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## Myrna Goodman Receives the Distinguished Alumni



**Myrna Goodman**  
B.A. Sociology, 1988

Director, SSU Center for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide

Sociology Department Chair

As an undergraduate student at Sonoma State University, Myrna Goodman was a Presidential Scholar and the recipient of the Ambrose R. Nichols, Jr. Scholarship. After completing her bachelor's degree at SSU, she received her master's and doctorate degrees in sociology from the University of California, Davis. She returned to Sonoma State in 1993 to teach in the Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies Departments and for the Holocaust Lecture Series, which she now

directs. As the Center's director, Dr. Goodman coordinates the Holocaust Lecture Series, which attracts distinguished speakers from around the world representing disciplines that range from history to philosophy to biology to political science and others. The series has been offered for academic credit since 1983 and more than 100 students enroll each spring semester. In addition to the lecture series, Dr. Goodman plans Center programs and activities, archives media, maintains a reference collection, and oversees the Center's grants and operational funds.

Dr. Goodman teaches an upper-division course called the Sociology of Genocide, and serves as the faculty advisor to the SSU Human Rights Club. She is also involved in the development of the Holocaust and Genocide Memorial Grove Sculpture to be installed on the University campus in 2008 (article courtesy of the Alumni Office).

## Sheila Katz Meets with Obama Transition Team

Professor Sheila Katz traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in the Realizing the Promise Forum on December 4. The Forum brought together community organizers, activists, and community researchers from across the country to participate in a conversation with members of President-elect Obama's transition team about policies for low-income families in the U.S. The highlight of the event was discussions with Valerie Jarrett, co-chair of the Obama-Biden Transition Project, and Melody Barnes, appointed by President-Elect Obama to be the incoming Director of the Domestic Policy Council. Katz was invited for her policy perspective and experience conducting community-based research on poverty, domestic violence, and access to higher education. She conducts qualitative research with

mothers on welfare who are enrolled in higher education programs in the San Francisco Bay Area. Katz traveled with Diana Spatz, Executive Director of Low Income Families' Empowerment Through Education (LIFETIME), and two of their community organizers, who are mothers on welfare pursuing higher education. She has worked with LIFETIME for more than five years on poverty and higher education policy. While on Capitol Hill, Katz and LIFETIME also met with the Legislative staffers from 12 key Congressional Representatives' offices, including Representative Lynn Woolsey and Representative Mike Thomson from the North Bay. In addition, the group met with the Deputy Staff Director of the House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on income Security and Family Support and (**see page 2**)

### Editors Note:

*Greetings! The Sociology Department is excited to present the first issue of the Department Newsletter. Our goal is to publish an issue every semester. We would like this newsletter to be a place where students past & present can connect, faculty can share their research, and the department can announce news and events. If you are interested in publishing an article, submitting pictures, or including an announcement please feel free to contact us at: [sociology@sonoma.edu](mailto:sociology@sonoma.edu)*

## News & Events

### Project Censored Wins PEN Award



*Project Censored, Sonoma State's watchdog program which focuses on reporting important news stories left by the wayside in the mainstream media, has received the prestigious 12th annual PEN Oakland Literary Censorship award.*

*This award, presented to Project Censored is given by PEN's Oakland Chapter Saturday, December 6, 2008 in recognition of defying censorship of important facts.*

*Project Censored  
[www.projectcensored.org/](http://www.projectcensored.org/)*

### Intersession Course

*Classical Sociological Theory will be offered over intersession through the Department of Extended Education*

*Sociology 375, Classical Sociological Theory, 4 Units, GE upper division, category D1  
January 5-23, 9-1:15PM*

*Contact Extended Education or Professor James Dean via e-mail ([deanja@sonoma.edu](mailto:deanja@sonoma.edu)) or phone (707)664-2599 for more information.*

(continued from page 1) about policies to help for low-income families, including the upcoming reauthorization of welfare policy. "These meetings were an important opportunity to represent SSU and our community in this historic moment.

President-Elect Obama faces many tough issues, and it is vital that community activists and policy advocates stay involved in this transition to strive for social and economic justice," Katz says.

### **2007–2008 C. Wright Mills Award for Sociological Imagination Awarded to Andrea Lochtefeld**

The Department of Sociology is pleased to announce that Andrea Lochtefeld is the recipient of the C. Wright Mills Award for Sociological Imagination for 2008. The Mills Award is bestowed on the best student paper from the previous academic year (2007-08) and was given to Andrea for her paper titled "Collective Action and Negotiation of Space at Indie Hip-Hop and Indie Rock Concerts" which she wrote for Sociology 414: Methods Seminar: Social Interaction with Melinda Milligan.

