Welcome Back HDFS!

We are so excited to be back for another great semester. This year’s welcome picnic was a great success...Lots of food, fun, and meeting of new people! Here’s a picture of our newest department members at the picnic.

A Note from the Editors

We’re both really excited to bring you the news this year! We hope everyone is off to a great start to this semester!

This issue will introduce you to the first year graduate students as well as new faculty. You’ll also get to see what exciting things everyone has been up to since the last newsletter. Other content includes contributions by Emily Waterman and Rachel Koffer on topics as varied as bird-watching and summer courses in Sweden. We also introduce you to the wild and wonderful world of geocaching. Enjoy the read!
~ YAHOOOOOO...David and Kristine
First-Year Student Profiles

Name: Dbrain Calhoun (the D is silent).

Where are you from? Quahog, RI.

What are your research interests? Resilience and prevention.

Who is (are) your advisor(s)? Jennifer Maggs.

What is your education background? B.S. in Biology (2008) and Psychology (2013) from Virginia Commonwealth University, which is known as the Harvard of Richmond.

What are your hobbies? Quidditch, Wizard’s chess, and drinking butterbeer at the Leaky Cauldron.

What is something interesting or unique about you? I’m currently in a relationship with Hunger Games champion Katniss Everdeen.

Name: Jacinda Li.

Where are you from? Washington, D.C.

What are your research interests? The effect of adversity on individual and family development; Interventions to promote resilience in socioeconomically disadvantaged populations with an emphasis on childhood obesity prevention.

Who is (are) your advisor(s)? Scott Gest.

What is your education background? B.S. in Economics with concentrations in Marketing and Communication, University of Pennsylvania.

What are your hobbies? Yoga, dance, community service, cooking, studying new languages.

What is something interesting or unique about you? I practice and perform hula and belly dancing.

Name: Nicole Jamily Roberts.

Where are you from? Pittsburgh, PA.

What are your research interests? I am interested in understanding the neurological mechanisms of addiction in order to develop and enhance prevention and intervention techniques.

Who is (are) your advisor(s)? Chuck Geier.

What is your education background? I have a B.A. in psychology from Westminster College and an M.S. in health psychology from The University of Bath, England.

What are your hobbies? Running and baking! My “backup career plan” has always been to open a bakery and one of my goals on my bucket list is to run a marathon on all 7 continents.

What is something interesting or unique about you? I cry when I laugh; not just a few drops, but actual streams of tears. So if you see me crying— I’m most likely really happy :)

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First-Year Student Profiles

Name: Jinshil Hyun.
Where are you from? South Korea.
What are your research interests? Adult development; cognitive aging; job experiences that affect cognitive aging; career development in middle-age and later life.
Who is (are) your advisor(s)? Martin Sliwinski.
What is your education background? B.A. in Psychology and M.A. in Cognitive Psychology at Yonsei University, South Korea.
What are your hobbies? Photography; traveling.
What is something interesting or unique about you? I like coffee! I like drinking coffee, and had a cat named “Coffee” in my hometown :)

Name: Chelom Leavitt.
Where are you from? Provo, Utah.
What are your research interests? Sexuality.
Who is (are) your advisor(s)? Eva Lefkowitz.
What is your education background? M.S.—Marriage Family and Human Development, J.D..
What are your hobbies? Skiing, watching old movies with my kids, quilting, music.
What is something interesting or unique about you? I love to travel. When I visit a country, more important than the sights, is the food. I love to try foods from all around the world.

Name: Kami Dvorakova.
Where are you from? Czech Republic.
What are your research interests? Prevention research and the enhancement of well-being through the use of mindfulness-based practices.
Who is (are) your advisor(s)? Mark Greenberg and Tish Jennings.
What is your education background? M.A. in Developmental Psychology from Teachers College, Columbia University. Master’s degree in Public Administration from University of Economics in Prague, Czech Republic.
What are your hobbies? Meditation, biking, yoga, crafts, cooking and backing, reading, and being with like-minded people.
What is something interesting or unique about you? This is a tricky question :) What about this: Raised and born in Czech Republic, worked in London, Alaska, NYC, and Boston, and lived in a Buddhist Monastery in Taiwan and Meditation center in upstate NY.
First-Year Student Profiles

Name: Annie (Yunying) Le.

Where are you from? Shanghai, China.

What are your research interests? Family relationships, couple relationships across life span.

Who is (are) your advisor(s)? Susan McHale.

What is your education background? I did my undergrad in Psychology both in East China Normal University in China and Colorado State University here at the United States.

What are your hobbies? Basketball, skiing, cooking...

