in British society. Whether in the Netherlands, Greece, Germany, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Poland, or even Switzerland these far right political parties seem to have a common thread: nationalism.

An inescapable question for political sociologists to tackle is: why are far right parties gaining ground? It is facile and counter-productive to dismiss the rise of far right movements, or attribute their ascendancy to racism, immigration, xenophobia or other phobia because although these factors are at play in some countries, they may well be external manifestations of underlying processes at work. It is more likely that globalization trends emerging since the end of colonialism have yet to reach their natural endpoints. In the interim these trends have unleashed forces that are not easy to comprehend, explain, let alone predict their future with certitude. In the midst of uncertainty, it is at times difficult to embrace the future; instead, looking back at some glorious past, contagious as it may, is more comfortable, for after all, the past is better known than the future.

On face value, it is joyful to marvel at all the technological advances made since 1945 (ignoring the atomic bomb). Infectious diseases are largely contained, though from time to time new ones emerge with devastating consequences. In the West, the leading causes of death are for the most part chronic (for the long haul) diseases, and acquiring even one or more of these does not spell an immediate death sentence. International travel (at least for those that can afford it) has become easier with regard to capability. The degree of comfort in undertaking the endeavor remains an open question since September 2001. Advances in computing, video, voice, and text transmissions, and the overall interlocking of people across oceans and continents is now possible, although these are not without their woes, whether through hackers or general loss of privacy due to omnipresent cameras, listening and recording devices that many people gladly carry around.

If one were to reflect just on modernization and accompanying technological breakthroughs, the age of globalization ought not be an epoch of doom, but of optimism, and perhaps the greatest, if not the most exciting period in human history, Yet globalization has brought tremendous challenges that the leaders of the world and the community of nations seem unable to resolve. One of these is the rapid, and rather insane increase in inequality—in wealth, income, and even power. The capitalist system which has penetrated most of the globe appears to work in generating income and wealth, but largely for the few and well connected at the top. Even for persons that consider themselves to be in the middle class in many western nations, moderate increases in wages and salaries are quickly offset by much higher increases in cost of living, leaving individuals with the sense of working harder and harder, but struggling to make ends meet. The bills and their collectors

never cease to appear over and over. In short, there is stagnation in earnings. Unemployment, underemployment, and precarious employment have perhaps always been features of modern capitalism, but they seem to have worsened and persisted over time, and risk becoming part of some 'new normal.'

De-industrialization in some Western countries cannot be ignored in any analysis of the rise of far right parties or leaders. Heavy manufacturing industries once made for a comfortable living with decent wages; there was solace in the hope that one could work, retire at some age, and still maintain acceptable physical quality of life; there was job security. Movement of factories to cheap labor markets, often in places where employers pay deplorable wages has left many in the West genuinely frustrated and at times with no safety nets. It is no coincidence, for example, that some of the most avid supporters of Britain leaving the European Union were from areas of England that had witnessed considerable loss of manufacturing jobs.

The financial crisis of 2008 and its accompanying recession only made things worse for a non negligible percentage of the population in many nations, including the United States. Governments reacted differently to the crises. A long held economic wisdom prior to the 2008 was that to combat recession or depression, government spending must go up. Spending on infrastructure (schools, roads, bridges, railways, and so on, prisons excepted) creates jobs, and over time, as the employed spend their earnings, the economy rebounds, and the recession ends. In the meantime, a country that made such an investment obtains much improved outlook. In the Great Recession, while some nations (like Italy) went for infrastructure improvement, others (like Britain) decided that austerity was the way to go. Spending cuts invariably meant greater pain and suffering for the most vulnerable as social services, including welfare and health care took a hit. Any semblance of an economic recovery from the 2008 recession never raised everyone; there remain areas within nations where people continue to suffer economically and socially.

Western entanglements in foreign wars have not helped the economic situation of most people, with the exception of those in the defense and weapons manufacturing community. These entanglements, especially since 2003 set in motion events that have had troubling consequences with global implications that are still unraveling. Populations were displaced, and international migration flows resulted into major refugee crises.

There has occurred a complex interplay between de-industrialization, economic inequality, long-term unemployment, wage stagnation, job insecurity, reduction in social services and a dwindling safety net. Ordinary citizens, especially the less educated may not know the intricate details of how the economy works, let alone the pernicious sequelae of financial markets and financiers.