**Abstract:** This paper analyzes observation of audiences attending indie hip-hop and indie rock concerts. It contends that audience interaction within quasi-public venue settings is influenced by two factors: (1) the physical space of the concert venue and (2) the genre of music being performed. In this study, I took the role of participant-observer at four indie hip-hop concerts and three indie

rock shows in San Francisco, CA. I was able to draw specifically upon concepts developed by George Simmel, Clark McPhail and Edward T. Hall in order to explore audience interactions that occur collectively as a crowd, among groups of audience members, and within spaces provided inside concert venues. My findings show that audience members engage in collective action in three different ways: (1) in response to performers, (2) within groups and (3) among individual audience members. In addition to collective actions, my observations reveal that interactions within the audience also occur between groups of comrades and strangers. Finally, I observed that physical space within venues influences the behavior of audience members. Understanding the various forms of audience interactions that occur at concert venues allows us to better comprehend the collective crowd actions that occur in different quasi-public settings.

### **2009 Holocaust Lecture Series**

**Uncovering the Past: New Perspectives on the Holocaust and Genocide**



Sociology 305: Perspectives on the Holocaust and Genocide: The 2009 Series will feature several Holocaust survivor presentations along with the authors of two books that explore newly discovered information on the Holocaust. Lucille Eichengreen will speak on her experiences as a teen age girl during the Holocaust. Paul Schwartzbart will present his story of hiding from the Nazis in a Belgian orphanage. Social psychologist

James Waller will lecture on how ordinary people commit extraordinary evil. We will also present lectures about the Armenian genocide and Mathilde Mukatabana, a Rwandan survivor, will explain the effects of the genocide on current everyday life in Rwanda. Sociology 305 is an upper division GE class in Area D. Sociology majors can take this class for major credit, as well. For more information, contact Professor Myrna Goodman, [goodman@sonoma.edu](mailto:goodman@sonoma.edu).

## New Class Offered in Spring 2009

### Sociology 377, Contemporary Sociological Theory

Sociology 377, #3664  
Contemporary Sociological Theory  
Professor James Dean

This course is designed to explore and extend the way classical social theorists (Marx, Durkheim, Weber, and Freud) laid the groundwork for the development of critical theory, postmodernism, and poststructuralism. Following a chronological order, we will explore the critical theory of Jurgen Habermas and Pierre Bourdieu, who both take up a neo-Marxian tradition and significantly transform it through their theories of society as a system and lifeworld or as a form of cultural habitus, respectively. Taking a post-disciplinary perspective, we will then turn to theorists who have reshaped fields of debate in both the social sciences and the humanities. Here, we will be attentive to notions

of power and difference in the work of the following postmodern and poststructural theorists, Michel Foucault and his concept of disciplinary power, Jacques Derrida and his theory of deconstruction, and Judith Butler and her performative critique of identity. We will compare each theorist's visions of agency, domination, and liberation.

The class format, while including lectures and presentations, will focus on collaborative, interactive learning. Students will work together in small groups on discussions.\*

\*Students interested in going on to graduate school should seriously consider taking this course as part of their training and preparation for graduate level work.

## New Class Offered in Spring 2009

### Sociology 443, Methods Seminar: Women & Social Policy

Sociology 443, #4089  
Women and Social Policy  
Professor Sheila Katz

This course explores the effects of social policies and their implementation on women's lives and analyzes the ideologies shaping these policies especially how gender intersects with race/ethnicity, class, sexuality, age, and religion to affect policy outcomes. It traces the development of social policy in the U.S. as it pertains to and affects women and gender inequality. For our purposes, social policy includes state and federal law, court decisions, and pending legislation. We will explore the effects of social welfare programs and policies on women's lives, analyze and critique the ideologies that shape these policies and their implementation, and consider how gender intersects

with race/ethnicity, family, age, religion, and place to affect policy outcomes. The introductory section of the course provides the foundations for discussion of policy issues. In the first third of the semester, we will discuss the changing concepts of sex and gender, and examine the relationship between gender and policy-making. The bulk of the course is devoted to some of the issues (and relevant policies) that directly affect the lives of women in the contemporary U.S: education, violence against women, reproduction, employment, and poverty/welfare policy. The goal of this course is to help you learn how to evaluate both the stated and hidden effects of public policy on women. In addition, students will learn to conduct and analyze focus group data.

