

ELEANOR FAILS ALUMNI SPEAKER SERIES

ALUMMIN LECTURE SERIES: DR. PAUL DRAUS

April 2025

It was our privilege to have Dr. Paul Draus as this year's speaker. Paul is a professor of sociology at the University of Michigan–Dearborn and serves as the faculty director of the University of Michigan Detroit Center. He earned his PhD from Loyola University Chicago in 2001. His research explores health behaviors and the social contexts surrounding substance use in rural Ohio, as well as the social networks, daily routines, and income-generating strategies of active heroin users and former street sex workers in Detroit.

Nielbock's experiences provide a lens to understand the challenges facing Detroit, highlighting the city's ongoing redevelopment as a high-stakes drama.

Through Nielbock's mixed-race upbringing in postwar Germany, his search for his Black father in 1980s Detroit, and his struggles with racial and cultural adversity, Draus weaves a narrative of identity, craftsmanship, and ambition. Combining direct observations, interviews, and historical research, the book *Forging Identity* delves into Detroit's rise, decline, and resurgence, addressing themes like race, capitalism, and criminal justice.

Forging Identity: THE STORY OF CARLOS A. NIELBOCK'S DETROIT



ALUMNI NEWS!

Burr, William, PhD'2020. Judson Everitt, James Johnson, and Lillian Platten. "How Your Doctor's Debt Matters," *Contexts* (2025) 24 (2).

Kinsella, Melissa, PhD'25 was awarded 2nd Place in the 2025 MSS Graduate Student Paper Competition for her paper, "Fuck the Bad Guys: Online Actors, Evaluations, and Solutions in #MeToo Discourse." in March at the Awards Ceremony at the annual meeting of the Midwest Sociological Society (MSS).

Maly Mike, PhD'98. was recently named Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at Roosevelt University! Dr. Maly has been part of the Roosevelt community for nearly three decades and most recently served as Interim Provost.

Martin, Skky, PhD '23, Named 2025 Equity Scholar at NORC

Skky, a Research Methodologist II at NORC at the University of Chicago, has been selected as one of only two internal recipients of NORC's 2025 Equity Scholars Program. From January through August, Martin will collaborate with NORC experts to advance inclusive, culturally responsive research. Her project will use Round 3 of the National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project (NSHAP) dataset to examine how social support among older adults diagnosed with cancer relates to positive mental health outcomes.

Purifoye, Gwendolyn, PH.D'14. A Talk for the Sociology Department by alumna *Designing a Dissertation that Becomes a Gift that Keeps on Giving*. Gwendolyn is assistant professor of Racial Justice and Conflict Transformation in the Keough School of Global Affairs at the University of Notre Dame. She is a core faculty member of the Keough School's Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and a faculty fellow of the Keough School's Klau Institute for Civil and Human Rights.



Purifoye, Gwendolyn. July 2025 [Sociology of Race and Ethnicity - Without Risk Reduction: How Black Men's Well-being and Humanity Are Compromised in Mobile Public Spaces](#)

Purifoye, Gwendolyn has been quoted in [The New York Times](#) article, "Where Have All the 'Third Places' Gone?", offering insights on the decline of informal social gathering spaces and their impact on community life.

Purifoye, Gwendolyn. Sept 2024 *Seeing a pandemic: how COVID changed urban spaces and places.* <https://doi.org/10.1080/1472586X.2024.2390146>

Rumpf, Cesraéa, PhD '14 Had recent book, *Recovering Identity: Criminalized Women's Fight for Dignity and Freedom* reviewed in the May 2025 issue of *American Journal of Sociology*.

Talati, Samir received his PhD in May and writes: I will be joining the North Eastern Social Research Center in Guwahati City in Northeast India. This center focuses on social issues like development-induced displacement, ethnic conflicts, Peace studies, land, and gender issues, especially in the context of multi-ethnic Northeast India, where there are more than 225 ethnic groups. I am joining this center as a researcher, but gradually I will also get into the administrative responsibility. I am thrilled at this exciting opportunity to develop my own research skills and contribute to the people of Northeast in some meaningful way.