Greetings!

To “continually renew our community,” as Terence Hopkins constantly urged us, we are devoting the second issue of our newsletter to news about our alumni. We are grateful that so many of our alumni provided us their bios and reflections on Binghamton at short notice. Some of them even kept to the suggested maximum length of these pieces, others blithely paid no heed to these limits as is to be expected in a department where “area papers” have ranged from a meager 7 pages to massive tomes of 150 pages plus! The more things change, the more they remain the same.

VOLUME IV OF THE MODERN WORLD-SYSTEM

We are delighted to see that the University of California Press has announced that it will publish volume IV of Immanuel Wallerstein’s Modern World-System later this Spring. University of California Press is also reissuing the three earlier volumes that have been out of print for some time now.

Public Sociology

Members of the department have been especially active in engaging non-academic audiences. The Justice Project organized a public discussion on the anti-immigration hysteria and Islamophobia in the Binghamton City Council Chambers. Herb Bix, Bill Martin, and Denis O’Hearn have written Op-ed pieces that are accessible through the department website and Walden Bello of course has been extremely active. Benita Roth has a radio interview on feminism and Ravi Palat has a blog on current affairs--links to these are also on the website (sociology.binghamton.edu).
Carmen Sirianni

I earned my Ph.D. from the department in 1979, with Jim Geschwender, Terry Hopkins, and Dale Tomich generously serving on my committee. Generously, because I admittedly was much more stubborn about my approach than I now encourage my own graduate students to be! Binghamton was a great place for me also because of the students there at the time.

After Binghamton, I had a postdoc at Harvard’s Center for European Studies, revising my dissertation as a book and articles. The dissertation was on comparative worker control movements in Europe during the WWI period. Perry Anderson shepherded it to publication.

I am now the Morris Hillquit Professor of Labor and Social Thought, and Professor of Sociology and Public Policy at Brandeis University, and a faculty fellow at the Kennedy School’s Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard (after having taught at Northeastern for a while and held another postdoc at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton). My research interests shifted considerably in the early 1990s, still on democracy and grassroots movements, but on the contemporary U.S. and also policy, planning, and public administration as these intersect with community empowerment. I was elected this year to the National Academy of Public Administration, which must be a first for a Binghamton sociology Ph.D., ignominiously or not! But we can all agree that the state is important!

Collaborative Governance (Brookings Institution Press, 2009), which examines the role that government at local, state, and federal levels can play in fostering robust, collaborative engagement among citizens and civic associations. My Civic Innovation in America (University of California Press, 2001), with Lewis Friedland, analyzes how civic intermediaries and networks have built capacity for innovation in several policy arenas (community development, civic environmentalism, community health). I am currently working on a book titled What Time Is It in American Democracy? Configuring Self-Governance from the Revolution to the Present, so back to more historical work, mostly from the perspective of APD (American Political Development), new institutionalism, and policy feedback.

My most recent book is Investing in Democracy: Engaging Citizens in Regional Governance, which examines the role that government at local, state, and federal levels can play in fostering robust, collaborative engagement among citizens and civic associations. My Civic Innovation in America (University of California Press, 2001), with Lewis Friedland, analyzes how civic intermediaries and networks have built capacity for innovation in several policy arenas (community development, civic environmentalism, community health). I am currently working on a book titled What Time Is It in American Democracy? Configuring Self-Governance from the Revolution to the Present, so back to more historical work, mostly from the perspective of APD (American Political Development), new institutionalism, and policy feedback.

My research interests shifted, I became much more of a public sociologist. I served as research director for the Reinventing Citizenship project with the Clinton White House (funded by the Ford Foundation). I also coordinated the collaborative governance workgroup in the urban policy committee of the Obama campaign, and continue to work with various federal agencies (especially EPA, CDC, and environmental justice and health networks) on these things. I was academic lead for a project last year with six federal agencies, five White house offices, and various EJ movement leaders.