Far right parties have capitalized on what may be some legitimate economic grievances of the populace, but fail to cast blame on the underlying causes of problems—the unfinished trajectory of globalization and social change. In order to gain power, they play on people's fears, point to immigrants as the cause of economic hardships and downward social mobility. In their eyes, establishment politicians have to be removed from office because they have mismanaged the economy—through allowing refugees and other immigrants. If only immigration were to stop or be slowed considerably, they argue, the country will return to its glorious past, when it was all white.

There is some irony in the way far right movements and even ordinary citizens have reacted to immigrants. A look at their population pyramids in demography shows clearly aging populations. Countries like Sweden and Switzerland and even the Netherlands are approaching near stationary populations. Fertility declined a long time ago, and with increased life expectancy, younger workers are needed if those countries are to survive. As for the UK, the National Health Service could hardly function without a ready supply of nurses and physicians from the former colonies. Whether these far right leaders come to power or not, it is evident that they cannot, and probably should not be ignored. They may have the wrong message and wrong prescriptions, but silencing them is never prudent; society could learn from what they have to say.

Welcoming the Cohort of 2016

The Department of Sociology, University of California Riverside joyfully welcomes the following members of the incoming cohort of future sociologists:

Bielitz, Rudolph, MA, Humboldt State University (Criminology)

Bloom, Quinn, MA, California State, Bakersfield (Social Psychology)

Bogumil, Elizabeth, BA, California State, Northridge (Political Economy)

Hamilton, Justen, MA, DePaul University (Gender Studies)

Harari, Lexi, BA, California State, Channel Islands (Criminology)

Lee, Juha, MA, University of Chicago (Social Psychology)

Maldonado, Katherine, BA, University of California, LA (Gender Studies)

Plascencia-Castillo, Jose Stalin, MA, California State, San Marcos (Race)

Quinn, Andrew, MA, San Diego State University (Social Psychology)

Ragsdale, Eden, BA, Western Washington University (Race and Class)

Wang, Zehao, MA, New York University (Gender Studies)

Webb, Megan, MS, University of Alabama, Birmingham (Criminology)

Welch, Levin, MA, University of Nevada, Reno (Political Economy)

Winegar, Joel, MA, California State, Fullerton (Evolutionary Sociology)

STUDENTS' FORUM

Does the Inclusion of Latin Culture Affect Latina Women's Subjective Experience of Zumba?

Christine Muñoz



Christine Muñoz is a fourth year Sociology and Spanish major. Christine is entering UCLA's Social Work program this fall as a social advocate for underprivileged families of color. Christine would like to thank Dr. Tanya Nieri for her guidance and mentorship and the Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant for providing financial support.

Zumba, a Latin-inspired dance fitness program, has emerged as an immensely popular form of physical activity. Zumba is available in 185 countries and serving 14 million people worldwide. Zumba is different from traditional group fitness because of its blend of rhythms of Latin, hip-hop, and other world music into Latin dance styles. Zumba's minimal verbal cueing, simple, repetitive choreography, and focus on fun make it accessible to new consumers of physical activity and attractive to experienced consumers. Zumba features sexualized aspects and it is visible in some of the dance movements and music.

Zumba may provide strategies on reducing health disparities by attracting ethnic minority groups. Research on health disparities show that language barriers contribute to reduced access to and quality of care among ethnic minority groups. Cultural involvement and cultural care are seen by colleagues, specialists, and policy makers as essential to communicate with racial/ethnic minority populations. Latinos/Hispanics in the United States experience disproportionately high rates of cardiovascular disease, obesity, and diabetes, and significant barriers to regular physical. Physical activity reduces the risk of disease, but Latinos/Hispanics in the United States have less access to exercise facilities and health programs. Research has not yet explored the reasons for Zumba's popularity. Its popularity and growth suggest that Zumba may have positive impacts on health disparities by attracting new consumers to physical activity and retaining existing consumers by providing culturally competent fitness services.

The data for the present analysis come from a broader study of Zumba's impact based on 56 qualitative interviews conducted in 2013-2014 with ethnically diverse, female Zumba participants in the Inland Empire, California. Zumba is described as Latin inspired fitness, the present study investigates on what that means to 41 self-identified Latina participants from the broader sample and the role of the "Latinness" that Zumba plays in participants' subjective experience. Funded by the Minigrant program in Spring 2015, a preliminary analysis was conducted on 15 (of the 41) Latinas who identified as predominately Spanish speaking. It found that there were four categories of experience: participants that loved Zumba's sexual aspects, participants that accepted Zumba's sexual aspects, participants that disliked Zumba's sexual aspects, and participants that did not recognize Zumba's sexual aspects. The present analysis investigates whether the preliminary findings affect the way Latin culture is understood by these consumers. The question we address is whether the inclusion of Latin culture affects Latina women's subjective experience of Zumba? And if so, why?

