

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

NEWSLETTER

FALL 20 ISSUE

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Message From the Chair

Spring 2020 was a challenging semester. On March 11th, campus closed when one of our students tested positive for CoVid-19. That evening, just after President Mason announced that campus was well-cleaned and ready for our return, Governor Cuomo ordered all schools in the state closed. Whether we were trained for it or not, we immediately learned to become online instructors, and our students, often in the midst of dire family hardship and tragedy, became online learners. Our faculty adjusted to the challenge with little complaint, even when the Spring schedule suddenly changed and we received numerous lengthy memos detailing adjustments in CUNY policies in light of these unprecedented events.

Then on Thursday, May 7th, members of the Finance and Budget Committee were informed that John Jay College would face a \$21 million shortfall under a best-case scenario and a \$55 million shortfall (roughly half of our operating budget) under a worst-

case scenario. The next day, John Jay Department Chairs were notified that 437 part-time professors on semester-based re-appointments would be cut, and we must immediately adjust our schedules. In tandem with PSC-CUNY, the Chairs mobilized, endorsing a letter of protest to college administration. Some called for a strike involving grade withholding, but this was overturned in the acknowledgement that it would hurt students already suffering the worst effects of the Corona Virus. Administration capitulated by asking for course section cuts based on seat efficiency. We were able to keep all our valuable and respected part-timers, even as those who suffered the cuts of eighteen of our sections took the news with grace and dignity. Together, we will fight the Corona Virus, austerity and systematic racism. Our department is committed to activism based in thoughtful analysis, both of which are desperately needed in these urgent times.

Robert Garot, Ph.D.

Welcome Our New Co-Chair!

Associate Professor of Sociology at John Jay, **Jayne Mooney Ph.D.** is also on the doctoral faculties of Sociology, Criminal Justice and Women's studies at the Graduate Center, CUNY. Her focus of scholarship is on the history of crime and punishment, gender and crime, the sociology of violence, social deviance and critical criminology. An author of innovative books e.g. *The Theoretical Foundations of Criminological Theory: Place Time and Context & Gender, Violence and the Social Order*, Jayne

is currently working to shed light on the history of incarceration in New York City as Director of the Research Initiative Critical History Project (CSHP). Jayne will play a key role in coordinating the course scheduling for the Department of Sociology.





8 MINUTES 46 SECONDS

That was the time it took for Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin to asphyxiate George Floyd on May 25th by kneeling on his neck. But the police abuse of African Americans was integral to the origins of policing in this country, when vigilante groups were formalized to track down escaped slaves. Congress is still unable to pass anti-lynching laws, despite nearly 200 bills being introduced over the past 100 years to outlaw the practice. Police murder and abuse of African Americans is only a stopgap measure to limit the justified rage of those who have endured forced migration, a genocidal middle-passage, slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and contemporary housing, education, employment and transportation policies that leave the African American families with 1/13th the wealth, on average, of white families. The Sociology Department is here to expose such historic and contemporary practices of oppression and marginalization, so we can understand the murder of George Floyd not as the aberrant actions of a few bad cops, but as deeply rooted in American society.

Robert Garot, Ph. D.



Juggling College During the Pandemic!



Award winning Professor *Serena Thomas*

an Adjunct Lecturer in the John Jay Sociology department (**SOC 227– *Sociology of Mental Illness***) and Adjunct Therapist at the John Jay College Wellness Center facilitated a ‘Stress Management & Self– Care’ workshop for our Criminology, Sociology and Dispute Resolution students and faculty in May via ZOOM. Professor Thomas taught students holistic approaches on how to balance life and ease stress using various healing techniques; she also provided incredible digital health resources!

If you have any questions about anything regarding future events or mental health awareness or confidential self care resources feel free to reach out to Professor Thomas anytime! at: sethomas@jjay.cuny.edu



The link below has multiple resources, mental health apps, self-care quizzes, trainings, free meditation tips and more!!

