

Christopher Alley, PhD (Medical Anthropology)

Areas of interest: Medical waste and commodification, masculinities and bisexuality, and urban poverty and the street economy. Geographic areas of interest include New York City, Brazil, and South Africa.

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Christopher Alley has been a doctoral student Department of Sociomedical Sciences since 2005. His current research explores the meanings of medical waste. He asks how medical waste comes to be defined, disposed of, ritualized, recycled, and commodified? Of special interest to him is the growing field of re-functioning, or redevelopment, of body wastes into new therapeutic products, and their subsequent deployment into living humans.

Chris has also studied the medicalization of genital cutting practices, with a special focus on the institutional cultures responsible for promoting biomedical claims that male circumcision is an effective and acceptable HIV prevention strategy.

Jocelyn Apicello, MPH, DrPH Candidate

Areas of interest: Contextual effects on urban health; housing and neighborhoods; homelessness; community-based research; inequalities and social justice; population-level interventions; and the translation of research findings into public policy.

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Jocelyn received her M.P.H. from the Department of Sociomedical Sciences in 2006 and has continued with the department as a doctoral student. She is interested in how housing, neighborhood, and other contextual factors influence health outcomes of individual agents, households, and communities. In particular, she is exploring how housing as an intervention can impact health, and how growing social disparities can be addressed by implementing population-level interventions and public policies.

Joan Bennett, PhD Candidate (Sociology)

Areas of interest: Social impact of extreme life events on individuals, groups and communities including forced migration and displacement, combat, catastrophes and chronic illness.

Geographic areas of interest: U.S. and Liberia.

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Joan's current research examines employee evacuation behavior during workplace fires.

Tiphani Burrell-Piggott, MA, MPH, DrPH Candidate

Areas of interest: HIV/AIDS (among women and adolescents), global health, mental health, gender, and qualitative research methodology.

Geographic areas of interest: US Urban cities, the West Indies, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

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Tiphani Burrell-Piggott has been a Doctor of Public Health candidate in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences since 2005. Her current research explores how individual risk factors, community factors and structural factors create vulnerabilities to HIV infection among minority youth. Educational Background: MPH in Global Health (Yale University), MA in Psychology (Howard University), BS in Psychology (Howard University).

Yessica M. Diaz, MPH, MSW, DrPH Candidate

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Yessica Diaz' research focuses on the self-management practices of elderly Latinos in Washington Heights/Inwood with Type 2 Diabetes. She is interested in the social and cultural factors that influence the management of diabetes among elderly Dominicans. Ms. Diaz participated in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's Public Health Fellowship (1997) and was awarded the National Hispanic Health Foundation Scholarship in 2005. She graduated from the University of Michigan's Schools of Public Health and Social Work. Currently, she is a mentor in Hunter College's Public Service Scholar Program and a Board Member for The Center for Independence of the Disabled, New Yorkers.

Sue D'Isabel, MPH (DrPH student in Sociomedical Sciences)

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Areas of interest: Childhood obesity; youth and physical activity/healthy eating, especially as these behaviors manifest in schools; policy and environmental changes to promote healthy eating and physical activity.

Sue D'Isabel has been a doctoral student in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences since 2002. Her dissertation is entitled, "Initiation, Implementation and Impact of Changes to the Coordinated School Health Environment on Physical Activity and Nutrition: A School-based Social Ecological Approach."

Ashley Fox, MA, PhD Candidate (Political Science)

Areas of Interest: HIV/AIDS, gender, economic development, globalization, social epidemiology, wealth and inequality. Geographic Areas of Interest: sub-Saharan Africa and cross-national, comparative studies.

Ashley Fox has been a doctoral student in the Department of Sociomedical since 2004 and is a fellow in the multidisciplinary IGERT Program in International Development and Globalization. Her current research explores the complex relationship among economic development, inequality, migration patterns and the

spread of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. She is currently constructing a multi-level model to test the effects of country and regional level wealth and inequality on individual risk for HIV infection and population prevalence dynamics. She holds an M.A. and B.A. in Political Science from the University of Connecticut and worked as a Research Associate at Yale University's Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS prior to joining Columbia.

