Greetings from the AKD Board
Welcome to the Fall Semester of 2019!

Hello everyone, hope you all had a relaxing summer. With the school year, let us welcome you back to the rush of 10,001 things you have to do.

To help you learn to manage the time and stress that goes into doing all 10,001 of those things, you should come to AKD's first ever informal workshop on academic life skills!

Our expert panel of graduate students and faculty will assemble on Oct. 4 at noon who will share tips and tricks they've used to survive and thrive in academia. Our sincere thanks to Dr. Christopher Dum, Dr. Tiffany Taylor, Tierra James, and Tiah Wingate for taking time out of their busy schedules to volunteer as our panelists.

We want to make sure these workshops are useful as possible to the graduate students, so please, take a minute to submit questions for our panelists using this link: https://bit.ly/2m90g4J. Your submissions are anonymous, so this might be especially useful for any questions you might be nervous about bringing up in front of the group yourself.

Moderators Jessica Fleck and Jon Overton will organize your submissions and give the panelists a chance to respond to them. Twenty minutes will be left at the end for questions that may have occurred to folks in the audience during the discussion.

Also, make sure to sign up for the NAMI Walk, happening in late October (see t-shirt order form at the end of the newsletter).

Mental health has long been a priority for this department in more ways than one. This will be our 5th annual walk, and we want to emphasize that everyone is welcome to attend. Feel free to invite friends, relatives, children, undergraduate students, etc. All are welcome!

See our team page to make a donation: https://bit.ly/2k1Ej2s. You can also ask folks to make donations using the same link.

If everyone can just take a moment to ask a few friends and/or relatives for a hand, we’re certain that we can meet our $1,500 fundraising goal.

AKD is always looking for better ways to do what we do (see next page for details). If you look at something we’re trying to do and ask yourself “Why aren’t these boneheads just doing [insert your far superior idea here]?” then fear not! Positions become available on the board every year, so you can be the change you wish to see in the department by joining the AKD board.

We especially want to thank everyone who’s contributed their time and resources to AKD over the years: past boards, our faculty advisor, and members of the department. We couldn’t do any of this without you.

Cheers,

Jon Overton, President
Dan Burrill, Vice President
Jessica Fleck, Treasurer
Courtney Dress, Social Chair
Leslie Wood, Secretary
Dr. Kristen Marcussen, Advisor
Greetings and welcome to the Fall Newsletter. For those who do not know me, I became Chair this past July 1. Richard Serpe, who served as Chair for 14 years, retired and is now living the good life in San Diego. I want to thank him for his leadership.

I also want to take this opportunity to tell two never-say-never stories. When I was 20 years old, if anyone had ever said that I'd have a job where a large part of my time would be standing in front of a large audience talking, I would have thought, “That will never happen.” I was very inhibited and even the thought of standing and talking in front of others would make me nervous. Fifteen years later, I had my Ph.D. and spent my day lecturing to students or attending conventions and presenting my research.

Likewise, 15 years ago, if anyone had said that one day, I would be the Chair of a Sociology Department, with a graduate program, I would have also said, “No way.” When I was younger, I was never the type to yell, “Me, Me,” when teachers asked for someone to volunteer for leadership positions. Well, here I am doing something that I thought would never happen.

Life experiences often lead you to do something that you never thought would happen. The challenge is to accept those experiences and learn to deal with them.

I hope everyone had a great summer and is enjoying the last of the warm fall weather.

-Richard Adams

Meet the New Graduate Students

Questions
1. What was your previous institution?
2. What are your research interests?
3. What is your favorite memory in sociology?
4. What is a fun fact about you?

Maddy Steward

1. I received my Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Sociology from Kent State University in May 2018.
2. Social inequalities, specifically gender and sexual orientation and how those intersect with perceived deviance from breaking gender norms.

3. When I approached Dr. Kamesha Spates after an Introduction to Sociology class and asked her if there was any way she could help me with a small research project I wanted to do. I was so enthralled with how forthcoming she was with information and enthusiasm towards my interests. I knew then I wanted to keep doing research and I wanted to learn more about the theories and discussions she talked about in our meetings.