What is something interesting or unique about you? My family name is relatively rare in my home country, and it means happiness in Chinese.

Name: Lingying Ju.

Where are you from? Hangzhou, China.

What are your research interests? Methodology, Child development

Who is (are) your advisor(s)? Sy-Miin Chow.


What are your hobbies? Arts & Crafts.

What is something interesting or unique about you? I was a public accountant (or auditor) in an accounting firm.
Words of Advice for First-Years

...from Faculty

Development is cool!
~Nilam Ram

“Enjoy the process of learning. Not many have the wonderful opportunity to be where they are. Do not focus so much on the grades but in the amazing things you will be learning. Stop sometimes, look around and just enjoy being part of a class full of individuals from whom you can learn so much.”
~Mayra Bamanca-Colbert

As doctoral students, though grades are important, the learning is now focused on being a scholar who examine, integrate, gather, and critique information. Focus on doing that and you’ll be fine. Relax and enjoy the ride!
~Emilie Smith

Just have faith in yourself.
~Lisa Kopp

Be PATIENT. READ READ READ.
~Dave Almeida

Ask questions if you get stuck on something. Build friendships with advanced students working with your advisor or on similar topics, because they will help you learn the practical things you need.
~Steve Zarit

...and from Peers

Just keep swimming.
~Jacqueline Miller

Try to go to the Penn State arboretum by the law school building before the weather gets too cold. It is beautiful!
~Ali Doub

Be genuine and create the experience here that is right for you.
~Emily Waterman

Go to the Farmers Market Downtown (every Tuesday and Friday) They have great produce and flowers.
~Lauren Bangerter

Get to know your cohort!
~Briana Sprague

Just do it!
~Lu Ou

Cheese will always be your friend. So will ice cream. They are particularly good around exam time.
~David

What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger. ~Ni Jian

Remember to have some fun and make time for your own wellbeing!! Take time to read something that interests you, have a little fun in State College doing things completely unrelated to grad school with your friends, and dedicate some time to whatever stress-relief practices work for you! ~Alexis Harris

Don’t worry! You will make it through your first year! Then, you should travel and have fun your first summer.
~Brandon McDaniel

Don’t give up! Never give up!
~Aaron Miller

Drink water!
~Kristine Bova

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Just do it!
~Lu Ou
Did Someone Say FOLLIES????

Last year’s Follies was a HUGE success. The food was abundant and delicious, the comedy was STAND-UP, the games were a blast, and the skits were hilarious! As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words...

Photos complements of Brandon McDaniel, McDaniel Family Photography
What in the World is Geocaching?!?!

“Don’t judge me until you’ve tried it, but while you were away I really got into geocaching.”
- Kristine to Rachel Koffer on her new addiction

**Definition of Geocaching:** Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location.

Isn’t geocaching the pastime of choice for people who watch daytime TV? No! Geocaching is the latest and greatest craze that has captured the imagination of the HDFS graduate students. No, there is nothing valuable in the caches, no real treasure at the end of the hunt - although some geocachers leave little trinkets (see photo of Leprechaun hat Rachel and I found on Blue Course Drive) - but there are other incentives. Very little in life can match the thrill of finally writing your name on the log of a recently-discovered cache that’s hiding place has alluded you for the best part of thirty minutes. It’s also a great excuse to get outside and explore the many trails of Happy Valley.

There are dozens of geocaches scattered around State College. Some of our favorite trails contain geocaches waiting to be discovered. Our second-year cohort have spent hours cutting their way through bramble-covered trails, dredging through streams, even crossing state lines to find geocaches. And now you can join them! The official geocaching website can be found at this link: http://www.geocaching.com/ And if you have a smart phone, you can download the official geocaching app, “Geocaching Intro” by Groundspeak Inc., for free. This free intro app will let you get your feet wet and you can decide whether or not you want to spend $10 on the complete app. Or just drop us a line and come on our next geocaching adventure!

**My Favorite Geocaches**

**Blue Walk**
This is a series of 11 geocaches located on a 1.1 mile stretch between Blue Course Drive and the Penn State Blue Golf Course. There is a paved cycling path but there is also a little walking path that goes through some small wooded areas.

Rachel and I spent an evening collecting 7 of the 11 caches. Most of the caches are not too difficult to find and it’s a nice excuse to walk the trail.

Words of advice—if you wear shorts the bugs will eat you. Also, if a mound of dirt looks like an anthill and your foot sinks into it like it would sink into an anthill, it’s probably an anthill.

Anyone who finds the cache with the leprechaun hat and takes a picture of themselves with it gets a free coffee from me.