Jennifer Farnsworth Francis, PhD Candidate (Sociology)

Areas of interest: Child and family health policy, social construction of illness, impact of childhood developmental disorders on low-income families, and welfare and public policy analysis.

Geographic areas of interest: United States

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Jennifer Francis has worked as a research associate at the National Center for Children in Poverty at the Mailman School of Public Health where she analyzed the effects of changing welfare and public policy on children. Her current research analyzes the impacts of developmental disorders in low-income families.

Robert Frey, PhD Student (Medical Anthropology)

Interests: critical and interpretive studies of the body, the mind, and emotions; biomedicine; memory; violence; political economy; personhood and kinship; ethnography, phenomenology, and life history; Israel/Palestine

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Robert's research interests focus on cultural conceptions of mental health, illness, and care, particularly in contexts where collective identity is marked by a traumatic past or ongoing violence in the present. His dissertation research investigates experiences of loss and bereavement related to political violence in Israel. He holds a M.A. in Sociomedical Sciences from Columbia University and a B.A. with highest honors in anthropology and French from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Gabriel Richard Galindo, MPH, CHES, DrPH Student

Areas of Interest: HIV/AIDS prevention and research. Health concerns of gay men. Adolescent health. Ethnoracial disparities in health care resources and delivery. Health promotion and program evaluation, including development of socioculturally competent social marketing campaigns. Qualitative research methods utilizing ethnographic techniques.

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Gabriel Galindo began his doctoral studies in the department of Sociomedical Sciences in 2003. Working full-time as the Youth Coordinator at Gay Men's Health Crisis (the nation's first and largest HIV/ AIDS social service agency) for

the past two years, his dissertation will focus on exploring the impact of HIV in New York City's House and Ballroom Community; a community characterized as low-income urban minority LGBT youth. A native Californian, he holds a BA in Comparative Ethnic Studies from the University of California at Berkeley and an MPH in Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences from San Diego State University.

Marian Moser Jones, MPH, PhD (History and Ethics)

Areas of interest: The history and ethics of disasters and disaster relief; the social construction and social production of "disasters"; disaster relief disparities and health disparities; the ethical responsibilities and limits of state and non-state actors in crises; homelessness; state and non-state regulation of chemical warning labels.

Geographic areas of interest: The U.S., the Atlantic World (Eastern U.S.-Europe), Caribbean Basin (Southeastern U.S.-U.S. territories and Caribbean nations)

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Marian Moser Jones has been a doctoral student Department of Sociomedical Sciences since 2004. Her research explores in historical context the tensions between American voluntarism, the libertarian ideal, and the State's mandate to protect the public in the areas of health and emergency relief. The recipient of a Quinn Fellowship from the History department, she is currently completing a dissertation, "Confronting Calamity: The American Red Cross and the Politics of Disaster Relief, which traces the historical roots of organized disaster relief in the U.S."

Nora J. Kenworthy, PhD Student (Political Science)

Areas of interest: HIV/AIDS and chronic infectious disease policy development, delivery, and change in Southern Africa.

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Nora J. Kenworthy has been a doctoral student in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences as well as an NIH training fellow in Gender, Sexuality and Health since 2006. Prior to attending Columbia she received her BA in Political Science from Williams College and worked in public health program delivery in the Western US and in South Africa. Her current research examines political processes, systems of representation, and institutional factors related to the creation and delivery of effective HIV policy in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Giselle Kiperman, PhD Candidate (Medical Anthropology)

Areas of interest: HIV/AIDS and treatment adherence issues, maternal and child health, and urban poverty. Geographic areas of interest include New York City and Argentina.

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Her current research explores the experiences of HIV-positive men and women in Argentina. She asks what continues to be the factors and barriers to why people do not adhere to treatment in the Argentina, a developing economy still recovering from a severe economic collapse with universal access to medical care and HIV medications and what can be learned from this context? Of particular interest are the experiences and issues around adherence to HAART and the challenges of living with HIV in the ever-growing poverty-stricken “conurbano” or outskirts of Buenos Aires.

