

"We are all the same age inside." Gertrude Stein

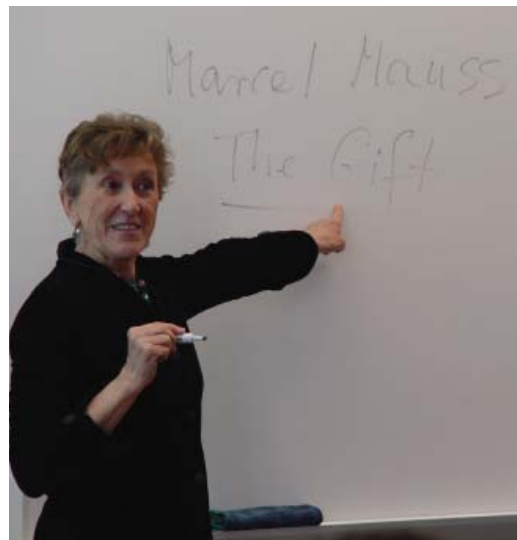
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We are all aging. **Age and Agency**, an original publication of the Scripps Gerontology Center, serves to examine the dynamics of aging, while providing information on the contributions we make to improving the lives of aging people. Through this newsletter, we intend to update friends, colleagues, and students about our activities in research and scholarship, education and training, and professional service.

Lessons in the Classroom, Lessons in Life Our Gratitude, Dr. Groger

Miami University Dept. of Sociology and Gerontology faculty and staff gathered in May for a semi-farewell/appreciation lunch in the Scripps Library for Professor Lisa Groger, who served the department (and her students) with distinction in her 18 years as a full-time professor. (The farewell was, fortunately, only "semi" because Lisa will continue to teach gerontology classes part-time under Miami's "retire-rehire" program, allowing faculty to collect retirement while teaching reduced hours.)



Known for her engaging warmth and wit in the classroom (and in the halls), Lisa not only taught a wide array of undergraduate and graduate gerontology classes, she innovated them as well, personally devising and implementing curriculums for Gerontology (GTY) 260 (Global Aging), GTY 472/572 (Minority Aging), GTY 476/576 (Environment and Aging), GTY 609 (Qualitative Research Methods in Gerontology), and GTY 709 (Advanced Qualitative Research Methods in Gerontology).

Lisa's teaching has earned her the 2000 Outstanding Professor Award from the Miami University Associated Student Government; the 2003 Outstanding Pro-

fessor Award from the Miami University Graduate Association; and the 2004 Distinguished Teacher Award from the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education.

Adept at drawing out even the most taciturn of students, Lisa had no shortage of pupils and colleagues on hand to sing her praises. Social Gerontology Ph.D. candidate Dawn Carr and Master's of Gerontological Studies student Kevin Chaney both saluted Lisa

as key in their decisions to pursue careers in the field of aging, while Dept. of Sociology and Gerontology Chair Lee Harrington touted the depth and breadth of wisdom, perspective and humor that Lisa brought to her every encounter.

And Scripps Gerontology Center affiliates brought to mind an episode of "This Is Your Life" in recalling first encounters with Lisa in 1990, with Scripps Director Suzanne Kunkel sharing a humorous story about a toy-filled-car ride and an emotional account of the warmth, calm and leadership Lisa instantly lent to the

Lessons in the Classroom, Lessons in Life cont'd from pg. 1

center.

A native of the Sudetland (part of Czechoslovakia), and raised “as a landless proletariat in a Bavarian peasant village,” Lisa came to Pennsylvania to visit a friend in 1966 and decided to stay. She earned bachelor’s, master’s and Ph.D. degrees in anthropology, all from Columbia University in NYC. Lisa describes the blossoming of her interest in anthropology: “Having grown up in a setting where there was only one right way of doing things, I felt ‘born again’ when I discovered that there were many other ways of doing the few basic things that humans have to achieve, and that there was an established discipline that dealt with just that: the great variability of cultures. It was love at first sight.” And the study of old age, being somewhat of a culture

of its own, presented a natural and easy transition from anthropology.

Before coming to Miami, Lisa served as an adjunct professor of anthropology and gerontology at the North Carolina Central University, where she was director of grant-funded gerontology projects. Along with her teaching at Miami, Lisa has published on a wide array of aging-related topics, including global aging; consumer choice; African Americans perspectives and coping mechanisms in relation to caregiving and nursing homes; and, most recently (with Jessie Leek), centenarians.