**Rebirth of a Bridge**
Dan and I went to Nashville for a week vacation over the summer. While there I nagged and nagged until I convinced Dan that geocaching in a city with plentiful tourist attractions and live music was a great idea. So we whipped out the geocache app and went on the hunt for some Tennessee treasure.

The app took us over a pedestrian bridge and within a few feet of the cache. The description said it was a small cash hidden under a hand rail post. We looked under every hand rail post on the bridge before finally my hand brushed against the black box in the photo on the right. There was a magnet attached to the box which allowed whoever came up with this cache to slip it inside a tiny space under an unassuming rail. It felt really good to finally find it. Worth every Luke Bryan cover band we missed out on that day.

**Geocaching endorsements:**
Chuck “Charles in Charge” Geier: “So this is what you’ve been doing in your spare time all year?”
Courtney Polenick: “I don’t get it, what’s the incentive?”
Lauren Bangerter: “Um…I guess we can try it sometime…or we could just, you know, go to Pickles.”
New Faculty: Introducing Chad Shenk and Jennie Noll

1. Where did you complete your undergraduate and graduate training?

C: It just so happens I completed my undergraduate training right here at Penn State. I graduated in 1998 with a degree in Psychology, though I did all of my research with HDFS faculty. After taking three years off, I began graduate school at the University of Nevada in 2001. I finished there, after completing a year-long internship at the University of Rochester Medical Center, with a degree in Clinical Psychology in 2007.
J: University of Southern California.

2. What has been your favorite aspect of your career thus far (from any of your previous positions)?

C: The best part of my career thus far has been my return to Penn State. Not only is it nice to be back on campus but it is also very exciting to be a part of HDFS and the Network for Child Protection and Well-being. There is tremendous potential here to have an impact in the area of child maltreatment. In a manner of speaking, my career so far has been building toward just this opportunity.
J: Learning how to write grants and working with families who are at-risk for child abuse.

3. What areas of research will you be focusing on here at Penn State?

C: My research will focus in two primary areas. First, I’ll be examining the biobehavioral mechanisms involved in the onset of developmental problems, mainly psychiatric disorders, following child maltreatment. I’ll be starting a project in the fall with the aim of identifying the genomic/epigenomic changes following child maltreatment that are related to the incidence of psychiatric disorders in late childhood to mid-adolescence. Second, I’m interested in translating results on biobehavioral mechanisms, including psychological processes such as experiential avoidance, into prevention and intervention trials with families to reduce the risk for psychiatric disorders in the child maltreatment population.
J: Child abuse outcomes, treatment and prevention.

4. What are you most excited about for this upcoming academic school year?

C: I’m really excited about teaching HDFS 432 this fall. It’s been several years since I taught undergraduates and I’m looking forward to interacting with students again, especially about a topic so relevant to my research and clinical experience.
J: Getting to know the students and faculty in HDFS.

5. Do you have any hidden talents (such as juggling, playing an instrument, or cooking)?

C: I can fight my way through “Used to Love Her” and “Running to Stand Still” on the guitar. I also make a mean mole.
J: I play guitar and love to stand on my head.

6. What is the best movie you’ve seen in the last year?

C: Tough one. I’d say The Human Condition by Masaki Kobayashi. Quite a time commitment but well worth it.
J: Not much time for movie watching, but within the last two years I think the movie “Blindside” starring Javier Bardem has to be it for me. It was so moving and painful that I’ve not been able to bring myself to watch it again after that first theater viewing.

7. Have you read any great books lately (not related to your research)?

C: I recently read, “Bells in Winter”, a book of poems by Czeslaw Milosz. It’s a good book to carry around with you. I’m currently reading “The Brothers Karamazov” and am having a great time with it.
J: I finally finished Moby Dick last Spring and I’m so glad I did.

8. If you had limitless funds to invent anything you wanted, what would you invent?

C: An answer adequate to the human condition.
J: I would find a way to eradicate child abuse.

Look for interviews with Lesley Ross and Steffany Fredman in an upcoming newsletter...both will be joining us in the spring!
What was everyone up to this summer???