4. I love collecting sea glass and I used to make jewelry out of it.

Cynthia Hunt

1. I graduated from The University of Akron in 2018 with a B.A. in Family & Child Development and a certificate in Parent Education.

2. Gender, sexuality, and family, inequalities.

3. When I presented at NEOUSS in 2018 at Oberlin College. I presented (a small amount of) research on Intentional Teen Pregnancies, which is something I hope to continue studying and researching in the future!

4. My boyfriend and I bought a house in May, we live in the Akron area with our cat (Stormy) and the majority of my non-grad school time goes towards home repairs / remodeling / DIY projects!

Chloe Miller

1. B.S. in Neuroscience from the University of Mount Union.

2. Social psychology, social neuroscience, gender and sexuality, and inequality.

3. Amelia’s baked goods in my intro to sociology class.

4. I learned to play steel pans last year and played in the steel band at Mount Union.

Michelle Fretwell

1. Boise State University - B.S. in Sociology

2. Gender and sexuality; femininities and masculinities; race, gender, and class; inequalities; social movements.

3. When I realized that I was not alone in the way I thought about the world and our culture; I remember everything making sense in my first sociology class in undergrad. I had always wanted to create social change, but never knew the HOW. It was in that class when I decided that studying sociology was my best bet at getting there.

4. I coached high school rugby my last year of undergrad and my team became the state champs.

Brandon Ehlinger

1. I have a BA in History and a second major in Criminal Justice from Ashland University.

2. My areas of interest are crime, deviance, and racial prejudice/discrimination.

3. My favorite sociology-related memory came in my undergrad research methods class. We were discussing surveys and as an example of a vague question, my professor (Dr.
Drinkard, who received her PhD from Kent) asked how we like our time at Ashland. There are few African American students at Ashland and frankly, many students at Ashland have had very limited experiences with African Americans in general. This is evident in the subtle ways some white students at Ashland show their level of discomfort around black students and a black student in my methods class took this opportunity to point these things out and how they have been detrimental to his experience. It led to a great conversation that I imagine was quite insightful for students not from diverse backgrounds.

4. A fun fact about me is I hold my high school’s record for number of cookies eaten in one lunch period (51).

Welcome new cohort!

We are excited for your many successes in the program and beyond.

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Jerry Lewis
This year, Kent State University is commemorating the 50th anniversary of the May 4th shootings. Emeritus Professor Dr. Jerry Lewis has been a member of the sociology faculty at Kent State since 1966. He has devoted much of his scholarship to what happened on May 4, 1970 and is currently involved in planning many of this year’s commemorative events. Social Chair Courtney Dress spoke with Dr. Lewis for this issue’s faculty spotlight. Their conversation below contains minor edits for clarity.

Courtney: What is your role in the annual walking vigil we have on May 3rd and May 4th? Typically, I start it off. When the vigil is completed, I go to the parking lot. I'm at the parking lot and I talk to a lot of people coming back. I'm also a member of one major committee—it's called the Advisory Committee—which advises the university president on May 4th activities. I'm also a member of the walking vigil committee.

Dr. Lewis: Well, I think there’s several.

First of all, clearly my own personal participation as an eyewitness and my memory of the slain and the wounded. Second, I’m taking a leadership role in the annual walking vigil we have on May 3rd and May 4th. Typically, I start it off. When the vigil is completed, I go to the parking lot. I'm at the parking lot and I talk to a lot of people coming back. I'm also a member of one major committee—it's called the Advisory Committee—which advises the university president on May 4th activities. I'm also a member of the walking vigil committee.

I see myself as having several functions. One, I'm a resource for what happened on May 4th as an eyewitness. Second, I try to help people track down those who are important to the story. I don’t give addresses or anything like that, I just say "I know that they live out west. You might contact the alumni association."

