



# SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT NEWS

## Inside this Issue

*AKD Celebration* 2

*General* 2

*Department News*

*New Classes Offered in Fall 09* 3

*Summer Classes & Senior Seminar* 3

*Faculty Corner* 5

*Senior Seminar Abstracts* 6

*Senior Musings* 7

### Editors' Note:

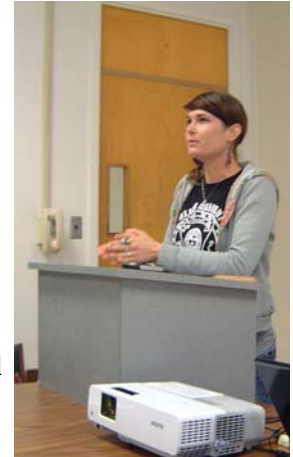
*Greetings! The Sociology Department is excited to present the second issue of the Department Newsletter. Our goal is to publish an issue every semester. We would like this newsletter to be a place where students past & present can connect, faculty can share their research, and the department can announce 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).*

## Students Excel at Santa Clara Conference

Two SSU Sociology majors gave research papers at the 36th Annual Western Undergraduate Research Conference at Santa Clara University on April 4, 2009. Erin Garnett (Sociology and Women's & Gender Studies double major, Criminology and Criminal Justice minor) (pictured below) presented her paper "The (In)



Visibility of Sexual Orientation in GLBT-Themed Children's Books." Ashley Rae Webster (Sociology and Spanish double major) (pictured right) presented her paper "Competing in Pink: Femininity in the Triathlete Community." Professor Melinda Milligan accompanied the students to the conference. Erin and Ashley's papers both began as research projects for senior seminar courses, Erin's in Professor Milligan's course and Ashley's in Professor Cindy Stearns' course. Both students will graduate in 2009 and plan to pursue graduate training in sociology.



## SSU Sociology at the Pacifics 2009

Sonoma State was well represented at the April 2009 Pacific Sociological Association meetings in San Diego, CA. Susan Garfin, Professor Emerita, gave a paper called "Graduation—at Last!" as a part of a Presidential Session on The Lives of Retired Women Professors. James Dean, Assistant Professor, presented his research in a paper on "Gays in the (Straight) Public Eye: Heterosexual Anxieties & Gay & Lesbian Media Visibility." Ashley Rae

Webster, Sociology major, discussed her paper "Boys Have a Penis & Girls have a Vagina: A Qualitative Study of Gender Constructions among Children in Informal & Formal Settings" in an Undergraduate Roundtable session. Cindy Stearns, Professor, organized and presided over two roundtable sessions and two regular paper sessions, each with the theme of the Sociology of Reproduction.



## JOIN US IN CELEBRATING OUR ALPHA KAPPA DELTA (AKD) HONORS STUDENTS

Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD), the international sociology honor society, was founded in 1921 by Dr. Emory S. Borgardus of the University of Southern California. The name Alpha Kappa Delta chosen because the letters represent the first letters of three classical Greek words that embody the function of society: anthrōpos, meaning mankind; katamanthanō, meaning to examine closely or acquire knowledge, and diakoneō, meaning to do service. As an honor society, Alpha Kappa Delta serves to recognize students with outstanding academic achievements in the field of sociology

Come join us in celebrating the academic accomplishments of the Alpha AKD honor students this year. Family, friends, and fellow students are welcome to attend this event.

Professor Melinda Milligan will also announce the winner of the C. Wright Mills Award for best undergraduate paper at this event.

