Professor Betances published his new book “In Search of Citizenship: Social Movements and Democratization in the Dominican Republic” in Spanish last year. On November 13, 2017, he gave a talk at the Joseph Theater at Gettysburg College about this new book, which welcomed an audience of around 120.

Mairead McCarthy, a student from the Sociology Department, gave a brief introduction on Professor Betances’ background, education, and notable publications. Professor Betances started his presentation by sharing the background of his 8 year journey to complete this project. He spent 4 summers in the Dominican Republic and 5 years to examine approximately 24 thousand articles from 8 different newspapers. He also conducted 68 interviews with leaders of various social movements.

The main research questions of his study are “Why and to what extend do social movements contribute to the construction of citizenship?” and “Why are the gains to expand citizenship so limited in developing countries?” These questions guide him into three main topics to explain the role of social movements in constructing social citizenship in the Dominican Republic: the democratization and cycle of protests in 1980s, the emergence and success of the movement of 4% for education (1908-2012) and the significance of the campaign “La Marcha Verde” against corruption in 2017.

His book covers a wide variety of social movements including labor, peasant, middle-class based movements, as well as environmentalists. These movements have ups and down through various protest cycles, especially during the 1980s and early 1990s. In any case, he argues that the emergence of middle-class social movement posed challenges for the government because they were asking it to enforce the law and thereby recognize citizenship rights such as health care, education, environment, employment, and law enforcement against corruption in the Dominican Republic.

At the end of the talk was the Q&A session. Students and faculty members from different departments had questions showing enthusiasm towards the topic. Currently, Professor Betances has revised and resubmitted his research paper on “What happens to social movements when they succeed: a case study of the 4% for Education movement in the Dominican Republic.” He is also working on the literature review of social transformation of the Dominican Republic.
For readers interested in Betances’ talk, a video-lecture is available on his website at http://www.gettysburg.edu/faculty-pages/betances/videos.dot

Potuchek: Aging in America
By Jesse Shircliff ’19

As part of Gettysburg’s Year of Health, the Sociology Department hosted Emerita Professor Jean Potuchek for a speech titled: “Health and Wellbeing in Later Life.” Potuchek claims that our perceptions of aging are consequential to wellbeing. She related a study demonstrating that positive outlooks on aging at age fifty produced healthier, happier, and longer living individuals twenty years later than those who saw aging as negative. Another study showed that positive perspectives and optimism in the face of aging help resist age related diseases and produce better attitudes on health and wellbeing in general.

Moreover, Potuchek cited evidence that people above eighty-nine are, on average, equally happy to those of us in our thirties and happier than us in our twenties and our fifties. If optimism on aging has such large impacts on our health, then the cultural belief that being younger is better can be a destructive one, especially how an anti-aging perspective can affect the way we treat aging individuals, and how those individuals think of themselves. Considering this, Potuchek made a request of her audience.

Potuchek asked that we resist the urge to treat our elders like feeble, decrepit people spiraling closer to death than ourselves. Instead, we should engage with an older person as you might with yourself and help change our cultural perspective. After all, Potuchek claims that our seventies and beyond can be the best years of our lives.

Dr. Potuchek taught at Gettysburg College for twenty-five years as a professor of Sociology and Women, Gender, and Sexualities. Today, she teaches at Maine Senior College and authors two blogs—one on the fruits of retirement, the other on gardening.

Fall Department Party
By Jesse Shircliff ’19

On Thursday, September 21st, the Sociology Department hosted a welcome back lunch for faculty, majors, and minors. Included were the classic features of any academic-social event: too many boxes of pizza, a questionable number of chairs, and a time for students and professors to engage in symbolically mutual conversation, without concern of midterms on the horizon.