Sara E. Lewis, MA, MSW, PhD student (Medical Anthropology)

Areas of interest: severe mental illness, religion, healing, child refugees, psychoanalysis

Geographic areas of interest include India, Tibet & Peru

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Sara Lewis has been a doctoral student in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences since 2007. Her current research involves a study of mental illness among Tibetan child refugees in Northern India, exploring the role of Buddhism in strengthening resiliency.

She is particularly interested in clinical ethnography and intersections between anthropology and psychoanalysis.

Benjamin Mason Meier, JD, LL.M., PhD Candidate (Political Science)

Areas of interest: Health & Human Rights; Global Health Governance; Public Health Law

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Benjamin Meier has been in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences since 2003, formerly as a Legacy Foundation Fellow and now as an International Development and Globalization Fellow. He received his B.A. in Biochemistry from Cornell University, his J.D. from Cornell Law School, and his LL.M. in International and Comparative Law from Cornell Law School and Universite de Paris I. His interdisciplinary research--at the intersection of law, political science, and public health--examines the insalubrious effects of neoliberal economic policy on national health systems. He is currently writing his dissertation on the history of the human right to health, publishing various articles in the international law and public health literatures, serving as the Public Health Law Manager at Columbia's Center for Health Policy, and teaching an SMS course on Health & Human Rights.

Debra Pelto, MPH, PhD Candidate (Medical Anthropology)

Topics of interest: sexuality, gender, health disparities, immigration, religion.

Geographic areas of interest: Latin America, Mediterranean, and Scandinavia.

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Debra's dissertation research explores heterosexual negotiation and communication in the context of migration. The project seeks to increase our understanding of adult heterosexual discourses and practices, by examining the meanings, communications, negotiations, and activities around sexuality and sexual health among adult Mexican women and men in New York City.

Sanyukta Mathur, DrPH (Sociomedical Sciences)

Areas of interest: Sexual and reproductive health, youth, marriage, and empowerment. Geographic areas of interest include South Asia and East Africa.

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Sanyukta Mathur has been a doctoral student in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences since 2007. Ms. Mathur holds a Masters of Health Science degree from Johns Hopkins University. Prior to joining Columbia, she worked at the International Center for Research on Women as a public health specialist focusing on adolescent sexual and reproductive health, including HIV and AIDS. Ms. Mathur is particularly interested in the intersection of economic empowerment and reproductive health outcomes for young women.

Destiny Q. Ramjohn, MA, PhD Candidate (Sociology)

Areas of interest: socio-cultural aspects of health and disease, qualitative methods, health disparities in communities of color, HIV/AIDS prevention and research, community-based participatory research, and international public health policy.

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A native New Yorker with a great appreciation for consulting, Ms. Ramjohn has worked with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Mailman School of Public Health- Office of the Dean, the Northern Manhattan Peri-natal Partnership, the Harlem Health Promotion Center, and The Commonwealth Fund. In 2003, Ms. Ramjohn was awarded a fellowship grant from the American Legacy Foundation. This graduate fellowship award afforded her the opportunity to closely examine the Harlem community's capacity for tobacco control using community based participatory research approach. Ms. Ramjohn has several years experience teaching, moderating, and facilitating various workshops, seminars, and courses employing qualitative methods within public health education and practice.

Ephraim Shapiro, MPA, MBA, PhD Candidate (Sociology)

Areas of interest: Religion and health, Immigrant health, Access to care, Chronic diseases.

Geographic areas of interest include United States, Mexico, China, and the Philippines

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Ephraim Shapiro has been a doctoral student in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences since 2004. Prior to entering Columbia, he earned an MPA in Health Policy from NYU, MBA in Marketing and Finance from Columbia and a BS in Decision Sciences from University of Pennsylvania. His current research explores how being part of a religious community affects the health of immigrants in the United States, especially through behavioral mechanisms affecting chronic diseases.