These factors are what led to my research question: Does the Inclusion of Latin Culture Affect Latina Women's Subjective Experience of Zumba? My study is a part of a broader study of Zumba fitness focusing on ethnically diverse women of all ages. My analysis used a subsample of the data. Qualitative interviews were conducted between 2013-2014 with 41 adult, female Zumba participants from metro Los Angeles and Inland Empire, CA. Interviews were completed in participants' chosen location, and were audio-recorded for about 1-2 hours. The eligibility was to take Zumba in 12 months prior to interview, identify as Latina/Hispanic, be female, and be over the age of 18. The participants received Target gift cards as incentives. The participants were recruited through personal networks, participant referrals, and local Zumba classes. 16 of the interviews were conducted in Spanish and 25 interviews were conducted in English (N=41). The age range was between 18-55 years old. 20 of the participants were born outside of the US and 21 were born in the US. Most of the participants identified as Mexican or Mexican-American

Based on prior research, all the women overall have a positive experience and have fun. However, they experience the cultural components of Zumba differently. I categorized the cultural components into 6 groups: 1) Nostalgia, 2) Cultural Education, 3) Latina Participants gain a sense of pride when educating others, 4) Collectivism, 5) An informal built in system of accountability, and 6) Formal system of accountability.

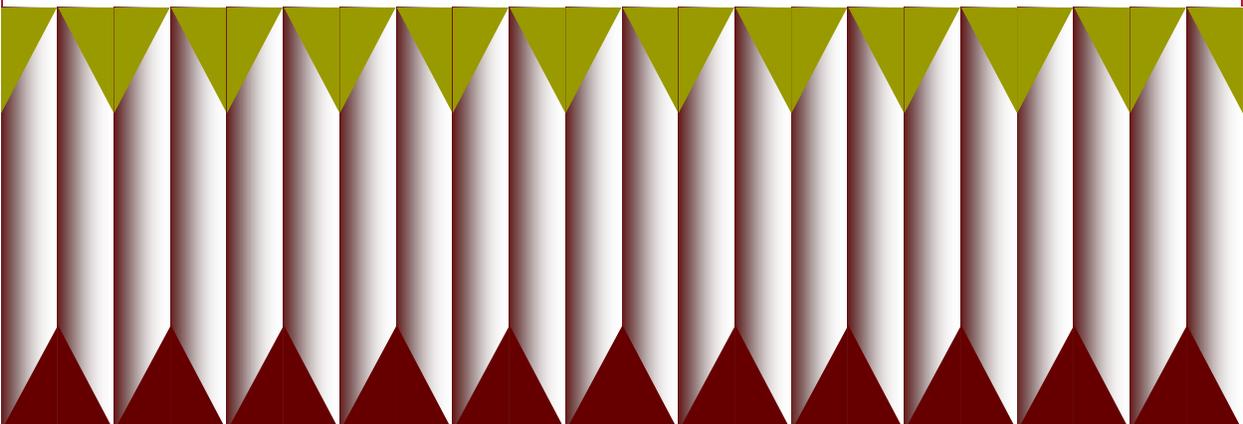
In conclusion, all the women have an enjoyable experience when participating in Zumba. However, the Latina participants have different and similar subjective experiences of the cultural aspects of Zumba. The cultural grounded base of Zumba is what makes it unique and meaningful to the Latina women because they are linking themselves (through its music, dance, nostalgic feelings, collectivism, etc) to Zumba to connect to their cultural identity even though that was not Zumba's purpose.

Funded by the Minigrant program in Spring 2016, I presented my research findings at the Pacific Sociological Association in Oakland, CA and at the 2016 Undergraduate Research Symposium.

My study builds on prior and ongoing work by UCR sociology Professor Tanya Nieri and UCR graduate and Chancellor's Research Fellow Rachel Aguilar that examines Zumba participation among the general population of fitness consumers.

References

Adelman, L., Baynard, J., Chisolm, R., Fortier, J. M., Garcia, R. P. (2008). *Unnatural causes: Is inequality making us sick?* Pacific Islanders in Communications.