## Letter from the Sociology Club President

*Dear Fellow Sociology Students:*

*The Sociology Club is a great way to get involved in your major and larger SSU community.*

*We invite you to join our meetings to help plan panels that you and your fellow students are interested in, such as Graduate School 101, academic research, and what sociology BA alumni are doing with their degrees now. We also plan student and faculty socials, fundraiser events like our recent one for The Living Room, and graduation parties.*

*Also I'm currently trying to be the curator of an art show that showcases the social history of SSU for next semester.*

*If you are interested in getting involved in the Sociology Club, then please join us every other Thursday from 12 pm-1 pm in Stevenson 2083.*

*Best Wishes,*

*Mary Jambon  
Sociology Club President*

## **Faculty Corner**

### **James Dean, Assistant Professor**

James Dean is currently working on a book manuscript from his dissertation on how recent increases in gay and lesbian visibility in the United States are shaping and reshaping heterosexual identities. Based on 60 in-depth interviews with heterosexual Black and White men and women, the manuscript explores the gendered and racial character of heterosexual identities in the context of gay visibility.

He recently published an article entitled "Gays and Queers: From the Centering to the Decentering of Homosexuality in American Film" in the Summer 2007 issue of the journal *Sexualities*, and is presenting at the Pacific Sociological Association annual meeting in April 2009 on a paper entitled "Gays in the (Straight) Public Eye: Heterosexual Anxieties and Gay and Lesbian Media Visibility."

### **Kathy Charmaz, Professor**

Kathy Charmaz delivered the opening plenary address, "Emergent Ethics in Qualitative Research," on June 30, 2008 at the 2008 Methodological Festival at Oxford University in the United Kingdom. In August, she 1) participated in the secret deliberations of the Nominations Committee of the American Sociological Association; 2) chaired a session on Qualitative Methods for the annual meetings of the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction (SSSI); 3) presented her paper, "Recollecting Good and Bad Days," a retrospective analysis of the methods for her earlier book, *Good Days, Bad Days: The Self in Chronic Illness and Time* at SSSI; 4) taught two intensive professional development courses for doctoral students and faculty at Research Talk in Long Island; and 5) presented a comparative analysis of qualitative methods at a theory symposium at the annual meetings of the American Psychological Association. She also gave the opening address, "Advancing Qualitative Research through Grounded Theory," at the Qualitative Research Conference at Bournemouth University, United Kingdom on September 10th.

## **A Selection of Fall 2008 Senior Seminar Abstracts**

*Sociology 498 is the "capstone" course for sociology majors. It focuses on student completion of independent research projects. Each section has a topical emphasis. Past examples include women and aging, food and society, gender and politics, and the sociology of time. Each student will design and complete an original research project, including the collection and analysis of original data.*

### **Kara Bogner**

**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to examine public school teacher attitudes on the implementation of standardized education techniques, such as testing and curriculum. The sample consists of primary and secondary public school teachers from randomly selected public schools in Sonoma County. Participants will provide data through a questionnaire which contains eleven scale items as well as space for open ended comments. This study aims to find a correlation between teacher attitudes and variables, such as experience and age.

### **Erin Garnett**

The "Coming Out" of Children's Literature:  
Transgressive Familial Representations in Gay and Lesbian  
Themed Children's Books

**Abstract:** This study seeks to offer linguistic recognition of gay and lesbian familial constructions by using content analysis to analyze textual and visual representations of transgressive gender, sexuality and familial constructions in gay and lesbian themed children's books. It draws on two bodies of existing literature: (1) content analysis based studies that document the perpetuation of gender stereotypes in heteronormative children's books and (2) in-depth interview studies of the lived experiences of gay and lesbian co-parents. Content analysis was used to assess the depiction of key characters in a purposive sample of nine gay and lesbian themed children's books intended to be read by four to eight year old children and drawn from the first decade of the Lambda Literary Awards (1989-1998). The findings of the study suggest that the content of gay and lesbian children's books afford readers representations of gender fluidity, egalitarian parenting, the promotion of gender-neutral play, and provide explanations of the

## Senior Seminar Abstracts Continued

complexities of sexual orientation, “alternative” familial constructions and homophobia. This research is especially relevant at present due to the ongoing “moral panics” concerning teaching the subject of homosexuality in public schools, which have resulted in the censoring and banning of gay and lesbian themed children’s books across the United States. It draws attention to the current literary silencing and invisibility of pluralistic forms of gender, sexuality, and familial constructions in the classroom that reinforce marginalization and oppression, resulting in the promotion of institutionalized heteronormative and homophobic curriculum that later structures inequitable legal and social policy.