**This event will be held on Thursday, May 14, 2009 at 1:00 PM in the Multi-purpose Room in the Student Union**

### Alpha Kappa Delta 2009 Honor Student Initiates

Lauren Marie Anderson  
Megan Luck Bullard  
Maria G. Cachū  
Meredith Dale Carey  
Renée Deanne Cook  
Chelsea Dawn Davis  
Sara Anne Dickenson  
Elisabeth Lea Dietz  
Kelly Darlene Dixon  
Donita Leigh Flecker  
Erin Showler Garnett  
Robert George Miller Girolo  
Chad Walter Goff  
Christina Marie Jimenez  
Leora Jeaniel Johnson  
Stephen Michael Ladrech  
Jennifer Marie Lagomarsino  
Christina Louise Long  
Danielle Catherine Martindale  
Ariel Lillian McClymont  
Tiffany Lyn Montgomery  
Caitlin Lorraine Morgan  
Jennifer Gail Nance  
Micaela Kay Naredo  
Christin Graham Newton  
Randall Elizabeth Precup  
Jenifer Erin Prentiss  
Jeffrey Keller Quinn  
Maureen C. Santos  
Stephanie Christine Smith  
Courtney Ann Snow  
Lauren Michelle Stavish  
Heather Chevon Steiner  
Patricia Christine Tanner  
Jennifer Ellen Trudgeon  
Nicholas A. Vos  
Ashley Rae Webster  
Niki Kohl Wyatt  
Nicholas Reid Young



*"To investigate humanity for the purpose of service."*

## Sociology Club Update

The Sociology Club at Sonoma State is proud to announce the upcoming 2009-2010 executive members: Lauren Stavish as President and Luis Bravo as Vice President. We are extremely excited to see what they have in store for us in the upcoming school year. Also, don't forget to keep an eye out for upcoming emails, as we are preparing to present our club's historical photo and newspaper research, "The Unwritten History of Sonoma State University." Hope to see you all at our upcoming meetings. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us:

President Mary Jambon at [jambon@sonoma.edu](mailto:jambon@sonoma.edu)  
Vice President Rob Girolo at [girolor@sonoma.edu](mailto:girolor@sonoma.edu)  
Faculty James Dean at [james.dean@sonoma.edu](mailto:james.dean@sonoma.edu)

## Successful Career Forum!

On Thursday, March 19, 2009, the Sociology Department held a career forum with speakers representing the fields of human resources and city planning. The forum was organized by Professor James Dean and included presentations by Tudor Havriliuc, Vice President of Human Resources at Salesforce.com in San Francisco, and Erik Balsley, Senior Planner at Michael Baker, Inc in Oakland. The presenters discussed job prospects, internships, and ways to network in their respective fields to student majors across the School of Social Sciences.

## CSU Research Competition

Lauren Stavish (Sociology), Erin Garnett (Sociology and Women's & Gender Studies), and Renee Cook (Sociology) will be traveling to CSU Los Angeles in May as members of the Sonoma State delegation to the CSU Student Research Competition. There, they will compete against students from across the CSU system to win recognition for their research. Professor Sheila Katz will accompany the students on their trip. Lauren's entry is "The Role of the Family in Preadolescent Nutrition Education," Erin's entry is "Banning Familial Love: Definitions of Family in GLBT-Themed Children's Literature," and Renee's entry is "Recognizing Stigma: Differences in Diabetes as They Relate to Disclosure and Identity Management." Best wishes for the competition!

## New Course Offered in Fall 2009

### Sociology 301: Statistics for Sociologists

**SOCI 301, #3544**

**Statistics for Sociologists**

**Professor Myrna Goodman**

Popular attitudes toward statistics often include a mixture of anxiety, fear, and contempt. The warning "Don't become a statistic" is taken to mean, "Don't let something evil happen to you." Statisticians have been placed in the company of both liars and crafty politicians and they have been accused of the art of lying with numbers while appearing objective, rational, and scientific.

The use of statistics may or may not be numerical "hocus pocus."

Liars may misrepresent numbers and statistics, but they also misuse words as well. On the other hand, people of integrity attempt to use words and statistics to honestly communicate with one another.

Sociology students need statistical literacy to have the critical knowledge and skills needed to assess the credibility of information given via numbers as well as via words.

In this introductory course, we will learn how to understand and interpret statistics like one might learn a new language. In addition to learning how to interpret published data, we will study and learn to use statistical analysis software. This course is specifically designed for sociology majors.

By the end of this course students should:

- Understand and appreciate the relevance of statistics.
- Understand the difference between descriptive and inferential statistics.
- Be familiar with the "language" of statistics.