My Undergraduate Experience at UC Riverside

Nicole Lynn Martin

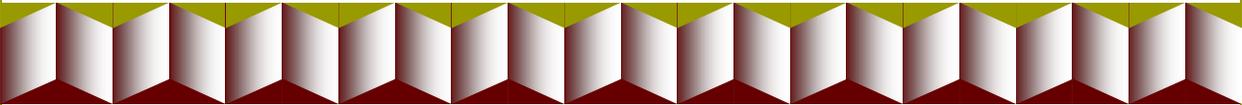


I have had an amazing four-year experience at UC Riverside. Initially, I began college undeclared and unsure on what career path I would follow. However, during my first year I took a Sociology course, which I was extremely interested in. I was compelled to learn more about the inequalities regarding race, class, status, and gender. I began taking more Sociology courses and decided to declare Sociology as my major. Taking courses in Sociology enhanced my critical thinking and analytical skills and also exposed me to several injustices occurring within US society. These injustices left me with an unsettling feeling, which led me to start thinking of what career I wanted to pursue. I knew that I wanted to make a change and impact on society. I began to think about pursuing a career in law and started researching different fields of law.

I am extremely passionate about assisting underrepresented groups, especially minorities and women. I then decided to add Law and Society to my major and found the material I was learning to be very stimulating. I started to take the steps regarding what I should do to fulfill my goal of attending law school and becoming a lawyer. Two colleagues and I started an organization on campus called Black Student Law Association (BSLA). The goal of BSLA is to encourage more minority students to enter the legal field and to provide the students with the necessary resources and opportunities to be successful in law school, and later as an attorney. Since the founding of this organization, we have hosted two events with panels of attorneys from Richard T. Fields Bar Association speaking about their experiences in law school and as attorneys. We also hosted a "Mock Law School Class" with the dean of Southwestern Law School. In addition, we have had UCLA Law School Admissions and a representative from Blueprint LSAT Course speak to our students. Furthermore, we planned and held several general meetings and philosophical chairs to inform students about the application process and introduce controversial issues to students to allow them to share their viewpoints and argue their case.

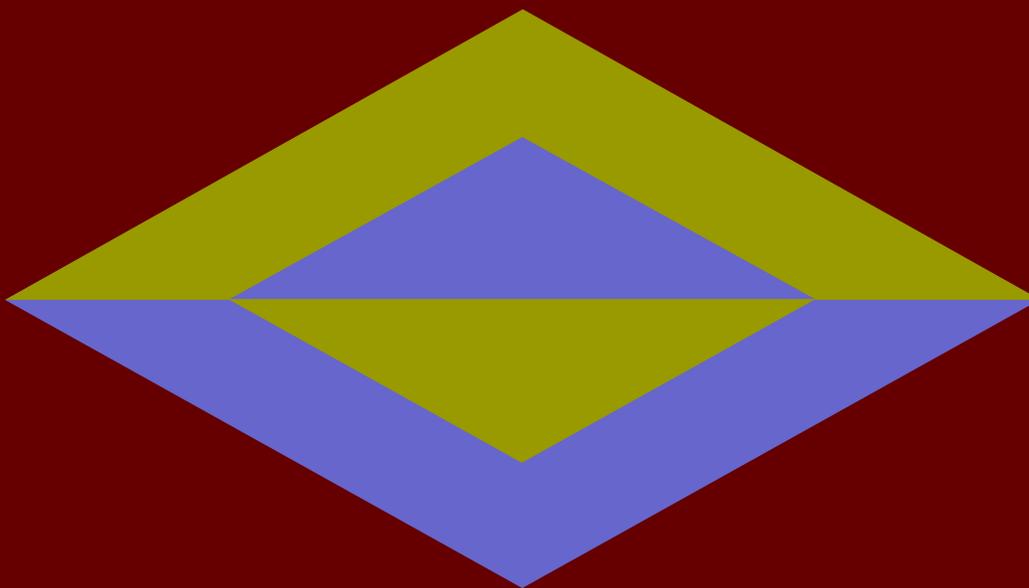
My passion in race relations also pushed me to obtain an internship with the Minority Business Development Agency. I was fortunate to receive a unique experience to participate in the UCDC Program to intern for this agency. I was able to learn about the impact minority owned businesses have on the economy and the world. The UCDC Program contributed to my academic and professional growth. My amazing experience with the program, led me to become the Peer Coordinator of the UCDC Program. I have been working with the program since the start of the senior year and have assisted other students in finding their internships in DC. My interest in race also led me to write my Senior Honor's Thesis Titled "Race and Consequences: An Examination of Police Abuse in America."