My wife, Andrea Walsh, who also received her degree in the department, taught sociology and women’s studies at Clark University, Harvard, and is now at MIT, joint writing and women’s studies. Hello to all our friends who are still in Binghamton or who have moved on! We remember our five years there very fondly. We also have a 19-year old son, David.

Sharmila Joshi

I came to Binghamton in the Fall of 2001. Although I had worked for years as a journalist, and had visited the US before 2001, I had not spent time in academia in America, and I am glad that I could be part of a place as unconventional and progressive as the sociology department. My first semester was a passage of discovery, with ideas, reading, and discussions whirling around in directions often new to me. In the second semester, I remember a specific moment in a class when the dots began to slowly connect, and the seemingly disparate points starting merging into a reasonably coherent whole. It was an exhilarating moment.

My three years in Binghamton were a time of intellectual growth, of making friends, and of trying to make the best of a rather dismal town. I had completed all my coursework (with an unusual record of no incompletes!) and was starting work on my area papers when I had to return home to Mumbai. I’d planned to continue, with intermittent visits to Binghamton. For various reasons, that was not possible. But a decade after I first came to the department, I continue to draw on what I learned there.

After returning to Mumbai in the summer of 2004, I have done a wide variety of work, as a journalist, editor, researcher and writer—for the media, for NGOs, for other organizations. I have not taken up a full-time job, preferring the flexibility of working on my own. I had often considered re-starting my academic work at Binghamton, but when that did not look feasible, I enrolled in a PhD program in Mumbai. That remains a work in progress.
It will soon be 35 years since I arrived in what was then called, the State University of New York at Binghamton as a graduate student in the Department of Economics. Looking back at how I got there, I realize that mine was a very unusual path. Binghamton was the only university I applied for graduate study. My main reason for choosing it was my expectation that it would be possible to combine a Ph.D. in Economics with Sociology. It took about two months for Terry Hopkins to disabuse me of this belief. The world of theoretical economics was too far removed from what I had really wanted to do, which was some form of economic history.

I transferred to Sociology Department at the end of my first semester in Binghamton and enrolled in the Ph.D. program. Looking back, I see my decision to switch departments as one of the best decisions I made in my life. There were four overlapping groups that were equally important in creating and maintaining an exceptionally vibrant and strong intellectual community in Binghamton in those years. The first was my teachers; led by Immanuel Wallerstein and Terry Hopkins and included Çağlar Keyder, Giovanni Arrighi, Robert Bach, Dale Tomich and Martin Murray. Above everything else I remember how committed they were to what they were teaching and how patient they were; given that we all believed that what we were doing was the only thing that mattered. The second was the group of graduate students who had gathered in Binghamton. I think it would be fair to say that we learned as much from each other as from our professors in those years. Discussions that started in graduate seminars that typically took place from 7-10 pm would continue until early hours in the morning, at places like the Ukrainian Club or Sharkey's or the Drummer's Pub, or at one of our apartments and often, they took a “life or death” quality with their intensity. Thirdly, we had the fortune of meeting and learning from some of the most distinguished historians and social scientists of the time who would come to Binghamton to give talks, participate in conferences at the Fernand Braudel Center or under the very special and valuable adjunct program in Sociology. I met both Fernand Braudel and Eric Hobsbawm within months after arriving in Binghamton and the stream of visitors continued throughout my time in Binghamton. Finally, for those of us who participated in them, the research working groups that were organized by the Fernand Braudel Center served as an invaluable training ground for writing grant proposals, collecting, analyzing, and evaluating data, and writing reports of various lengths. We all got our first publications through these projects. I believe that the synergy that existed between the Center and the department in those years was very valuable for both units.