## New Course Offered in Fall 2009

### Sociology 306: Career Planning

**Sociology 306, #3545**

**Sociology of Career Planning**

**Professor Sheila Katz**

This course will explore the possibilities of careers in Sociology, particularly those that students graduating with a Bachelor's degree can enter. The careers explored in this course will be in four categories: private/for-profit sector, nonprofit/foundations, public sector (city, county, state, and federal government), and research/academia (including graduate school). Career exploration will

done through readings, guest speakers, and interviews with professionals in various careers.

Course Objectives:

- Explore a variety of careers for graduates with a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology.
- Focus on personal areas of interest through researching specific careers.
- Create a five-year career plan and professional goals.
- Produce a "Professional Portfolio" including an up-to-date resume, curriculum vita, list of references, and master cover letter.

## FALL 09 SOCIOLOGY

### SENIOR SEMINARS

Sociology 498: Senior Seminar courses are offered with different topics each semester. Each student designs and completes an original research project, including the collection and analysis of primary data. Two sections will be offered in Fall of 2009:

Professor Charmaz's section will have an emphasis on self and society and their significance in understanding social problems. A symbolic interactionist perspective will provide the theoretical framework for the course.

Professor Katz's section will have an emphasis on the American Dream. The course will include a critical analysis of the American Dream ideology and how the 'dream' and its attainment varies by race/ethnicity, gender, and class. Capitalism's role in the American Dream will also be examined.

## SOCIOLOGY

### SUMMER COURSES

Drugs & Society and Classical Sociological Theory will be offered over August Intersession through the Department of Extended Education.

Sociology 375, Class #1177, Classical Sociological Theory, 4 Units, Upper Division GE  
7/27—8/19, 9:00-1:00

Sociology 340, Class #1184, Drugs and Society, 4 Units, Upper Division  
7/27—8/19, 1:00-5:00

**For more information or to register please contact Extended Education at [www.sonoma.edu/](http://www.sonoma.edu/)**

# FACULTY CORNER

## **James Dean**

*James Dean presented a paper at the PSA meeting in San Diego entitled "Gays in the (Straight) Public Eye: Heterosexual Anxieties and Gay and Lesbian Media Visibility. In this paper, he examined how heterosexual men and women are responding to the increasing number of gay images in the mass media.*

*Dr. Dean will also be presenting a paper at the ASA meeting in San Francisco in August. This paper, "Thinking Straight: Gender, Race, and (Anti) homophobia, examines the sociological literature on heterosexual identities and rethinks concepts, such as hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity through a racial lens.*

## **Kathy Charmaz**

*Kathy Charmaz was invited to give the spring lecture on "The Emergence of Constructivist Grounded Theory" at Aoyama Gakuin University in Tokyo to qualitative researchers in Japan. She was also asked to teach two classes on qualitative analysis to graduate students in the Department of International Communication at Aoyama Gakuin. While in Japan, Dr. Charmaz also met with Professor Sachiko Kawaura who is now in the Psychology Department at Nanzan University. Professor Kawaura took Dr. Charmaz's social psychology and sociological theory classes when she was an exchange student at SSU in the 1990s. She says that she still refers to the lecture notes she took in those classes.*

*Dr. Charmaz will teach an intensive seminar to researchers working on an altruism project for the John Templeton Foundation over the Spring break and she will give a workshop on using grounded theory for social justice research at the annual meetings of the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry in May.*

## **Sheila Katz**

*Sheila Katz was awarded a SSU RSCAP Summer Fellowship to work on her book manuscript. Dr. Katz's research focuses on mothers on welfare who are pursuing higher education as their welfare-to-work activity. This research started with her dissertation research, but the fellowship will enable her to write a new chapter based on follow-up interviews she conducted last fall with the original participants of her study.*

## **Melinda Milligan**

*Melinda Milligan received the Best Paper Award at the 2009 Davis Conference on Qualitative Research, sponsored by the UC Davis Graduate School of Management, for her paper "Save Something: The Profession of Historic Preservation, Pre- and Post-Katrina." A version of the paper will be forthcoming in a volume edited by the conference organizers.*