Regarding Oxford and Miami University, Lisa says she has most treasured the physical beauty of the campus and “the congenial, collaborative relationships with my colleagues and the many wonderful students I have

met in my 18 years here.” She notes how honored she has been to be associated with one of the premier gerontology centers in the country, thanking Scripps for its generous support in helping her further her career, stating, “It’s been an empowering experience.”

Lisa says there have been far too many wonderful memories at Miami to mention a favorite. In her semi-spare time, she hopes to “unclutter my life and search for its meaning.” It’s hard to think of anybody with a better head start in that department, especially considering how much she has meant to her colleagues and students. Thank you, Dr. Groger, for the advanced education in gerontology, in friendship and in life.

Summer Practicums

MGS students gaining hands-on experience in areas of interest

Master’s of Gerontological Studies (MGS) students are bridging their two year’s of study at Miami with a semester of fieldwork (i.e., summer practicum) to gain hands-on experience in aging services in areas of special interest to the students. Year 2008 summer placements are as follows:

- **Kevin Chaney - AARP, Washington, D.C.** Kevin is helping prepare a nationwide, state-by-state analysis of health-care reform policies.
- **Emily Halasz - Elderhostel, Inc. Boston, Mass.** Emily is helping Elderhostel (travel and learning for older persons) develop programs for

Continuing Care Retirement Communities.

- **Amber Hawkins – Barton House, Nashville, Tenn.** Amber is performing multiple tasks while learning the ropes of developing and directing a free-standing care setting for people with dementia.
- **Mary Kaschak - National Council on Aging, Washington, D.C.** Mary is working with the national “My Medicare Matters” project, helping to develop accessible, effective Medicare information programs for consumers.
- **Brienne Sheehan – Council on**

Aging of Southwestern Ohio, Cincinnati, Ohio. Brienne is working with COSWO’s Planning Department, helping out with diverse projects.

This year’s placements are being overseen by Kathy McGrew, Associate Professor of Gerontology. Kathy says she is delighted to have helped all five students find fieldwork of special interest and meaning to them, and that all students are doing well with - and enjoying - their placements. We all look forward to hearing about their experience in detail at the Summer Practicum presentations in September.

Updates from Upham Director's Notes

*N*at King Cole's "Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days of Summer" are in full swing. Some of those words, I admit, may have some application around here. A little crazy, especially on the softball field, where Scripps maintains its reputation as one of the most good-humored, charitable teams in the Miami league, donating hits, runs and laughs to our opponents almost every inning. (Fittingly, we're also one of the most intergenerational and oldest teams, with a roughly equal number of players from five different decades of life, from the late teens through the 50s.)

And a little hazy, surely, as anyone who knows southwest Ohio in summer is aware. But certainly not lazy. We get a good deal of work done from June through August. The Department of Sociology and Gerontology's first year master's students have been scattered about doing full-time fieldwork for their summer practicums, while other students engaged in paid research for the center and/or kept busy finishing up critical inquiries, preparing for comprehensive exams and defense of their dissertations. It's a time of year when faculty members can restore order to their offices (hope does

spring eternal!) and focus on finishing up articles or book chapters for publication. Or start new research projects, such as our recent contract to provide quality assurance evaluations for seniors receiving home-services through social service levy funds in Cuyahoga County.

This summer we are processing and analyzing data from some 28,000 surveys from our Ohio Nursing Home Family Satisfaction Survey, not to mention data analyzed from roughly 1,400 Biannual Ohio Long Term Care Facility surveys.

And then there's our ongoing evaluation of Ohio's Assisted Living waiver program. Additionally, we have conferences to prepare for, including GSA which is fast approaching. In connection with our survey of the 655 area agencies on aging and 243 Title VI (Native American) tribal organizations across the country, Scripps was a major presenter at this year's Annual National Association of Area Agencies on Aging Conference July 20-23 in Nashville, Tenn.

On top of all that, we're doing preliminary planning for hosting our third



*Suzanne Kunkel, Director
Scripps Gerontology Center*

national Long-Term Care Business and Strategy Workshop at the Marcum Center this October. Finally, as I write this, we are already getting ready for the returning students and a new class of master's and Ph.D. gerontology students. We will welcome the fall, as we always have, optimistic that summer will have worked its magic and left each of us refreshed and ready to start the semester with energy and enthusiasm that will last throughout the year.