Professor Augustine Kposowa motivated me to write my thesis and to challenge me. I took Sociology 137 (Population) with him during my third year. During the course we had to write a research paper including statistical analysis. However, I struggled with coming up with a topic, so I dropped by his office and explained my dilemma. He asked me two questions: (1) What topic are you most passionate in learning more about? (2) Are you curious about anything right now in this country or in the world? With the numerous cases of police brutality, which had occurred in 2014, I told Dr. Kposowa that police violence was something I was extremely frustrated and disappointed about, with all the shootings going on and policemen not being held accountable. He encouraged me to write about this topic for my research paper. Dr. Kposowa was different than many other professors I have had. He truly was invested and interested in my success and helping me accomplish the tasks I set for myself. He saw the potential in me, even when I felt discouraged.

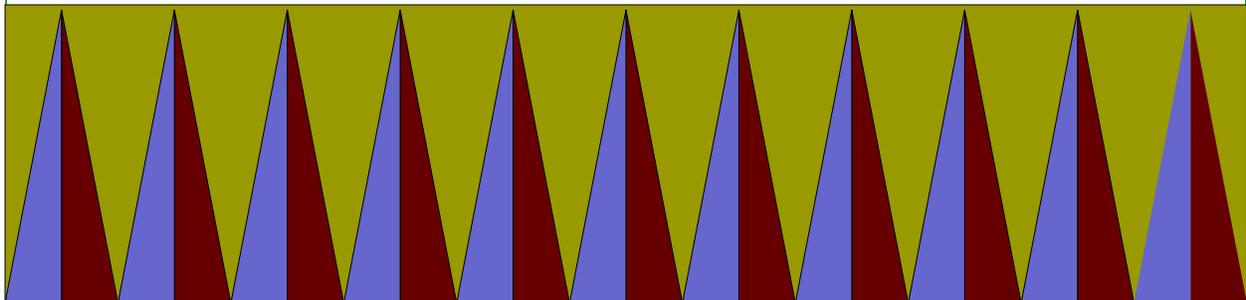
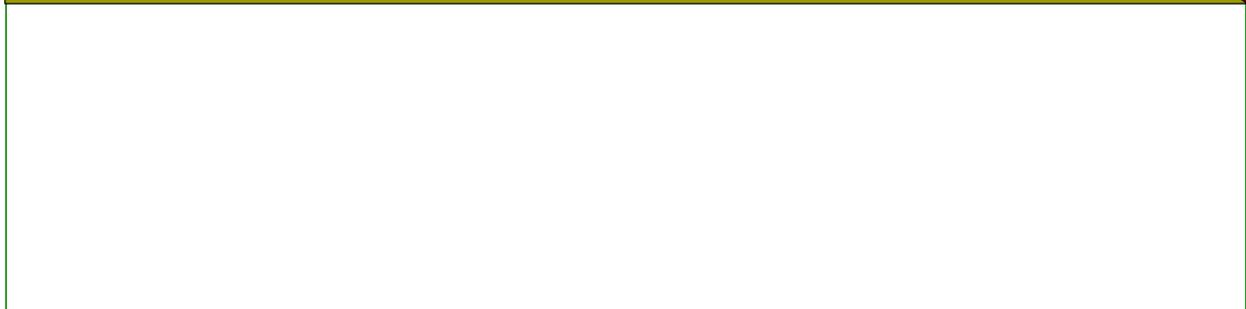
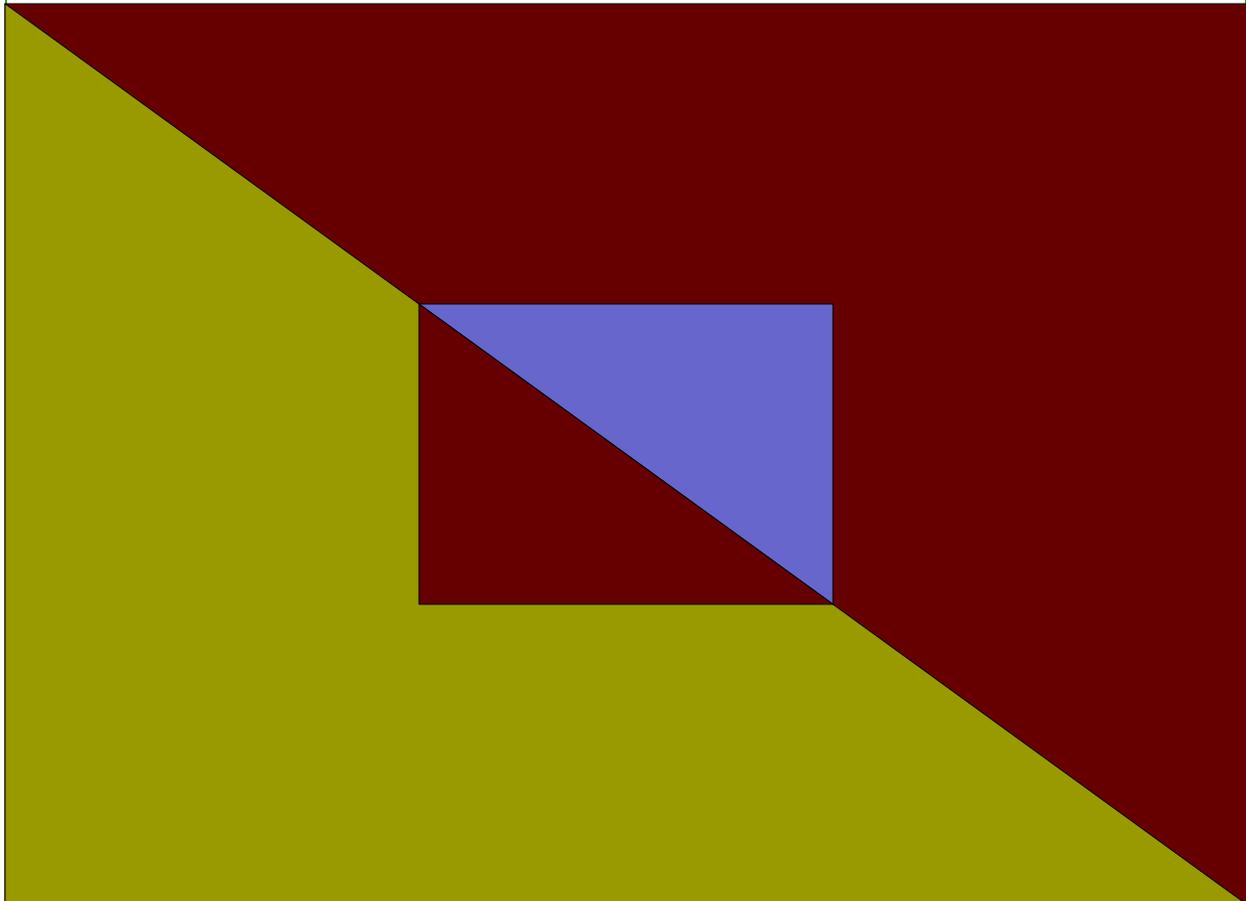


