

CURE SEMINAR SERIES

SPRING '17



**The CURE Seminar Series
takes place in Armitage Hall
Faculty Lounge at 12:15 p.m.**

FEBRUARY 3: Dr. Mazelis: *Surviving Poverty*

CURE affiliated scholar Dr. Joan Maya Mazelis will present her book *Surviving Poverty* which carefully examines the experiences of people living below the poverty level, looking in particular at the tension between social isolation and social ties among the poor. Joan Maya Mazelis draws on in-depth interviews with poor people in Philadelphia to explore how they survive and the benefits they gain by being connected to one another. Half of the study participants are members of the Kensington Welfare Rights Union, a distinctive organization that brings poor people together in the struggle to survive. The mutually supportive relationships the members create, which last for years, even decades, contrast dramatically with the experiences of participants without such affiliation.

In interviews, participants discuss their struggles and hardships, and their responses highlight the importance of cultivating relationships among people living in poverty. *Surviving Poverty* documents the ways in which social ties become beneficial and sustainable, allowing members to share their skills and resources and providing those living in similar situations a space to unite and speak collectively to the growing and deepening poverty in the United States. The study concludes that productive, sustainable ties between poor people have an enduring and valuable impact. Grounding her study in current debates about the importance of alleviating poverty, Mazelis proposes new modes of improving the lives of the poor. *Surviving Poverty* is invested in both structural and social change and demonstrates the power support services can have to foster relationships and build sustainable social ties for those living in poverty.

MARCH 3: Sara Goldrick-Rab: *Paying the Price*

One of the most sustained and vigorous public debates today is about the value—and, crucially, the price—of college. But an unspoken, outdated assumption underlies all sides of this debate: if a young person works hard enough, they'll be able to get a college degree and be on the path to a good life. That's simply not true anymore, says Sara Goldrick-Rab, and with *Paying the Price*, she shows in damning detail exactly why.

Sara Goldrick-Rab is Professor of Higher Education Policy & Sociology at Temple University, and Founder of the Wisconsin HOPE Lab, the nation's only translational research laboratory seeking ways to make college more affordable. She is the recipient of the William T. Grant Foundation's Faculty Scholars Award and the American Educational Research Association's Early Career Award, and in 2016 *POLITICO* magazine named her one of the top 50 people shaping American politics. Her latest book, *Paying the Price: College Costs, Financial Aid, and the Betrayal of the American Dream*, is an Amazon best-seller, and has been featured on *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, the *New York Review of Books*, and CSPAN's Book TV, among other venues.

APRIL 14: Joshua D. Phillips: *Listening to the Voices of the Homeless in Public Policy Debates*

A half-century after the "War on Poverty" of Lyndon Johnson, poverty rates remain unchanged. Scholars have advanced polarized theories about the causes of poverty, as politicians have debated how (or if) to fund welfare programs. Yet little research has been conducted where the poor are provided a platform to speak on their own behalf. While it is important to understand how economic systems affect the homeless, it is equally important to learn about the day-to-day realities faced by those who rely on public policies for survival. Over the course of 10 years, Dr. Phillips has worked with numerous homeless communities, including communities in Camden, NJ, central Michigan, and southern Illinois. Drawing on the author's experience working in homeless communities, this research presents some of the stories of loss, abuse, addiction, and marginalization through interviews, observations, and ethnographic research.

Joshua D. Phillips, Ph.D., is an instructor in the Department of Communication Arts and Sciences at Pennsylvania State University, Brandywine. His scholarly interests are in rhetoric, narrative, and intercultural communication with specific focus on issues of homelessness, poverty, welfare, race, and sexual violence. His new book, *Homeless: Narratives from the Streets*, recounts stories of homelessness in an effort to improve public policy.

In 2010, he published his first book *1,800 Miles: Striving to End Sexual Violence, One Step at a Time*. His recent publications include "Trial by Social Media: How Misleading Media and Ideological Protests led to Disastrous Results in the State of Florida v. George Zimmerman," "LeBron James as Cybercolonized Spectacle: A Critical Race Reading of Whiteness in Sport," "Dancing as Voice: The Rise of Krumping and Clowning as Black Vernacular Rhetoric," "Black Women and Gender Violence: Lil' Wayne's 'How to Love' as Progressive Hip Hop," and "Crystal Mangum as Hypervisible Object and Invisible Subject: Black Feminist Thought, Sexual Violence, and the Pedagogical Repercussions of The Duke Lacrosse Rape Case."

MAY 5: Rasheda L. Weaver: *Social Enterprise: Examining the Quest to Humanize Business*

Social enterprises are businesses that utilize their revenue to combat social problems. Since the millennium, social enterprises have significantly grown throughout the United States. This talk will focus on Doctoral Candidate Rasheda L. Weaver's empirical research study of 115 social enterprises throughout the nation. The discussion will describe the social issues social enterprises target, how they generate revenue, the laws they incorporate under, and the contexts in which they develop.

Rasheda L. Weaver is a fourth-year PhD candidate in the Public Affairs program at Rutgers University-Camden that will graduate in May 2017. Her research interests include social entrepreneurship, community development, and applied psychology.