Getting ready for my move to PSU.
~Lesley Ross, joining HDFS in the spring

Traveled to Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming to celebrate my brother’s graduation from BYU-Idaho.
~Ali Doub

I went to Alaska!
~Lisa Kopp

NI on a trip with her family in Wuyi Mountain, Fujian Province, China

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My fiancé Mike and I vacationed in Myrtle Beach, SC!
~Kristine Bova

Went to Michigan to visit a friend I haven’t seen in 8 years.
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Did a lot of travel in Europe alone, but met a lot of new friends from the world on the way. In Budapest, I was taught by a native to cook Hungarian chicken soup with two Chinese girls and a polish lady. There are definitely more stories.
~Lu Ou

My wife and I were in Korea and Japan. We were shown around Seoul by former HDFSer Jel Lee, Bora Lee and Kyungmin Kim, and current HDFSer Soomi Lee.
~Steve Zarit

My family and I got to visit my parents in Florida for a whole month! We had a great time in their pool and at the beach, and then my daughter absolutely loved Disney World (and I have to admit that my wife and I are hooked on it too).
~Brandon McDaniel

I went to London and Paris for vacation and went to some amazing concerts.
~Amanda/Roxanna Griffin

I went to California for 3 weeks and did everything! :) Visited family in Mexico, went to Disneyland, San Diego, and beaches everywhere- all with my loved ones.
~Jenny Padilla

I learned how to sail a Hobie Cat and got my bird count to 58 species!
~Emily Waterman

Vacationed in the Finger Lakes region of NY, got my Masters, and a new puppy!
~Cindy Willner

We had a very eventful summer... over to course of one month I got married, moved, went to the Society Prevention Research annual conference, and had a much needed honeymoon in Alaska!
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Try to write.
~Nilam Ram

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Exciting Life Events

Clodagh Belle Katz born to Deirdre and Garren on August 17th, 7 lbs 10 oz, 20 1/4 inches long

Jacqui and Aaron got married on May 21st!

I color-coordinated my new living room.
~ David

Got a new puppy!
~ Cindy

Milestones

Graduating with M.S.
Spring 2013
Rachel Abenavoli
Kameron Moding
Stephanie Wilson

Summer 2013
Katie Bamberger
Cynthia Wilner

Graduating with PhD
Spring 2013
Fumi Chin
Emily Hazlett
Bora Lee
Brandi Rollins
Mary Lai Rose

Summer 2013
Kaylin Greene
Amanda Leggett

Completed Comps
Spring 2013
Liz Munoz
Katie Lawson
Nicole Constance
Susan Doughty

Completed Candidacy
Spring 2013
Soomi Lee
Stephanie Wilson

Final Orals
August 2013
Jessica Heckert
Allison Reamy
HDFS Course in Sweden: Aging in a Welfare State

By: Rachel Koffer

Our ten days of lectures and site-visits through Sweden offered a great deal of insight on the advances and drawbacks of the Swedish welfare system, particularly regarding elder care and work and family policies. Steve Zarit led us, along with a group from Utah State University and two Swedish students from Jonkoping University, through the Jonkoping municipality’s hospitals, senior center, dementia care facilities, and a hospital physical therapy unit, and to Stockholm, with lectures at the Aging Research Center and a hospital site visit. Walking into the Swedish nursing homes and hospitals as an American, I was immediately struck by the homelike—or at the very least, not clinical or sterile—environments created by these facilities, with abundant natural light, handmade art, and dementia care facility rooms that resembled inpatients’ old homes. This promotion of comfort was deeper than simply aesthetics; in each place we visited, the staff members, though underpaid as in the US, were clearly devoted to the patients and their needs. The “New Nordic Model” of healthcare, as Magnus Jegermalm, one of our lecturers explained it, “begins with the individual and grows with the state.”

In Jonkoping municipality, adults aged 75 and older are allocated 10 free hours of care a week, without any needs assessment (Jansson, 2013). If the older adults need more than 10 hours of help, they may obtain a “needs assessment” by the municipality and are then allocated free care according to their needs (Jansson, 2013). Also, because health care is centralized, the maximum amount an older adult would pay for a hospital visit is $24 USD (Johansson, 2013). This allows the Swedish people to access healthcare services as they need, without worrying about the cost. However, this also creates issues of unnecessary hospital overutilization, especially as (similar in the US) prevention and early detection are underutilized. Fortunately, this wide-spread provision of need-based care has not led to a decrease in family care contribution, which remains at approximately the same level as in the United States (Jegermalm, 2013).

Swedish family policies are similarly generous, allowing for 240 days paid parental leave that may be used within 8 years of the child’s birth, 7 weeks of leave before delivery, and then 15 hours of free daycare a week after the child is born, as well as 120 days of temporary leave to care for sick children at 80% of one’s typical income. A gender equality bonus, put in place in 2008, has also successfully encouraged fathers to take 36% of the leave days offered to couples (Duvander, 2013). Though it does not eradicate all discrimination in hiring women and those first entering the workforce, this parental leave, along with child care and a housing allowance if needed, have resulted in high female labor force participation, high male parental leave use, and low child poverty (Duvander, 2013).