I have recently completed 25 years of teaching in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington. Just like Binghamton was the only graduate school I applied, the University of Washington was the only job I applied and interviewed for as I was finishing my dissertation. Since August 2010, I hold the Stanley D. Golub Endowed Chair and have started serving as director there. Over the last two decades, my main area of research has been the Ottoman Empire and Turkey and has covered economic history, state-society relations, migration, ethnicity and nationalism, and urban history. Most recently, I edited volume four of the Cambridge History of Modern Turkey and wrote A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Empire, Migrants, and Refugees, which won the best book prize from the Turkish Studies Association. In my new position I am still writing but not at the same rate as I did previously. Most of my time is taken by meetings where we are trying to deal with the adverse effects of budget cuts and with a legislature that is not always sympathetic to what we do. At the same time we are enjoying the new attention the study of the global system is receiving from the students and the public at large. For anyone who received his or her academic training at Binghamton’s Sociology Department, this is not difficult to understand. It is also important to note that because of this background I feel prepared to deal with this growing interest in the global system.
Asafa Jalata

I completed my MA and PhD in Sociology at SUNY Binghamton in 1988 and 1990 respectively. When I was a graduate student in the Department of Sociology, I enjoyed a rigorous academic environment, friendly social setting and institutional support. My former professors in general and Professors Terence K. Hopkins, James F. Petras, Martin Murray, and Mark Selden in particular had immensely contributed to my education, training and intellectual development. I regret that I did not express my thanks and admiration to Professor Hopkins who was my great mentor before he passed away. To be educated and trained by great intellectual minds of the Department of Sociology that truly have advanced human liberation and egalitarian values was a great opportunity for me. I am still thankful and appreciative. Also the diversity of students greatly contributed to my social wellbeing and my professional advancement.

Currently I am Professor of Sociology, Global Studies, and Interim Director of Africana Studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. I received the Senior Faculty Research/Creativity Achievement Award at the Winter Convocation of the College of Arts and Sciences on November 30, 2010. My expertise focuses on the area of international inequality, social movements, nationalism, terrorism studies, and race and ethnicity. My research concentration has been on Oromia (the Oromo country) and its interactions with Ethiopia and the modern world system. My most recent book, Contending Nationalisms of Oromia and Ethiopia: Struggling for Statehood, Sovereignty and Multinational Democracy, published this year by Global Academic Publishing of Binghamton University, evaluates the content and consequences of nationalism in Oromia and Ethiopia. Recently I have been shifting my research toward examining terrorism, investigating both the groups and countries perpetrating it, and responses to terrorism. I have authored more than three dozen refereed articles, numerous book chapters, and published and edited eight books. For further information, see http://web.utk.edu/~ajalata/; http://works.bepress.com/asafa_jalata/; http://quest.utk.edu/2010/asafa-jalata/

Biray Kolluoglu

I spent 8 years in Binghamton and at the time I used to joke about the fact that I had a knack for choosing deindustrialized places to study. I had completed my masters in Lancaster, England, a city whose industrial heyday was left behind in another century and when I arrived in Binghamton in 1994 it was a miserable town by all accounts. Main Street was a ghost street and the East Side was already dilapidated. I was shocked by the fact that there was not a single café in town. In the spring semester of my first year when Lost Dog opened in a place which used to be a mechanics shop, we were ecstatic. One could not go anywhere without a car and the university campus was not a particularly lively place. And the icing on the cake was the cold. I remember crying at the bus stop on campus one evening after a seminar because of the pain of being cold.

Against all odds though, I used to like it when I was there and I still look fondly back at my years as a graduate student. I kind of sensed at the time and I fully realized when I came back to Istanbul and began sharing graduate years’ experiences with friends who went to various universities in the US that Binghamton Sociology was a very special place. What made it special was our community. Perhaps precisely because the town and the campus did not offer any excitement but more so because the Department managed to recruit like-minded students from all over the world, graduate study was not a lonely experience. On the contrary, it was a collective enterprise. I hope it still maintains this quality, and offers an intellectual community and solidarity in a desolate place.