## **Peter Phillips**

*Peter Phillips was named the 2009 recipient of the Dallas Smythe Award by the Union for Democratic Communication Steering Committee. The Dallas Smythe Award is the highest honor given by the Union for Democratic Communications. It is awarded to researchers and activists who, through their research and/or production work, have made significant contributions to the study and practice of democratic communication. The award is named in memory of the late Dallas Smythe, one of the early leaders in the field of critical political economy of communication. Dr. Phillips will be presented the award in late May at the 2009 UDC conference, which is being co-hosted by the Buffalo State Communication and Niagara University Communications Studies departments.*

## SERVICE WITH CITY YEAR

By Renee Cook

Not sure what to do after graduation? Personally I was a nervous wreck about where to go next. Then I found City Year. Founded in 1988 by two Harvard law students, "City Year is a non-profit organization that unites young people of all backgrounds for a year of full-time service... as tutors, mentors, and role models, these young leaders make a difference in the lives of children and transform schools and neighborhoods" (cityyear.org). With 18 locations across the nation, this organization gives people is an opportunity to experience working in a whole new community and really make a difference. Members of the organization work in schools (ranging from elementary to high school) creating and instructing leadership programs, community development activities, literacy and tutoring workshops, and more.

I began the application with some hesitation, although it turned out to be a very simple and straightforward process. Two heart pounding phone interviews later; I was offered a job in New York City. The more I talk to my future employer the more I learn how amazing this opportunity really is.

Upon the completion of a year of service City Year provides an Education Stipend that can be used to pay current loans or future expenses. Plus, the organization's coordinators are very helpful in directing former members to Graduate School Programs or Future Careers. If you are like me, a little unsure of what step to take after your degree, I encourage you to check out this organization. It is great work with great benefits, the perfect way to transition from where you are now to where you want to be, even if you don't know where that is yet.

## A Selection of Spring 2009 Senior Seminar Abstracts



Left to Right: Cory DeBari, Patricia Tanner, & Iliana Barillas

### **Hello, My Name Is *Intervention*: Self, Family and Stigma** **Megan Bullard**

#### **Method: Interviews**

Based on analysis of ten semi-structured interviews with individuals in recovery, this paper examines the influence of viewing the reality-based television program *Intervention* on sense of self, family relationships, the recovery process, and perception of their own stigmatized identity. It concludes that viewing *Intervention* does not appear to influence the sense of self or family relationships of those in recovery. However, it does appear to work to lessen the perceived social stigma felt by those in recovery, as well to improve and strengthen reported relationships with others in the recovery community through the creation of an environment for open dialogue.

### **Making the Cut: The Portrayal of Male Circumcision in The Media** **Cory DeBari**

#### **Method: Content Analysis**

While parents make individual decisions about whether or not to circumcise their male babies, they do so within an environment of competing and debated interpretations of the appropriateness and medical soundness of the procedure. Is the decision to circumcise an irreversible mutilation or a procedure necessary for hygiene and sexual health? Is it socially essential for male babies to grow up to "look like" other men or is this a justification for compliance to existing standards for the male body? In my project I plan to explore these issues through a systematic content analysis of mainstream and alternative newspaper reporting about the moral, religious and medical justifications for circumcision decisions.

## Senior Seminar Abstracts (Continued)

### **Examining the Presence of Non-Caucasian Actors in Emmy Winning Comedy Series over Twenty Years**

**Elisabeth Dietz**

#### **Method: Content Analysis**

This paper examines the evolution of the presence of non-Caucasians actors in U.S. television series that are winners of an Emmy Award for Outstanding Comedy Series. Starting with the winner of the 2008 Emmy, I selected winners for every third year, ending with the 1988 winner. I then used content analysis to examine the winners' episodes in these seven years. I conclude that, although the presence of non-Caucasian actors has increased, Caucasian actors are still the majority and most non-Caucasian actors are playing non-recurring, minimal support roles, a situation that does not promote diversity or help to expel stereotypes.