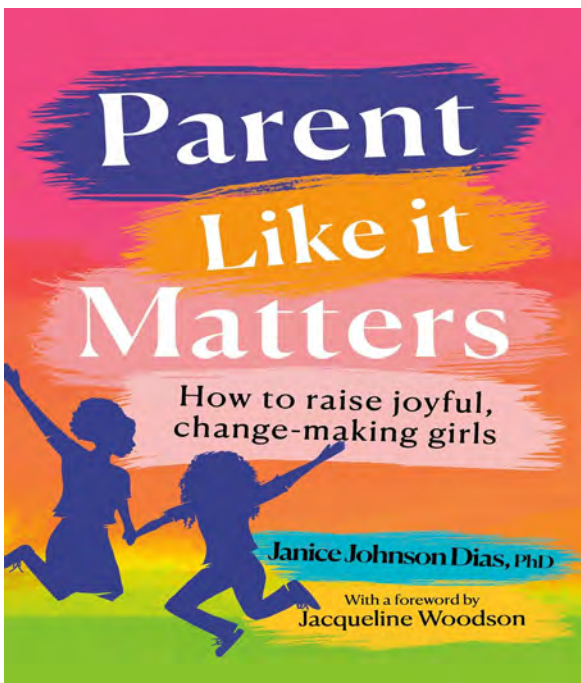
CLICK LINK BELOW

Here it is: <https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/covid-19-digital-mental-health-resources/>

HOT OFF THE PRESS!

NEW FACULTY BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

Professor Janice Johnson– Dias



An accessible blueprint to embolden our daughters to be critical thinkers, fearless doers, and joyful change agents for our future--from the proud mother of teen activist Marley Dias, founder of #1000BlackGirlBooks.

Can we teach our daughters to change the world? Renowned sociologist Janice Johnson Dias is here to show us how. She knows that self-realized girls are created through purposeful parenting. In this book, she asks parents to make conscious choices--from babyhood through adolescence--that will give our girls the resources to take hold of their futures and reach down the ladder to pull up the girls below them so that change becomes a chain reaction.

What is our biggest task as parents? To find our joy. Because as parents, we need to live it to inspire it. Just as Dias brings her own jubilant passion to parenting and teaching, she shows us the vital work we must do on ourselves to lay down the burdens of our past to make space for joy and inspire it in our children. Through anecdotes and personal

recollections, she shows us how to turn our challenges into adventures, our failures into lessons. She also offers advice based on both cutting-edge research and her own experience, such as: compliment her every day, let her teach you something every week, create daily affirmations, and help her identify heroes and mentors.

Dr. Dias understands how easy it is to feel overwhelmed by the enormous work of parenting, but she gives us invaluable tools to raise resilient, optimistic girls who determine for themselves what their world will look like.

<https://www.amazon.com/Parent-Like-Matters-Joyful-Change-Making/dp/1984819623>



HOT OFF THE PRESS!

NEW FACULTY BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

Professor Tarun Banerjee

HOW THE 1% RULES AND WHAT
THE 99% CAN DO ABOUT IT

LEVERS OF POWER

KEVIN A. YOUNG, TARUN BANERJEE,
AND MICHAEL SCHWARTZ

Tarun Banerjee's book (with colleagues Kevin Young and Michael Schwartz) is now out! ***Levers of Power: How the 1% Rules and What the 99% Can Do about It*** develops a broad, new theory of how the interests of global capital are met at every stage of the U.S. policy process, from initiation to implementation to enforcement. Where it differs from prior policy studies, however, is to draw direct implications for change from below through social movements. Tarun and colleagues argue that progressive and Leftist change comes best not by targeting government actors, but instead their sponsors in business (especially finance capital) by disrupting the process of capital formation. Aldon Morris writes:

“Levers of Power disrupts American democratic myths. Through rigorous research and penetrating analysis, Levers of Power dissects the power of elections, courts, Congress, politicians, presidents, lobbyists, social movements, and major corporations. It provides jarring and surprising conclusions of who really rules America; changes how we think about American centers of power; and which among them governs our lives. Everyone interested in

democracy should read Levers of Power to become enlightened citizens.”