What have I done since I left Bingo in 2002? I began, and still am, teaching in the Department of Sociology at Bogazici University in Istanbul. I also spent a year in Berlin at the Wissenschaftskolleg which paved the way for my edited book Cities of the Mediterranean: From the Ottomans to the Present Day. I have a two and half year old daughter named Ferzan.

The first Ph.D in sociology at Binghamton was awarded to Dogu Ergil in 1976. As of December 2010, 181 Ph.Ds in sociology have been awarded at Binghamton.
I was not a good prospect. When I started Binghamton, I was directing several research projects at Yale and facilitating a faculty study group on Capital. But, I had failed in my four previous efforts to get the Ph.D. At Washington U., I had an altercation with Alvin Gouldner, the Chair, following a short civil rights stint in the local jail. At Wisconsin, I finished my MA thesis under Hans Gerth. But I resigned after police ambushed a demonstration I was leading. At Minnesota, assistantships offered in the AM were withdrawn by noon, a result, I learned, of harassment from my personal Army Intelligence officer. I was even kicked out of Union, a correspondence school, because I shared some embarrassing intra-faculty correspondence. When I met Terry Hopkins at a cocktail party, he saw my problem immediately: I could only survive if I was never on-site. Since I already had completed my research project and had developed a theoretical framework I called “materialist epidemiology,” I jumped at the chance to finish sans attendance.

Still both of my visits to Binghamton were near disasters. My comp day started well. I reconected with Dale Tomich, one of my bodyguards in Madison. But that night, one of the faculty decided I was the devil incarnate after I inhaled a joint. I represented all that was rotten about the New Left. Realizing that dropping him from the 2nd floor balcony would ruin my chances of ever getting the degree, I pulled him back from the brink. Then, a member of my committee quit because my laughing at a “sexist” joke (two years earlier) made my work on violence against women a sham. What saved me was my family. Between children’s colds, freezing roads and drunken emergency crews, I was too exhausted to wise-crack.

Terry was disappointed in my decision to live at the interface of activism and academics. At Rutgers, from which I’m about to retire, I still teach classes on the history of disease and political theory, but in the applied field of public health and public administration, not in sociology. I also went to social work school and maintain a forensic practice with battered women who kill. My books and articles also have a practical bent, though I like to think Terry would have been proud of Coercive Control (Oxford, 2007), a radical revison of male domination in personal life.


Completed book manuscript under review for publication by the University of Rochester Press, Rochester, NY:


Book manuscript in progress:

The National Question in Ethiopia: The Fracture and Manufacture of Nations and Nationalism.
Bob Russell

I was a Ph.D student in residence at Binghamton between 1978 and 1980 - about 3 1/2 years in all or enough time to complete my course work, successfully pass my comps and make a serious start on my research. My committee consisted of Immanuel and Giovanni (supervisors) Martin Murray and Bob Bach. The thesis was successfully defended in 1984, just prior to taking up a tenured position at the University of Saskatchewan, where I was to work for the next 15 years in the Sociology Department. Over that time my interests came to be defined around a focus on the sociology of work. My first two research books covered historical and contemporary issues in this sub-field. A 1998 sabbatical in Australia was something of a ‘game changer’ with a decision coming shortly thereafter to take up a faculty position at Griffith University (Brisbane) in the Department of Industrial Relations. I also became Director of the Centre for Research on Employment and Work at this time. I remain research active with two new books appearing in 2009; Smiling Down the Line: Info-service Work in the Global Economy (University of Toronto Press) and The Next Available Operator: Managing Human Resources in Indian Business Process Outsourcing Industry (Sage, ed. with Mohan Thite). For the first half of 2011 I will be on sabbatical and a Visiting Fellow at the Indian Institute of Management - Ahmedabad and at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, where I will be pursuing further research on business process outsourcing and its implications for global divisions of labour.

