



**Dr. Steve Ceccoli**, P.K. Seidman Professor of Political Economy, has been teaching international relations, comparative politics, and political economy courses in the Department of International Studies since 1998 and regularly leads a summer study program for Rhodes students in Tianjin, China. He's interested in studying public opinion across countries as well as how different governments regulate citizen behavior. As an APSA Congressional Fellow and following the publication of his book, *Pill Politics*, he served on the staff of U.S. Senator Blanche Lincoln for a year where he assisted on health policy issues. In 2005, he received the Clarence Day Award for Outstanding Teaching and was the recipient of the Jameson Jones Award for Outstanding Faculty Service in 2010. He has recently been interested in how citizens perceive the use of drones in modern warfare. His wife finds his study of this advanced technology ironic, since he is typically quite slow in adapting to the latest cell phone, social media and mobile pay

technologies.



**Dr. Jonathan Fitz Gerald**, Associate Professor of Biology (BS Biology, University of California at Irvine; PhD Molecular Genetics and Cell Biology, University of Chicago). It is commonly known that we get half of our DNA from our mothers and half from our fathers. But are the genes from our parents equivalent? Dr. Fitz Gerald studies the Parental Conflict Hypothesis of Genomic Imprinting (GI). Under this model, what is evolutionarily advantageous for one sex is not necessarily optimal for the other. This has led to an epigenetic "Battle of the Sexes" that is played out after fertilization in our offspring. Gene expression systems exist whereby maternal and paternal genes are differentially utilized and can even have very different roles in embryonic development. In plants, GI is responsible for seed size and thus of enormous agricultural importance. Dr. Fitz Gerald's work focuses on the Arabidopsis gene AtFH5, important for seed development. Interestingly, after fertilization AtFH5 is expressed only from the maternal genome and the paternal

gene is silenced by the mother's Polycomb group complex, an evolutionarily conserved obstructor of gene activity. Could Polycomb be maintaining male and female identity of the parental DNA? Using a combination of molecular biology, genetics and microscopy, his aim is to understand both the role of AtFH5 in seed development and the pathways that regulate AtFH5 expression.

Dr. Fitz Gerald began his scientific career teaching Cambridge O-levels at Matshekge Hill Senior Secondary School in Bobonong, Botswana and later worked in plant genetics as a research assistant to Deborah and Brian Charlesworth in the Ecology and Evolution department of the University of Chicago. Perhaps believing that they were paying him way too much money, the Charlesworths pushed Fitz Gerald towards graduate school. After finishing his thesis on the budding yeast G1 DNA damage checkpoint in the UC Center for Molecular Oncology, Dr. Fitz Gerald returned to plant genetics. His current studies began at the Laboratoire Reproduction et Développement des Plantes in ENS, Lyon France and were continued at the Department of Chromatin and Epigenetics in Temasek Lifesciences Laboratories, Singapore before joining the Rhodes faculty in 2007.



**Dr. Han Li** is Associate Professor of Chinese in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, and has been working at Rhodes for nine years. Her research interest includes novels and material culture in late imperial China, and contemporary Chinese cinema. Coming from China's lower Yangtze Delta, an area known for its classical Chinese garden heritage, she is also an enthusiastic explorer of the Chinese gardens built in North America as well as the politics behind the transplanting of "Chinese-ness." Han Li is co-leader of Rhodes "Maymester in Tianjin, China" program and serves on the Faculty Development Committee.



**Dr. Loretta Jackson-Hayes** is Associate Professor of Chemistry and Chair of the Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Program. She received a B. S. in Chemistry from Tougaloo College and a Ph. D. in Pharmacology from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. Dr. Jackson-Hayes was the 2015 recipient of the Clarence Day Award for Outstanding Teaching, Rhodes' highest faculty honor for teaching. Her research has focused on determining the roles of genes involved in fungal cell wall metabolism for potential applications in the developing antifungal drugs and agricultural and industrial fungicides. This work has been published in scientific journals and her research has been supported by grants from Research Corporation, the Merck Company Foundation, and the National Science Foundation. Dr. Jackson-Hayes is a national spokesperson for STEM education within the liberal arts environment, publishing a Washington Post op-ed and delivering a TED<sup>X</sup> Talk on the subject. She is an alumna of the Higher Education Resource

Services (HERS) Institute and a member of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. Dr. Jackson-Hayes is lifelong resident of Mississippi, growing up in Coldwater, MS and now residing in Southaven with her husband Ken and children Kendel and Naomi.



**Dr. Amy Risley** teaches comparative politics, Latin American politics, and other courses for the Department of International Studies, which she currently chairs. Amy's scholarship focuses on activism and social movements in Latin American democracies. In 2015, she published her first book titled, *Civil Society Organizations, Advocacy, and Policy Making in Latin American Democracies: Pathways to Participation*. Her current book project is on global children's rights. Her research addresses gender and politics and human trafficking, as well. An advocate for interdisciplinary programs, she directed Latin American Studies for three years and also contributes to Urban Studies and Gender and Sexuality Studies. She is passionate about community-based learning and requires volunteer work in her social movements course. Fun fact: Her hometown is Madison, WI, but she has also lived in Buenos Aires, Santiago, Madrid, New York, and Austin.



**Dr. Betsy Sanders**, Associate Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science, joined the Rhodes College community in the Fall of 2007. She received an undergraduate degree in mathematics and computer science from Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi; then she completed her master's degree and Ph.D. in computer science at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. Her research work focuses on virtual environments, and she was a 2014 National Science Foundation CAREER award winner. On campus, you can find her working with students in the virtual reality lab in the newly renovated building, Briggs. Dr. Sanders grew up in a small town in the Mississippi Delta but now calls Midtown Memphis home, where she lives with her husband Andrew, a 2001 Rhodes graduate, and their daughters Callie and Cecilia. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, catching up on sleep, going out to eat, and hunting for antiques.