Erin N. Simpson, DrPH Candidate (History and Ethics of Public Health and Medicine)

Areas of interest: Tobacco control, the influence of the state in public health policy, consumerism, and the role of advertising in public health issues, specifically tobacco and African-Americans.

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Erin Simpson has been a doctoral student Department of Sociomedical Sciences since 2003. Her current research explores how tobacco advertising has evolved during the latter half of the 20th century, specifically how that advertising has been used to target minority populations. She is especially interested in the meanings of consumerism in the post World War II era, particularly the relationship between African Americans and the products they consumed (such as cigarettes) as the Civil Rights Movement began. She explores the social, political, racial, and economic consequences of those relationships in Cold War America.

Lindsay Stark, MPH, DrPH Student

Areas of interest: Child protection in complex emergencies, children associated with fighting forces, gender based violence among displaced populations, psychosocial and mental health in conflict.

Lindsay Stark is the first doctoral student to work jointly in the Departments of Sociomedical Sciences and Population and Family Health (Program in Forced Migration and Health). Her research focus is on developing innovative methods to assess and measure protection concerns in crisis-affected countries. She has published her work on child soldiers in the journals Disasters and Intervention, and has previously worked in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Sudan and Haiti.

Ana Stefancic, MA, PhD Candidate (Sociology)

Research interests: homelessness, mental health services, housing programs, survey research, qualitative methods

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Ana Stefancic is a doctoral student in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences. Her recent research focuses on exploring the effectiveness of Housing First

services and studying homelessness, mental illness, and housing, within the context of poverty, disability, recovery, social inclusion and citizenship. She is a research consultant with Pathways to Housing, Inc., the NIMH-funded New York Services Study, and The Osborne Association.

Siri Suh, MPH, PhD Candidate (Sociology)

Siri Suh began her doctoral program in the Sociomedical Sciences Department in 2007. Having recently worked in family planning and maternal health programs in Senegal, her research interests continue to center around reproductive health in sub-Saharan Africa. Siri wishes to investigate the silence surrounding unsafe abortion in this region and the role of religion, social constructions of gender and sexuality, politicized national and international reproductive health agendas, organized medicine and the law in perpetuating this silence. Siri is particularly interested in how health professionals negotiate decisions to provide clandestine abortion within this context.

Annika Sweetland, DrPH Candidate

Areas of interest: poverty and common mental disorders; structural violence; HIV and tuberculosis; individual and collective trauma; stigma; social stress.

Geographic areas of interest include Central and South America, Caribbean, Africa.

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Annika Sweetland has been a doctoral student Department of Sociomedical Sciences since 2005. Her current research explores the individual and structural factors associated with mental distress in several villages in Africa. She is a social worker and her background includes finding ways to address psychosocial needs of people living with multidrug-resistant tuberculosis and HIV.

Sarah A. Vogel, MA, PhD Candidate (History)

Sarah Vogel began her studies in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences' Center in 2003 for the History and Ethics of Public Health. Before attending Columbia, she received master's degrees in public health and environmental management from Yale University. Her primary research interests include the history and contemporary politics of the science of toxic chemicals with particular attention to endocrine disruption and competing concepts of risk. She is currently working on her dissertation, "The politics of plastics: the history of the safety and risk of bisphenol A," expected to be complete in the spring of 2008.

Brooke S. West, MA, PhD Student (Sociology)

Areas of interest: HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, gender and sexuality, marginalized populations, sex work, structural interventions, monitoring and evaluation, women's health in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

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Brooke S. West joined the PhD program in Sociomedical Sciences in 2007 after completing a MA in Sociology at Cornell University. Most recently, her research focused on the evaluation of a community-based HIV prevention intervention for sex workers in southern India. This project explored the links between sexual behavior and community mobilization, control over sex work, and empowerment. Brooke plans to continue her research on the implications of women's empowerment for health outcomes, and is particularly interested in the role of economic opportunity in health decision-making.