I have been extremely grateful to work on my Senior Thesis with Professor Kposowa. I have used extensive content analysis to explain the crisis of police violence. African Americans are targeted at a disproportionately high rate in regards to police use of force, including shootings, and being able to talk to Professor Kposowa who kept providing statistics on police abuse of African American citizens and the historical context of how police forces were established in the United States greatly helped. I would recommend other African American students to take courses with Professor Kposowa. Not only is he very aware of the injustices occurring, but he is open and willing to listen to students, and talk to them about solving problems. He takes time to assist students with any concerns or issues brought to his attention. Most importantly, Dr. Kposowa truly motivates students and will assist them in any way he can regarding their future career aspirations. I am looking forward to the Conference of the Society for the Study of Social Problems in Seattle, where I will be presenting my research on police violence.

UC Riverside has exceeded my expectations for my undergraduate experience. My involvement on campus has enhanced my world view. In addition to founding and being Co-President of Black Student Law Association, I am a member of Phi-Alfa Delta Law Fraternity International, Co-President of the Sociology Honor's Cub, African Student Programs Peer Mentor, and Black Graduation Committee Member. I also am currently pursuing my interest in law by interning for the Riverside Office of the City Attorney. Currently, I am interested in employment law and am thinking about pursuing a joint degree program to obtain my JD and MBA. I am interested in fighting for a higher minimum wage, protecting the working class, and preventing forms of discrimination in the work place. I believe that a Masters in business, with a focus in human resources along with a JD, will provide me with resources to better assist minorities and underrepresented groups by providing them with jobs and opportunities to become successful. I have been able to make life-long friends, develop great relationships with my professors, and take full advantage of the resources offered through UCR. I will be applying to law school for the Fall of 2017 and am looking forward to what is in store for my future.



The Department invites our many alumni to send us their news and other stories, including any transitions. We are interested in hearing from you, and knowing what has happened since graduation from UCR. Please send information to Dr. Alexandra Maryanski (Alumni Affairs) using the following email address: Alexandra.maryanski@ucr.edu



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