Suzanne Kunkel

Matters of Fact

- Thirteen percent of the total population (of 304,557,606) 37.9 million people, were 65 and older in 2007. Up from 12.8% in 2000.
- The number of people 85 and older reached 5.5 million, or 2 percent of the population, 2007 (up from 1.4% in 2000)
- States with the highest percentages of older people (65 and older) included Florida (17 percent), West Virginia (15.5 percent) and Pennsylvania (15.2 percent). States with the lowest percentages were Alaska (7 percent), Utah (8.8 percent) and Georgia (9.9 percent).

Scripps Hosts Second National Aging Policy Conference

Federal, State and Local Aging Officials Discuss Home-Care Initiative at Miami

National policy leaders in the field of aging exhorted area agencies on aging (AAAs) and Native American Tribal Organizations (Title VI) across the country to be “bold, brave and brilliant,” at the second in a series of biannual business and strategy seminars for the U.S. aging network at the Marcum Center on the Miami University campus May 15-17, 2008.

Hosted by the Scripps Gerontology Center, in partnership with National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), the conference focused on uniting the nation’s 655 area agencies on aging and 243

(Title VI) tribal organizations in efforts to increase the federal budget for aging services and offer more accessible health promotion and home-service programs to older Americans.

That aim is in line and support of Project 2020, a refined version of the Choices for Independence program designed to help an increasing number of older Americans live as independently and fulfillingly as possible for as long as possible in the comfort of their own homes and communities. Promoted by n4a and the National Association of State Units on Aging (NASUA), Project 2020 takes its name from the year by which aging officials hope to have a more comprehensive and efficient set of

home and community services firmly in place for a rapidly increasing older population.

The Project 2020 proposal emphasizes a nationwide increase in aging services and programs in the following areas:

- Streamlined, single-point-of-entry for easily accessible information and referral (with an emphasis on Aging and Disability Resource Centers);



- Evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention;

- Nursing home diversion (via home- and community-based services).

“This is a partnership endeavor to look at ways to move the network forward; you are all critical components in making this work,” Sandy Markwood, n4a chief executive officer, told 27 AAA and Title VI directors at the conference’s opening session. “Our call to action requires you to be bold, to think big; to be brave, be heroes, which sometimes means stepping out of your comfort zone; and to be brilliant. You all need to let your light shine on the good work that you do. Don’t be the best kept secret in your community.”

Observing that the current system’s over-reliance on institutional care of older Americans is neither the public’s first choice nor financially sustainable in the years to come, Markwood stressed that the convergence of an aging baby-boom generation, a decreasing population able to take care of them, and increasing nursing home costs will result “in a perfect storm,” unless the country

changes the way it funds long-term care and other services for older persons.

Project 2020, as proposed by n4a and NASUA, would be cost-neutral in that increased funding for Older Americans

Act home- and community-based services (currently about \$1.8 billion, annually) would be offset by approximately \$2.7 billion in decreased Medicaid and Medicare spending on older Americans over the next 10 years. The proposal hopes to divert 164,000 older persons from nursing homes into home- and community-based services in that time period. And those projections, Markwood noted, are conservative. “This is not pie in the sky,” she said. “We know this works.”

She added that a mandate for the major components of the proposal was included in the 2006 re-authorization of the Older American’s Act, but not the

Scripps Hosts Second National Aging Policy Conference con't 4

money necessary to carry out the proposal.

U.S. Administration on Aging Deputy Secretary of Aging Frank Burns praised the nation's AAAs and Title VI organizations for their roles in creating a positive image of the country's aging services. "You are viewed as high performers by the federal government," he said, accenting their importance as advocates for Older Americans Act funding. Burns thanked the representatives of aging agencies from distant reaches of the country for their cooperation, paying tribute to their "unprecedented" wide-scale collaboration. "We are coming together in ways that we have not before."

In addition to hosting both National Center for Long-Term Care Business Strategy Workshop conferences, Scripps Gerontology Center is involved in the national home- and community-based service initiative as the designer, disseminator and analyzer of a nationwide survey of AAA and Title VI programs. Information gathered on AAAs (published in detail in the Scripps winter newsletter) reveal the median budget for a AAA is \$3.8 million; the median clients served is 3,026; one-third receive money from private-pay clients; nearly half provide consumer-directed services; and about one-in-five are designated as an Aging and Disability Resource Center. (Information on Title VI

programs is included in a sidebar to this article.)