HOT OFF THE PRESS!

NEW FACULTY BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

Professor Vojislava Cordes

New York in Cinematic Imagination: The Agitated City. London and New York: Routledge: Research in Planning and Urban Design, 2020.

New York film of the 1930s and 1940s was powerfully shaped by a vision of *agitated urban modernity* born of the Great Depression, World War Two, and post-war practices of urban renewal. This book traces the aesthetic consequences of these economic and political crises in visual and directorial styles, and shows how the new felt urban experience manifested in and was influenced by the commercial and political interests of the film industry, the role of exiles and New Yorkers in Hollywood, and the rise of censorship and the blacklist. The urban theory of Lefebvre and Benjamin, Kracauer's film research, and the sociological studies of Simmel, Park, and Wirth, as well as Mumford's and Jacobs' urbanists works, are all drawn upon and critiqued to elucidate the changing experiences of city life at this time and the new impacts of those experiences. The discussion throughout is aided as well by the more recent city writings of Edward Dimendberg, Andreas Huyssen, and Giuliana Bruno.

Purchase from the publisher (an affordable e-book rental available):

<https://www.routledge.com/New-York-in-Cinematic-Imagination-The-Agitated-City/Cordes/p/book/9780367247560>

Review the book metadata (including view chapter abstracts; Introduction and Bibliography available via Preview pdf):

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9780429284205>

Purchase from a bookstore (in NYC and beyond):

[Boogie Down Bookstore in the Bronx](#)

[The Lit. Bar : Bookstore and Chill in the Bronx](#)

[Book Culture on the Upper West Side](#)

[McNally Jackson in Soho](#) Barnes & Noble

[The Last Bookstore in LA](#)

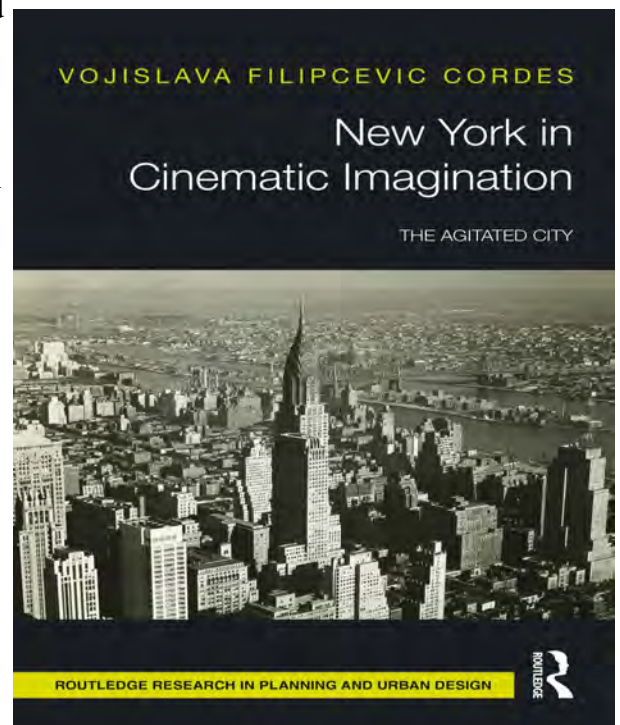
[Skylight Books in LA](#)

[Galignani Bookstore in Paris](#)

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Purchase an affordable Kindle edition on Amazon:

<https://www.amazon.com/New-York-Cinematic-Imagination-Agitated/dp/0367247569>



HOT OFF THE PRESS!