I'm often asked if I know any guardsman. I know of them, but I don’t know them personally. I suppose I'm sort of the corporate memory for what we've done in the past in terms of remembering.

Courtney: What events you are personally most excited for?

Dr. Lewis: I'm not sure I'm "excited", but I think the walking vigil, which starts at midnight on May 4th and ends
up at 12:24 when the shootings took place. I want that to go well. I want that to have dignity and respect as we remember and honor the slain and wounded.

So I think that vigil walk and vigil itself are very important events as part of the culture of May 4th. Some people are coming for the first time in a long time or ever. Some were here in 1970. I want them all to have a meaningful experience, so that I can tell them what’s happened and talk to them, even comfort them. I get more comfort than they probably do. I think that’s important to welcome the alum back. I hope that we do our best to teach the next generations what happened on May 4th.

Courtney: Historically the university administration hasn’t always been interested in recognizing and remembering the shootings. How did the institution reach a point where it’s actively commemorating May 4th? How has their official role changed over the decades?

Dr. Lewis: Wow—trip round the world and elsewhere. In 1975, the University announced that it would no longer officially recognize May 4th. So that started the May 4th Task Force, which was essentially a student group. I worked on the vigil and the walk. Tom Hensley and I started the class on May 4th.

The faculty, staff, and students tried hard to keep the memory of May 4th alive. We had the gym dispute in 1977/78 which was really rough on the university.

The university only began working hard on the memorial after Mike Schwartz, who was a sociologist, became the University President. Carol Cartwright came along and took a very active interest in May 4th. Then Lester Lefton came along, but didn’t do a lot about May 4th. Dr. Warren came in and did a lot with May 4th—she actually was the first president to speak at the commemoration. And then the new president, Todd Diacon has been very interested in May 4th. He’s on the advisory committee.

So it’s an evolution. I think what basically happened is that the presidents I mentioned, the later ones, began to realize the scope and impact of May 4. And what helped a lot was the creation of the archives and the creation of the Visitors Center, which was later. The Visitors Center is very important to remembering May 4th.

Courtney: You’ve written extensively on social movements, collective behavior, and collective memory, especially their connection to the events of May 4th. So, what do the events of May 4th and their commemoration teach us about these subjects?

Dr. Lewis: That’s a good question. One of the things I’ve realized is I had a very simple explanation when I started out and wrote a piece analyzing the May 4th events using Smelser’s theory of collective behavior. After I wrote the Smelser piece, I realized how complex crowd behavior was, and why people didn’t study it. Because it’s just hard. Collective behavior is very good in theory and there are strong theories in
functionalism, strong theories in Symbolic Interaction, obviously social movements and Marx. So all the theoretical positions we teach and read about are present in collective behavior. It’s just hard to research it, to walk into crowds. I’ve been in riots—was not a very pleasant experience—in a sports riot. It’s hard to collect data. A lot of the data is very confidential because it involves crimes. So I think that May 4th, because there are so many documents, eyewitnesses, photographs, physical structures that are still there—the Commons and the parking lot—has helped a little bit. But my main takeaway is that it’s very tough to research it, and that’s because collective behavior is so complex.

**Courtney:** Those were all of our official questions. Is there anything else you wanted to add?

**Dr. Lewis:** The department never told me to avoid researching May 4th. In fact, my colleagues over the years have been very supportive, incredibly supportive. Not everyone I knew was so supportive. My advisor, Bernard Farber was a great guy. I was one of the few lucky people that came away with a positive advisor-student experience. A lot of people don’t have that relationship to their dissertation advisor. But I had a positive one. So, I ran into him at ASA, I think in August of 1970 or the year after. And he said "I see you published on May 4th. You can’t build a career on writing about May 4th." I loved the guy. So I spent a year being depressed because Bernie didn’t support me.

The next year, he was introducing me as an eyewitness to the shootings. He had completely changed. And I think that happens to a lot of people when they see where the students were standing who were killed and how far away they were from the National Guard. The depth of the tragedy is almost Shakespearean. And I think that changes a lot of people’s view.