### **Shaina Hildreth**

Homosexual Experiences in Heterosexual Spaces:  
How Lesbians and Gay Men Respond to Negative  
Encounters in Public

**Abstract:** Using data from ten in-depth interviews, this research examines the experiences of lesbians and gay men with negative encounters with strangers in public places and how they respond to such situations. Most of the interviewees choose to “pass” in public, meaning they intentionally aim to appear “straight” in order to avoid negative encounters with strangers. However, when negative encounters occur, the interviewees implement a range of responses, including (1) anger, (2) avoidance, and (3) attempting to educate “the attacker.” Preliminary results show that although negative encounters do occur, lesbians and gay men generally work to avoid defining the hatred of strangers as resulting from their own actions. All of the interviewees believed that strangers who expressed negative sentiments toward them did so due to the strangers’ religious beliefs and/or low levels of education, rather than due to the personal identity characteristics of the targeted individuals. Consequently, the interviewees refrain from allowing negative encounters to influence their personal identity and sense of self.

### **Megan Menjou**

**Abstract:** My study utilizes objectification theory, to examine how women perceive themselves. A total of 50 women will be asked to complete The Self Objectification Questionnaire, which will gauge the importance of specific body attributes. Findings for college women will be

compared to findings for women in their mid-40’s to late 50’s. I hypothesize that the college-age women will be far more likely to put emphasis on appearance based attributes like “sex appeal” whereas the women from the second group will presumably focus more greatly on the competence based attributes like “physical coordination.” This could be due to differences in socio-cultural values and expectations among the groups and/or the increased exposure to media images of objectified female forms in the college-age group.

### **Ashley Murray**

Getting your foot in the door:

Job searching techniques among college students

**Abstract:** Months away from my college graduation, I wondered, “How will I find my next job?” I took my concern to an advisor and he told me to talk to people in my desired field of work instead of searching an internet classifieds database. Was his advice valid? Social network theory suggests that when it comes to job searching, who you know may be as important as what you know. My research aims to answer the question of which searching techniques used amongst college students Data will be collected through ten in-depth interviews with college students from three northern California universities. Transcripts of the interviews will be analyzed to uncover patterns of job search strategies. My findings hopefully will provide useful information about job searching strategies amongst college students.

### **Randall E. Precup**

Home Organization: The Construction of Identity and  
Place Attachment

**Abstract:** This paper addresses the increasingly popular service of professional home organization as it relates to theories of place attachment and sense of self. Based on analysis of eight in-depth interviews with “organizees” (individuals who have engaged the services of a professional organizer), it examines the relationship between the meaning of place and an individual’s sense of self. The paper argues that the alteration of a private space affects the individual to whom the space belongs from both a physical and emotional perspective. In addition, it shows how conceptions of home often influence actions

## Senior Seminar Abstracts Continued

taken regarding the physical alteration of home spaces. This paper contributes to previous studies of emotion, identity, and place attachment by investigating the impact of the relatively new profession of home organizing on clients who seek to “become organized” and provides insight into the construction of self in relation to the built environment.

### **Rosemary Scott**

**Abstract:** My research aims to examine the extent to which women are portrayed as sex objects or victims in the most popular magazines for young adults according to circulation rates and gross revenue. In order to pursue this objective I will conduct a content analysis of current magazine advertisements depicting women to determine the rate of sexual objectification and victimization in each magazine. Although the findings of this research are unknown at this time, I hypothesize that magazines aimed toward men will have a higher rate of sex objectification and victimization of women than magazines aimed toward women and other general interest magazines. Through this research, I hope to gain a better understanding of the differential distribution of the depiction of women in print advertisements.

### **Angela Marie Tejeda**

**Abstract:** The growth of the restaurant industry in the last twenty years is a noticeable phenomenon; it is a multi-million dollar industry. The industry relies heavily on immigrant labor power, specifically Latino immigrants. My senior seminar research project, “Invisible Service Workers Made Visible,” is a qualitative inquiry of the unique experiences of Latino immigrant workers in the restaurant workplace. My research project tries to capture what it means to work in the restaurant industry, and the stressors involved in lacking recognition in an industry whose success is dependent on the labor of immigrants. I am conducting in-depth interviews in Spanish with members of the Latino immigrant community. My interviews focus on how the workers perceive the importance of their position within their respective work environment and in the larger society. From the interviews with restaurant workers I will examine their importance in the industry, their invisibility, and the dependence the restaurants they work for have on their labor. The

sociological macro picture is grounded with the lived micro realities of the workers themselves. Themes that have emerged from my data thus far suggest the importance of educational opportunity and cultural competency as well as benefits in being bilingual. In addition, my participants discuss their experiences with our documentation based society, as well as the non-commodified aspects of their native culture and the quality of life experienced in the US as contrasted their country of origin.