NEW FACULTY BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

Professor Susan Opotow



Faculty Publication

Opotow, S., & McClelland, S. I. (2020). *Theorizing hate in contemporary USA*. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Perspectives on hate: How it originates, develops, manifests, and spreads* (p. 91–108). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000180-005>

This chapter takes up the construct *hate*: what it is, how it appears, and how psychology can study it. Though hate is often studied in its extreme forms (e.g., murder, genocide), this chapter is attentive to its mundane forms to understand its normalization in contemporary society and, particularly, how it combines with moral exclusion and injustice. Mundane forms of hate can teach us to see its manifestations in contemporary life, its progression, and the possibilities for its dismantling. The authors write this chapter at a moment when the president of the United States produces a constant stream of disrespectful and violent political messages that have made hateful racist statements and White Supremacism increasingly acceptable. His messages have affected how people treat one another. The day after Donald Trump won the 2016 U.S. presidential election, hate crimes connected with racial and ethnic bias increased.

SOCIOLOGY STUDENT CORNER

John Jay Sociology Students Participate in Qualitative Prison Project

At the end of the Spring 2020 semester, The Marshall Project (TMP), a *nonpartisan, nonprofit news organization that seeks to create and sustain a sense of national urgency about the U.S. criminal justice system*, recruited a group of students enrolled in Dr. Patricia Johnson Coxx's sociology courses (SOC 101, Introduction to Sociology, SSC 325, Research Methods in Criminology and Sociology, and SOC 440, Senior Seminar (Criminology)) to participate in a prison survey project. The students received data collection (virtual) training conducted by Nicole Lewis, TMP staff writer and Anna Flagg, Senior Data Reporter. In addition to learning about the intricacies of the qualitative methods process, the *contact rate and cooperate rate* of online surveys administered to imprisoned populations nationwide, students participated in collecting data during the global pandemic, in the virtual setting of their own homes.

At the end of the project, Nicole Lewis stated, "With the help of students at John Jay College, The Marshall Project surveyed nearly 2,000 incarcerated people across the country. The survey was designed to gauge how well the Center for Disease Control's (CDC's) guidance on preventing virus transmission in correctional facilities is followed in correctional facilities. Responses to the survey provided insight into the steps, and potential missteps, that have led to widespread coronavirus outbreaks in prisons across the country."

Upon publication of the survey's results, John Jay College students that completed all of the project's requirements will receive *additional reporting credit* for the The Marshall Project article include Sam Ascencio, Brianna Cienza, Oleksandra Drevetska, Wiktoria Hatala (Criminology, JJC 20'), Kayla Hofman, Adrian Ferrera (2020 Sociology Student Service Award), Iriaz Hernandez, Jailene Jimenez, Bohdan Klotska, Tiko Muskudiani, Nicole Allan Perez, Lia Stewart, Pete Thomas (Criminology, JJC 20'), and Adelle Villarente.

<https://www.themarshallproject.org/>

Special Thank you to Professor
Patricia Johnson– Coxx and the
Marshall Project team for exposing
our students to hands-on research!



**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
2019-2020 STUDENT-ADJUNCT AWARD
WINNERS**

RECIPIENT

CAMILLA BRODERICK
JERMAINE HALL
MOSAAB SADEIA
RAFAEL GONZALEZ FLORES
ADRIAN FERRERA
LATT THANT
ANN VOLCY

RECIPIENT

KEVIN JOHNSON
JOANNE MCLEAN
BRIAN MAULE
YOLANDA ORTIZ RODRIGUEZ
JAN YAGER

JAMES CAPIELLO-DITUCCI
KT CHUN
SARAH HANKS
KEVIN JOHNSON
ALYSSA LYONS
AMY MARTINEZ
BRIAN MAULE
YOLANDA ORTIZ RODRIGUEZ
BRADLEY ROTH
SERENA THOMAS
MARISA TRAMONTANO

STUDENT AWARDS

JOCK YOUNG AWARD
SEAN WHEELER AWARD
SEAN WHEELER AWARD
STUDENT SERVICE AWARD
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STUDENT SERVICE AWARD

ADJUNCT AWARDS

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