I’ve greatly appreciated and collaborated with the other faculty here on projects related to May 4th. I wrote with Stan Gregory, I wrote with Denzel Benson, and with Ray Adamek on May 4th topics. Half my vita is essentially about May 4th.

I deeply appreciate the support from the department. The fact that you’re doing an interview this late in my career is very much appreciated.

To learn more about Dr. Lewis’ scholarly work on the events of May 4th, see his book with Thomas Hensley, *Kent State and May 4th: A Social Science Perspective*. From this book, he asked us to highlight this chapter in particular for an overview of the events of May 4th. In addition, see the article he mentioned in the interview on the May 4th events using Neil Smelser’s theory of collective behavior.

Dr. Lewis also wrote a manual to guide instructors interested in teaching a course on May 4th (or aspects of May 4th) in their classes. It reviews sociological analyses of the shootings, teaching resources, assignments, and more.

For additional information on this year’s events commemorating May 4th, please see: [https://www.kent.edu/may4kentstate50](https://www.kent.edu/may4kentstate50)
Advice from 2nd-Year Graduate Students: Surviving Year 1

Courtney Dress

Make friends with people in your cohort. Everything you're feeling, they're feeling too, especially in the first year. Relatedly, remember that people are quiet about having a hard time. If you're struggling but it seems like no one else is, that doesn't mean they aren't. Grad school is really hard and we all need people to vent to who get it.

Sam Nousak

The most important skill to work on is time management. There are a lot of deadlines, tasks, and meetings you'll have to balance as a graduate student, and it's important to make sure you account for everything. Get a planner (paper or electronic) and fill it out religiously! In particular, pay attention to when you have multiple things due in one week and plan for that ahead of time. This will save you a lot of suffering in the long run.

Sarah Harvey

We are all students, and that's okay. Some of us are at varying levels, and that's okay too. The pressure of the semester and the work you are being asked to do will often make you feel like this is not okay. You have to keep telling yourself that it is. Research shows that teachers learn so much more about themselves and their work from students. We do not extend our stay in academia to stop learning, and if we remember that even as students, we have so much to offer, it will help us to focus less on the immediate product, and more on finding enjoyment in the process.

Lexi Hilling

First and foremost, prioritize self-care. This is of course easier said than done, but even just making yourself do something fun once a week can really help you recharge!

Dan Burrill

1. Use a citation manager. It will greatly reduce the amount of tedious work you have to do. I like Zotero, but there are others.  
2. The best piece of advice I ever got was to always make a figure out of your data as soon as you finish collecting it. Graphically plotting the relationships between important variables will help you understand what is going on in your data and can help guide your analysis plan moving forward.

Jessica Fleck

As a wise graduate student once told me... download Zotero. It is sound advice that has afforded me hours of precious sleep time.

UPCOMING EVENTS

5th Annual NAMI Walk
Saturday, October 26th at the Stile Athletics Field House, University of Akron. Gather at 9:15am, starts at 10:00am

Department Mixer
Friday, November 1st. Starts directly after department meeting (around 4 or 5) in Merrill 207

Banquet Fundraiser: Silent Auction
December 6th at Twin Star Lanes, 2245 Hwy 59. Starts at 7PM
**AKD 2019 T-Shirt**

Please detach and turn in to Jon Overton with payment!

(Use Mailbox or Merrill 231)

The NAMI Walk is October 26th

✓ **Orders must be placed by October 4th, 2019**
✓ Cash or check (made payable to Sociology Honor Society)
✓ Contact Jon Overton with any questions

Name: _________________________________________________

Email:  ________________________________________________

- An email will be sent to announce when the t-shirts are ready for pick-up from Jon’s cubicle in Merrill 231.

**Sizes/Prices: Please indicate number of t-shirts**

$15 / t-shirt  _____ S  _____M  _____L  _____XL  _____XXL  _____XXXL

Total Payment _______________