With food, drink, and good company, the department delved into the mysterious lives of Sociology professors in a questionnaire.
competition. Students and faculty tried answer revealing questions about the department, such as: which professor helped make a rap album in college? Who used to live in convent? Who once played against Jason Acuña—that’s Wee Man from Jackass, in a skateboarding video game? Who used to work on an Alaskan fishing boat? Whose guilty pleasure is red wine? Adult Swim? Or eating a bucket of KFC? And most intriguingly, which professor has been arrested the most times? Winners received coveted Sociology-themed water bottles, and those of us present are sure to remember these answers. If you’re interested in learning more about which faculty member did what, you’ll have to come next year. And undoubtedly, before you leave, you’ll hear someone say… “Grab some pizza! We bought too much.”

**Betances: New Published Book**

“The Catholic Church and Power Politics in Latin America”

By Shelby Reese ’18

This past August 2017, our very own Dr. Emelio Betances published, in Spanish, the second edition of his book, *The Catholic Church and Power Politics in Latin America: The Dominican Case in Comparative Perspective* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2007). In this book, Professor Betances discusses the Church’s role as an institutionalized political and social mediator in the Dominican Republic. He investigates the political and social circumstances through which the Church was able to ensure national political stability and, simultaneously, accommodate the political establishment in the Dominican Republic. He claims that, in a certain way, the Dominican Church mirrors the larger reality of Bolivia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala, countries which, like the Dominican Republic, went through political turmoil. In the second edition, Betances thoroughly revises the text and included a new prologue. Interested readers may freely download the Spanish version of the book and many other publications in English and Spanish from his website at [http://www.gettysburg.edu/faculty-pages/betances/publications.dot](http://www.gettysburg.edu/faculty-pages/betances/publications.dot)

**Annual Senior Survey**

By Xiunan Yu ’18

A total of 24 (out of 27) Sociology undergraduates responded to the senior student survey. Majors felt very confident in their “comprehension of the power dynamics that produce stratification”. They also felt highly positive about their ability “to design a research project” and how well they acquired “mastery of skills in writing sociological papers.”

The majority of seniors stated that their most important learning experiences as a Sociology major were “looking at a situation from various perspectives” and “learning about other people’s points of view.” Additionally, some seniors emphasized the experience of participating in a Sociology conferences, expanded on their knowledge and enhanced their ability to conduct research.

A number of students offered suggestions as to how to improve the major. In this regard, students accentuated the necessity to have “more variety to classes” and “more recent topics” such as social media or technology.

Most seniors plan to get jobs in social research and marketing after graduation. A few students wish to go to graduate school to continue their sociological studies after working for one year.
Awards/Honors

Woman of Distinction
Student Award:
Alexa Laboy ‘18

Hidden Figure Award:
Miranda Wisor ‘17

Banner Carrier:
Alex Richmond ‘17

Holly Gabriel Award:
Cheery Huang ‘17

Departmental Honors:
Chelsea Johnson ‘17

American Sociological Association Departmental Award:
Keyana Moody ‘17
Cheery Huang ‘17
Chrisbell Jimenez Sosa ‘17
Jenny Enos ‘18
Mairead McCarthy ‘18

Nicholas Prize in Religious Studies:
Shae Belenski ‘17

Managing Editors
Xiunan Yu ‘18
Jesse Shircliff ‘19

Supervising Faculty/Staff
Voon Chin Phua, Craig Lair and Andrea Switzer

Making the List

Dean’s List Spring 2017
Shae Belenski ‘17
Caroline Campbell ‘17
Laura Gradiska ‘17
Katherine Guth ‘17
Sarah Kramer ‘17
Kelly Palmer ‘17
Jhanvi Ramaiya ‘17
Jenny Enos ‘18
Megan Luckenbaugh ‘18
Maireid McCarthy ‘18
Anisha Wilson ‘18
Tien Dao ‘19
Jesse Shircliff ‘19
Emily Wielk ‘20

Commendation List Spring 2017
Keyana Moody ‘17
Lauren Kirinic ‘17
Cheery Huang ‘17
Ty Abdul-Karim ‘18
Michael Deleon ‘18
Sarah Good ‘18
Charlotte Groseclose ‘18
Claire Healey ‘18
Alexa Laboy ‘18
Mackenzie Targona ‘18
Sarah Bradley ‘19
Yalin Lian ‘19
Ella Kulma ‘20