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Letter from the Editor

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**Letter From the Editor of the
Silicon Valley Sociological Review, Volume 21**

Dr. Cara Chiaraluca, Editor
Jessie Hill & Kiki Valenzuela, Student Editorial Assistants

The Sociology Department at Santa Clara University is proud to present, in this volume of the *Silicon Valley Sociological Review*, six research papers written by students majoring in sociology. This 21st volume continues a tradition to provide students with a meaningful opportunity in professional socialization while honing their research and writing skills. As in past years, the substantive, theoretical, methodological, and applied content of the Sociology curriculum at SCU are reflected in these papers. The articles highlight students' ability to engage in meaningful professional work informing sociological understanding of important topics. The authors studied important social topics about individuals, interactions, organizations, and institutions. Furthermore, the authors incorporated their theoretical, substantive, and methodological training in their analyses of real-world social problems.

Angel Lin, Maria Garcia, and Lucas Negritto's "A Nexus of Supportive Infrastructure to Foster Student Learning, Engagement, & Flourishing During the COVID-19 Pandemic" examines the impact of virtual learning on middle school students' learning, engagement, and development during the COVID-19 pandemic. By interviewing middle school students, teachers, and parents of students who participated in remote learning, researchers identified the necessity of a nexus of interconnected support founded on the relationships between the students, parents, and teachers both inside and outside of educational contexts to foster student engagement. These findings suggest a reimagination of the educational landscape, which includes: (1) the prioritization of a dynamic, personalized, and evolving curriculum, (2) community-focused, inquiry-based pedagogy, and (3) an audit system that ensures students are consistently supported in all three conditions of the support nexus.

Megan Imai's "Educational Outcomes of Multicultural Curriculum" aims to answer the question: "Does the level of exposure to multiculturally representative curriculum in high school U.S. history courses correlate with educational engagement, especially for students of color?" Quantitative data from the National Assessment for Educational Progress 2010 12th grade U.S. history assessment and questionnaires was used to assess the correlation between the level of emphasis on people from various cultures in course curriculum and three measures of student engagement: NAEP test score, interest in course material, and their educational goals. Findings suggest that inclusion of different cultures in curriculum alone may not be enough to make a difference in achievement gaps along race and class lines. This study provides motivation for further research on the topic of diversity studies and multicultural curriculum in high schools, and discussion of the limitations of the study gives insight into how this might be done.

Bryce Nishikawa, Kelly Lelapinyokul, and Alex Zabalza's "The Social Politics of Contemporary Greek Life Organizations" asks: How does race impact college students' experiences in Greek Life? This study utilizes six interviews conducted with white and non-white racially identifying members of Santa Clara University GLOs and six hours' worth of digital observations on media affiliated with or in relation to Greek Life. The authors found that an inductee's racial identity was most significant during the rushing process. If and when an

inductee was accepted into a GLO, race was no longer critical to the nature of their experiences. However, the data also indicated the significance of numerous non-identity measures to one's experience which were: the importance of self-presentation, rationalization of the individual benefits, and idealized reforms to be made within the GLO. These findings suggest that one's experience in GLOs is dictated by more than their racial identity. More importantly, in cultivating a harmonious environment within this prevalent social culture in many higher education institutions, GLOs need to do more than diversify their membership and reconcile with their racialized past.

Anthony Locatelli's "First Responders and Mental Health" focuses on mental health issues facing first responders due to their line of work. A proposed study seeks to gain more information from first responders to create support resources and programs to ensure that first responders are getting the best quality care for their work-related stressors and issues. The goal of this paper is not just to increase access to support resources to help first responders, but also to inform the public of the seriousness of first responder mental health, since they are the emergency personnel that care for the community.

Teresa Hu's "Social Implications of Violence in Sports" essay focuses on the relationship between competitive sports and violence both on and off the field. Major findings in the literature suggest that competitive sports such as boxing, hockey, MMA, and American football, stimulate violence mainly among white male athletes and spectators and discriminate against minority groups. She demonstrates how sports can serve to reinforce gender stereotypes, racial hierarchy when black athletes receive relatively less or negative media coverage, widen social class divisions, and promote ableism.

Aimee Truscott's "On The Right Track: An Analysis of Efforts Aimed at Mitigating Juvenile Crime and Recidivism" investigates the current options, as well as potential avenues, for mitigating juvenile crime and recidivism. Focusing primarily on the efforts within Santa Clara County, she examines the implementation of alternative services for youth in at-risk communities. By emphasizing the importance of alleviating youth crime and recidivism, both in the immediate community and beyond, this article works to identify the steps necessary for change.

As a collection, the student research presented in this volume exemplifies the evidence-based social science curriculum offered by the Department of Sociology at Santa Clara University. The collection also reveals sociology students' deep care for social equity and justice. The social issues explored have important policy and programmatic implications. These applications resonate with the University's mission to prepare students of competence, conscience, and compassion, who will help fashion a more just, humane, and sustainable world.

The cover art for this volume was created by talented SCU sociology major **Cathy Moya**, class of 2023. This piece is titled "Sunrise Flight." Bringing this issue to life would not be possible without the support and input from all members in the Department of Sociology at Santa Clara University. We are grateful to all of the editorial reviews and assistance especially provided by Kiki Valenzuela and Jessie Hill, both 2023 sociology graduates.