Scripps Director Suzanne Kunkel gave a warm welcome to conference attendees at the May 15 opening dinner, stating, "Once again, we're very pleased to host this conference. Being part of this project is a privilege – a highlight. We can see that it is directly going to make a difference, in the short-term and in the long-term, and we're very proud to be working with all of you. You've been wonderful to work with, and we're glad you're all here."

(Scripps will host the third National Center for Long-Term Care Business Strategy Workshop October 9-11, 2008.)

Recent Reports

"Disability in Ohio: Current and Future Demand for Services." *Mehdizadeh, Shahla.* Scripps Gerontology Center Report, April 2008.

This is the first of three reports published by Scripps in 2008 (as part of the Ohio LTC Research Project) under the umbrella heading of "If We Maintain the Status Quo, What Will Ohio's Future Demand Be for Formal Long-Term Care Services?"

The report estimates the number of Ohioans who had a disability in 2007 by age and type, and projects the size of the population with a disability through 2020. In addition to examining prevalence rates, it also examines the types of assistance that individuals who experience chronic disability receive. This report explores the public and private (out of pocket) costs of providing long-term care today and in

the future (using the same utilization rates). **Key findings indicate that:**

- o Of the more than 308,570 estimated persons with severe disability in Ohio in 2007, 181,670 (58.9%) received formal care. The other 126,900 (41.1%) either received all of their care from family and friends (informal care) or purchased home care services exclusively out-of-pocket.
- o On average, between the years 2000 and 2006, long-term care expenditures in Ohio accounted for 42% of the total state Medicaid budget.
- o Between 2000 and 2006, the long-term care portion of the Medicaid budget grew at an average annual rate of 7.5%. If Medicaid long-term care expenditures continue to grow at this rate, by the year 2020 the total long-term care portion of Med-

icaid allocations (from all sources) will grow to over \$13.2 billion (up from \$4.8 billion in 2006).

- o Almost 79% of those who obtained formal care (or 46% of the individuals with severe disability) received that care through publicly funded programs.

Two other Ohio LTC Research Project Reports serving as companion pieces (in the "If We Maintain the Status Quo" series) to the above report are: **"Disability in Ohio: Long-Term Care Settings and Services"**; and **"Disability in Ohio: Scenarios that Could Alter Future Long-Term Care Demand."** The former should be available later this summer; the latter should be available this fall. For a review of all available Scripps publications, please see: <http://www.scripps.muohio.edu/research/publications.html>

Native American Self-Assessment Response Encouraging

86 Percent of Title VI Assessments Returned

After receiving an impressive return of questionnaires sent out last fall, the Scripps Gerontology Center has compiled encouraging preliminary data on the ability of the 243 Native American Tribal Organizations (aka Title VI programs) to provide information and referral, preventive health measures and increased home- and community-based services in long-term care to the older population they serve.

Scripps is working with the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) and the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA) to assess the involvement of the U.S. aging network in an array of home and community services under the newly designed Project 2020 initiative.

The questionnaire, following a similar assessment of the country's 655 area agencies on aging (AAAs), examines basics such as funding sources and services provided, as well

as progress and readiness to promote healthy aging and help older persons remain in their own homes through streamlined, more accessible services.

Data on Title VI programs show:

- The median Title VI annual budget is \$143,190 (the median is the figure at which roughly half of the organizations fall above and half of the organizations fall below).
- On average, 74 percent of Title VI funding comes from the Older Americans Act, with "other tribal funds" and "Indian Health Service" accounting for the bulk of the remainder.
- Title VI organizations serve, on average, 277 clients, annually. (The median figure is 150.)
- Title VI organizations employ, on average, four full-time and three part-time positions.
- 84 percent of the areas served by Title VI organizations are classified as "mostly rural" (65.2%) or "mostly remote/frontier" (18.8%).

• The most common services offered by Title VI organizations (followed by the percentage of organizations offering these services) are:

- Congregate Meals
- Home-Delivered Meals
- Information and Referral
- Outreach
- Transportation

Before launching the self-assessment on Aug. 31, 2007, Scripps conducted five focus groups with Title VI directors. A special thanks to Cynthia LaCounte, Training and Technical Assistance Manager of Title VI programs and a member of Turtle Mountain Chippewa Tribe of North Dakota, for a fantastic job as an independent consultant assisting with the assessments. She was very instrumental in the high return rate.