### **Jessica Weiner**

Virtual Realities: Enhancing or Encroaching upon our Everyday Reality?

**Abstract:** Contemporary society is experiencing a virtual gaming revolution. The perceived value of communal activities is gradually diminishing as individuals opt not to venture from the security of their own homes, and rather choose to interact with peers primarily through an inanimate object. This paper seeks to investigate why individuals are interested in participating in virtual gaming environments and if such participation has implications for current and/or future face-to-face interaction. Virtual gaming “realms” are communities constructed in a fashion to simulate realistic communal entertainment by way of games, offering interaction through a technological medium. Players partake in these communities by use of “avatars,” virtual representations of an unspecified human body, and are guaranteed the freedom to conduct themselves virtually in a way that they might not allow themselves to behave in reality. Based on interviews with eight informants (four women and four men who participate in virtual gaming), the paper suggests individuals participate in online gaming partly to escape the demands of everyday reality. In addition, the paper analyzes the gendered nature of motivations for participation.

*The Department would love to hear from you!*

*The Sociology Newsletter is published once per semester and is available online at [www.sonoma.edu/sociology](http://www.sonoma.edu/sociology). If you are interested in submitting an article, editorial, or an update for our Spring edition please contact us at [sociology@sonoma.edu](mailto:sociology@sonoma.edu).*

## Alumni News

### **Danielle Wilde (2007)**

My name is Danielle Flahavan. It used to be Danielle Wilde, but I got married 4 months ago. I graduated Fall of 07 with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology. I am currently working at the National Indian Justice Center in Santa Rosa as a program manager. The company is a private non-profit. The company operates educational training and conferences for tribal courts, tribal government, law enforcement, social services, and many other programs throughout Indian country. I am also looking into a master's degree in counseling.

### **Monique Hernandez (2008)**

I just graduated in May of 08 with a B.A in Sociology. Five weeks after graduation I moved down to San Diego and began looking for a job I could put my degree to use. Shortly after arriving to San Diego I was hired at the YWCA as a case manager for the Passage program. It is a long term (2 years max) transitional housing for unaccompanied homeless women. In the short time I have been at the YW, I've learned a lot about the non profit world. There are always changes and difficult transitions. It is best to be prepared to adjust quickly and swiftly. While at Sonoma State, I did a special studies on Intimate Partner Violence with Dr. Leeder. The research I did during that semester and the paper I completed has helped me understand where some of the women are coming from. This job has helped me gain a better understanding of such a diverse group. Classes such as intro to sociology, drugs and society, cultural sociology and other classes have prepared

me in one way or another. My job, and any job in social services is stressful, I highly recommend getting as much experience (like a internship) ;and working with various populations. I also recommend working on fine tuning your patience. In the long run, if social services is where you want to go, patience and understanding is key. One last thing, one doesn't go into social services for the money, so be prepared to not get much pay out of college...work on those budgeting skills!

### **Jare' Longacre (2008)**

I am currently working for a non-profit company called Jay Nolan Community Services that serves adults with developmental disabilities. I am a Home Support Worker, which means that I work with individuals to make sure they can carry on with their normal lives and participate in their community as much as they like. I am enjoying this job very much, and am working to gain experience with this type of non-profit/social services work.

#### **Sociology Alumni Listserve**

*Want to keep in touch with other sociology graduates? Let other grads know about your accomplishments and hear about theirs? Learn about possible job opportunities? Then SIGN-UP for the Sociology Alumni Listserv!*

<http://www.sonoma.edu/sociology/Alumni.htm>

#### **What are you doing now?**

*We are always looking for alumni updates. It can be anything from a couple of sentences to a couple of paragraphs and don't forget to let us know when you graduated.*

*Drop us a line at:  
sociology@sonoma.edu*

### **Sociology Newsletter Team**

*Editor: Katie Musick*

*Faculty Editor: Sheila Katz*

*Contributing Writers: Myrna Goodman, James Dean, Kathy Charmaz*

*Special Thanks to the students who contributed their senior seminar abstracts and the alumni who sent in updates. Without your help and enthusiasm this Newsletter would not be possible.*

*The Sociology News Letter is published once a semester and is available online at: [www.sonoma.edu/sociology](http://www.sonoma.edu/sociology)*