Anupama Roy

was a graduate student at the Department of Sociology 1992 onwards. She was awarded a PhD in 2001 for her dissertation on the topic ‘Citizenship and Gender in Late Colonial India’. The dissertation was developed into a book manuscript, which was published by Orient Longman in 2005 under the title Gendered Citizenship.

Her recent book, Mapping Citizenship in India (Oxford University Press, 2010), traces the Citizenship Act of India (1955) from its inception, and through its various amendments, to argue that the law determining citizenship in India has shown a steady movement towards the affirmation of citizenship’s relationship with blood-ties and descent. Identifying amendments in the Citizenship Act as transitions which are framed by major historical choices and decisions, the book examines the liminal categories of citizenship produced in the period between the commencement of the Indian Constitution and the enactment of the Citizenship Act, which continue to make citizenship fraught with uncertainties and exclusions.

She has co-edited the book Poverty, Gender and Migration (Sage, 2007). Her research and teaching interests are in the areas of citizenship, gender, migration, political institutions and democracy, constitutionalism and the rule of law.

She is currently an Associate Professor at the Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, India.

The most Ph.Ds (11 each year) were awarded in 1998, 2001, and 2008.
I went to Binghamton Sociology Department basically because it had a reputation as a place where an interesting and varied group of social scientists were producing fine pieces of theoretical and historical criticism. In the Brazil of the early 1980s, however, we did not have a clear idea of the type of work being done at the sociology department, and so when I arrived in Binghamton, I was quite amazed at the depth and breadth of the work being done here and it has had an everlasting impact on my intellectual development.

Teaching and learning sociology at Binghamton was very different from the Brazilian school system during the military régime—here there was a peculiar zeal as we were offered a chance to participate in the building of a new perspective on the historical social sciences. In one word, the project invited us to be part of a theoretical and political process of change intending nothing less than rebuilding the whole of the Social Sciences, the way these had been thought and the way they were being produced. I grasped this opportunity with both hands.

I am now teaching at the Political Science Institute of Universidade de Brasilia working with World-Systems Analysis, Development Studies, and Brazilian Politics. A recent research project I am developing is focusing on the so-called informal sector and illicitness in the world-economy. Although the principles of world-systems analysis have become better known in the Brazilian academia there is still a lot of work to be done. Notwithstanding the difficulties of keeping the perspective consolidated among the Brazilian social scientists I keep faithfully following the advice a professor and mentor of so many of us once made to his lifetime friend: endure.

Returning to Binghamton from Portugal as a Fulbright Researcher in 2008 (Aug.-Nov.), some 20 years after my PhD in Sociology, was an exceedingly interesting experience. It was also full of ambiguities, which surface especially when writing about our expectations. Using some of the new campus facilities—such as Fernand Braudel Center where I was hosted and which had moved to a new location—was quite exciting, but at the same time it was rather disappointing to notice the loss of the academic and political dynamism of former times. Benefitting from the extremely diligent professionalism of the staff at the Center pushed me back to the friendly past of the mid-1980s, with the experience marred by the absence of stimulating characters such as T.K. Hopkins, I. Wallerstein, and G. Arrighi. I missed the dynamic scientific interaction that I witnessed between the Department of Sociology and the FBC. Working as I do at a Faculty and a Research Center that, although statutorily autonomous and independent, mutually cooperate—a partnership that has helped them achieve international recognition, I refuse to accept the idea that at Binghamton the Department and the Center are coming to the end of the line of what was a very promising scientific adventure. This downward trend must be reversed. I would hope the same about the city of Binghamton. The city looks to have been abandoned and turned into the ground zero of urbanity. Wandering around the city-center, one is left wondering about the inglorious signs of detroitism. For someone like me studying the urban world, and in particular the world of small towns—Oops! I forgot to say that my next book (A World of Cities), which results largely from my stay in Binghamton, is about to be published—the state of dismay of the city of Binghamton can be reversed. It requires some investment, no doubt, but above all it calls for a great deal of creativity and political will. As the city and the university cannot live without each other, I dare say that the same recommendation applies to recreating the teaching and research of sociology at Binghamton University. A UniverCity is needed as a way of Binghamton going back to the future.
I came to Binghamton in the fall of 1991, at a time when a strange new era was beginning. Just as classes were about to start, the August putsch had effectively put an end to the USSR – the country I was born in. Though I had come to Binghamton to make sense of the revolution of 1917 and the regime that followed it, I was soon led down new paths – exploring debates between Wallerstein and A. G. Frank regarding the character of pre-modern world-systems, trying to understand the persistence of regional structures in the wake of Arrighi’s presentation of his *Long Twentieth Century*, becoming involved in the “Structures of Knowledge” Research Working Group at the Braudel Center, and discovering the new field of world history. I was fortunate, too, in having come to Binghamton while Terry Hopkins – the program’s founder and soul was still alive, and I was among the last students to benefit from his mentoring and encouragement. No less important for me was the community of graduate students he helped to create and inspire. Today, this community persists in a variety of virtual domains, and continues to be a source of friendship and intellectual challenge.