For more information on the Title VI and/or AAA assessments, please contact Scripps' Survey Project Coordinator Abbe Lackmeyer: 513-529-1911; linscoae@muohio.edu.

Progress Report (Title VI)

The survey also shows Title VI organizations are making admirable progress in the area of accessible home and community-based services, with the following percentage reporting progress and/or already having services in place in the areas listed below:

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| • Improving information and referral systems | 83.4 percent |
| • Developing collaboration with local AAAs | 70.7 percent |
| • Assessing elders satisfaction with their services | 85.0 percent |
| • Asking elders about their service preferences | 84.5 percent |
| • Having culturally competent staff | 90.2 percent |
| • Conducting needs assessment in their respective areas | 83.3 percent |

Adios, Mis Amigas

Farewell to Intergero Students Sandra and Elvira

If time flies when you're having fun, then international students Sandra Garcia and Elvira Alejandre had a blast this past semester. They say their three and a-quarter months here have seemed more like three weeks.

Both graduates in psychology from the University of Salamanca in Spain, Sandra and Elvira came here as part of the Scripps "Intergero" program offering gerontology students from around the world exchange opportunities at Miami University, Salamanca, the University of Heidelberg (in Germany), and the University of Vrije (the Netherlands).

The congenial pair – both of whom hope to work as psychologists in nursing homes some day – spent the winter/spring semester taking the following gerontology classes in Miami's Department of Sociology and Gerontology in pursuit of their master's degrees in gerontology.

- *Global Aging*
Lisa Groger
- *Policy & Programs in Aging*
Bob Applebaum
- *Linking Research & Practice*
Suzanne Kunkel
- *Organization & Aging Enterprises*
Kathryn McGrew

Sandra and Elvira both appreciated the relatively small classes and the informal, participatory educational environment cultivated by their American professors. "In Spain, the classes are usually much bigger, maybe 25 or 30 students," Sandra noted. "And usually, it's just the teacher talking." Elvira added that in Spain it is sometimes consid-



Elvira Alejandre and Sandra Garcia

ered rude and interruptive for students to talk, or even ask questions, in class. "But here," she noted, "it is much more relaxed. We can ask the teacher almost anything. They are like our friends. It makes it much easier and more enjoyable to learn."

As much as they have learned in class, Sandra and Elvira have provided as many life lessons to each other. Though they attended the same university in Spain, neither had met until one week before boarding their plane to the

United States. As roommates, they have been nearly inseparable, helping each other navigate around the Miami campus and Oxford. And they've become good traveling buddies as well, seeing a good deal of the United States and parts of Mexico while visiting Elvira's many relatives in their short time here. In three months, they've been to Chicago, Boston, Grand Rapids, Miami (Fla.) and Mexico City.

They call themselves a team. "I have received a valuable education from Sandra," Elvira says, smiling. "She has been good for me. She teaches me how to be happy, more spontaneous, a little crazy sometimes, but in a good way." Sandra promptly returns the compliment, thanking Elvira for keeping things organized – and quiet and calm, when necessary. "Elvira is a good listener, very patient. And more realistic. I'm a little like Don Quixote, so I need that. She is like my Sancho Panza, the practical one who keeps things moving forward, who knows when it's time to study. And just like in the book, towards the end, we are beginning to reverse roles. I have become a little like her, and she has become a little like me. It has worked out very well. We will be friends forever."

Ditto from all of us at the Scripps Gerontology Center, Sandra and Elvira, *nuestras amigas para siempre*.

Age and Agency

Vol. 11, Summer 2008

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Calendar

dates, meetings, conferences...

Sept. 5

MGS Practicum Presentations

Shriver Center MPR Rm C

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Sept. 18

P.K. Whelpton Lecture

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

**“Immigration and American
Society: Past, Present, and Fu-
ture”**

Charles Hirschman

Marcum Conference Center

Room 180

Oct. 8

Brown Bag

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

**“Current and Future Demand
of LTC Services and the Impact
on Ohio’s Budget”**

**Bob Applebaum, Shahla Meh-
dizadeh**

MacMillan Hall Great Room

Oct. 29

Cottrell Award Lecture

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Ann E. Gillespie

Shriver Center Heritage Room

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