The idea that “all persons in Swedish care have the right to well-being,” is regrettably a difficult one to adapt to the US due to ideological differences and issues of scalability and heterogeneity in the US as compared to Sweden, but we can certainly use elements of it. The element of the Swedish eldercare policy that would be most easily adopted in the US are the more home-like aesthetics and person-centered approach for elder care, while the work and family policy that I think would be most useful to adapt to the US is the manner of paying parental leave (employers pay taxes on the salaries of each employee, they do not directly pay for parental leave. Instead, tax money is used to pay for leave, thus reducing gender discrimination in hiring due to concerns about having to pay this extra cost (Duvander, 2013)). The US does not have a national standard for paid parental leave, and I believe allowing companies to decide benefits individually has led to greater disparity in benefits (those earning minimum wage are often not given paid parental leave) as well as perpetuated the wage disparity between men and women. Unfortunately, the main obstacle with having the government use tax money to pay for parental leave is the need for it to be funded via increased taxes.

Overall, the Swedish welfare system is a “supermodel” to emulate. Though funding and political issues would be a limitation in the US, I think the US could adapt quite a few of the Swedish welfare features, and provide a better life to families and aging adults in the US.

Sweden was amazing, we had a chance to visit a variety of hospitals, assisted living facilities, and research centers. It was really interesting to talk to Swedish students, healthcare professionals, professors, and researchers about their healthcare system and some of the current issues that they are facing. We also met a lot of locals while we were there and got to watch the IIHF Hockey World Championships with some hard core Swedish hockey fans. It was a trip that I will never forget! ~Lauren Bangert

Prior to and after the class, I traveled with Soomi Lee and Rachel Koffer through Denmark and Norway. It was my first time in Europe, and I couldn’t have asked for better traveling partners. Although there were many fun experiences, my favorite part of the trip was the “Norway in a Nutshell” tour. For the tour, we took a train from Oslo to Flam. We stayed in Flam for the night and hiked up to a waterfall and stayed in an old hostel right in the middle of a sheep farm. The next morning, we took a boat and a bus through the fjords to Bergen. It was probably one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen in my life, and I highly recommend the tour to anyone traveling in Norway in the future! ~Katie Lawson

It was a good choice that I took the “Aging in a welfare state” class in Sweden during last summer. I learned a lot about their generous policies and good spirits of respecting and helping each other. It was a good time not only for thinking about positive features of the Swedish system, but also for appreciating relatively low prices of goods in the United States. After the Sweden trip, I always feel grateful when I can have a hamburger with only $5! ~Soomi Lee
A love of hiking and birding has led me to the discovery of several top secret spots to find birds in State College. Until now, I have only shared them with a few lucky friends. However, at the editors’ insistence, I will now release them in hopes of inspiring some future adventures. All of these spots can be located with Google, a map, and some persistence.

1: Mid-State Trail at Rothrock State Park
The MST gives you a lovely look at Pennsylvania’s forests. In particular, there is a beautiful meadow with some low brush and dead trees that is perfect for birding. It lies in the Thickhead Wild Area between the Kettle and North Meadows Trails. On this hike, you should look for Eastern Towhees, Cedar Waxwings, Yellowthroats, and Gray Catbirds.

2: Bear Meadows Natural Area
This is an easy loop around a unique bog. I hold this spot close to my heart because I saw an infrequently-visiting small bird there, the Canada Warbler. On this loop, you should look for other warblers, sparrows, and waterfowl.

3: Mount Nittany
Although this hike is heavily travelled, I need to address the total WOODPECKER HOT SPOT that is on the blue trail between markers 7 and 9. Taking this trail means you end up hiking the longest route Mount Nittany has to offer. Look for: Turkey Vultures, Red-tailed Hawks, Downy and other woodpeckers, Blue Jays.

4: Jackson’s Trail
This is my favorite hike in the area. It includes a fairly vigorous incline. Walk past the monument at the top for a surprise, and also a fun bird watching spot. Look for Black-Capped Chickadees, Eastern Towhees, and Ruffed Grouse, and listen for owls.

As you will notice in the spring, there are also many birds right here in State College. You will see Blue Jays, Cardinals, House Sparrows, Swamp Sparrows, Tree Swallows, Barn Swallows, Mallards, Mourning Doves, Robins, Grackles, Starlings, Crows, House Finches, and more. I even saw a Northern Mockingbird in the Beaver Stadium parking lot! Enjoy all the great hiking in this area and happy birding!
Start of year picnic

Food, fun, friends—what else do you need?