By the time I was completing my dissertation on world-systems in the ancient Near East, I had already begun to return to my original field of interest – Russia and the former Soviet Union. I wrote the final chapters in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and subsequently returned there in 2008 to take up a position in the department of Political Science and International Relations at the Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research (KIMEP), where I am now chair. To me, this return highlights three key Binghamton Sociology lessons – the importance of the *longue durée* (in this case, the *longue durée* of personal and intellectual interests in one’s life), of a global perspective (especially one rooted outside the core), and of the irrelevance of disciplinary distinctions in the social sciences.

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**Torry Dickinson**

It all began in 1975 with a circle on the board and an abstract but historical discussion of the transition from feudalism to capitalism. Sheep eating people? I was in Terry Hopkin’s methodology class, and we were being taken through a long historical analysis of wool production. All I could think for a minute was that the British pre-school song “Baa, baa black sheep, have you any wool?” had a much deeper meaning than I ever could have suspected. And what did all of this have to do with U.S. imperialism and Latin American political movements? I soon learned that we were talking about the development of a global division of labor and related ontological, epistemological, and socio-political developments, including resistance and movements for change, which had emerged over the last 500 years.

The educational and cultural experience with Binghamton’s Sociology Graduate Program changed me in a profound and lasting way. Students from around the world showed me the way in the classroom, at bars, and when we were cooking spicy foods and dancing on the weekend. Teachers coaxed me into thinking globally and historically. They helped me identify the importance of interconnections, and why and how changes were taking place during transitions, in historical capitalism, and in diverse spatial and temporal locations. Thanks to my advisor Immanuel Wallerstein, and my work in what was then called global, urban-industrial, and development studies, I was locating gender and households, and racial, class and global injustices within a very big picture. Using the reproduction of households as a starting point, my dissertation explored how the U.S. urban working class became divided along the lines of gender, ethnicity/“race,” and class. And, for the first time in what seemed like a very long time, I had become a part of a community of friends and political scholars, which had been cultivated and nurtured by Terry Hopkins and Giovanni Arrighi. All this I carry with me.

For the last fifteen years I’ve taught Women’s Studies at Kansas State University. I’m an affiliated faculty member in Nonviolence Studies and International Studies, and I’m an adjunct faculty member in Sociology. I serve as part of the adjunct faculty with the Western Institute for Social Research, a multicultural social-change school in Berkeley. Recently I was asked by the novelist Rainelle Burton to help her change public schools in Southeast Michigan and Detroit, where we both lived in the 1960s. It’s challenging project, but we’ve started. Please consider joining us.
And Trevor Abrahams is still diving!

Attention Alumni

Please contact us with your current contact details as we would like to keep updated alumni lists to email you our newsletters. Please let us know if you do not want us to share your information.

Please also let us know about your jobs, books, births, partnerships, and any other information you want to share with the Binghamton sociology diaspora.