### **Tattoos and Identity: The Unspoken Conversation**

**Patricia Tanner**

#### **Method: Interviews**

The presentation of the body and the self through appearance and behaviors is a longstanding interest in sociology (Goffman). Tattoos are a unique and increasingly popular form of self expression and presentation. Through in depth interviews with fourteen individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 who have at least one tattoo, I am exploring tattoos as markers of identity. My focus is on how individuals make decisions about the placement and image of tattoos; how tattoos are selected to symbolize identities and record private experiences; how tattoos compare to other forms of self expression (especially non-traditional piercing); and how tattoos are understood to be both a gendered and gender neutral practice.

### **Mars vs. Venus: Gender Differences in the Interpretation of Love and Commitment**

**Jennifer Trudgeon**

#### **Photo Elicitation Interviews**

This study examines gender differences in the interpretation of advertisements relating to love and commitment. Members of five couples, ranging from newly dating to married, were interviewed separately. After viewing a series of advertisements, each was asked to discuss their emotional responses to, as well as the

messages and effectiveness of, the advertisements. Women of all relationship statuses and "seriously involved men" provided more detailed narratives, used more emotional words, and were more likely to identify with the ideas of love and commitment. In contrast, "newly dating" men were less likely to articulate identification or empathy with these ideas.

### **Central American Women's Ideal Body Image** **Iliana Barillas**

#### **Method: Interviews**

I am conducting in-depth interviews with women who are from Central American countries and live in the Bay Area. My focus is on their perceptions of feminine beauty and the ideal female body. How are these expectations learned and reinforced within their families and cultures? What are the consequences for women whose bodies do not fit the ideals? What is the influence of Spanish-speaking media on ideas of female beauty? As a Central American woman, I am familiar with the "coke-bottle shaped body" ideal and I hope to shed light on its meanings and importance for the young women in my study.

*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.*



## Sociology Tips and Musings From Graduating Seniors

"I got through my 4 years here at Sonoma State by keeping in communication with my professors. Get involved around campus. Being part of JUMP impacted my experience here at Sonoma State." –Lindsey Perez

"Sociology projects are really fun to do but make sure to give yourself enough time! Know your resources!" –Lisa Navarra

"I will be attending University of Pittsburgh starting Fall 2009. I am going to get a Masters of Social Work. I had so much fun at SSU and I'm ready for this next step of my life. So I guess Pittsburgh here I COME!" –Iliana Barillas

"Moving to Seattle this summer and will then begin the dreaded job search. I'm applying to the University of Washington School of Social Work for fall 2010 admission." –Lisa Johnson

"I'm taking classes to become a paramedic fire fighter." –Danielle Doelman

"Plans on going to Italy in the summer to teach English at an Italian summer camp. I will be working full time at a non-profit organization in San Francisco starting in September." –Celeste Jimenez

"Get yourself a legit SOCI crew and you're on your way to an A." –Jennifer Lagomarsino, Allie Maguire, Steve Ladrech

"After graduation I'm going to serve in the Peace Corps for two years in a foreign country. I'm excited to experience a new culture and country." –Christina Long

"After graduation (and the birth of my fourth child in June) my family and I will be moved to Las Vegas, NV. After a brief break, I plan to pursue my Master's Degree in Social Work at the University of Nevada Las Vegas." –Cynthia Lovsness

"I'll be attending SSU's School of Education to become a Special Education teacher." –Jennifer Nance

"Sociology has changed me. I now wake up every day and view the world as the constructed manifestation of humanity from which no one is excluded." –Cory DeBari

"Many people come to college to acquire knowledge; however, very few attain wisdom. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And remember that it's always darkest before dawn." –Ariel McClymont

"My sociology classes have given me inspiration to take what I have learned and apply it in everything I encounter in the future. Thank you for all the thought provoking discussions." –Danielle Stanton

"I'm working on bringing a child with disabilities gymnasium in Northern California and welcoming my brother back from his mission." –Mary Jambon

"Take one day at a time, but don't procrastinate. Get ahead when you get the chance, but don't overwhelm yourself. Enjoy this step of your life; it's quite a ride!" –Niki Wyatt

"The group! You know who you are, it's been a pleasure these past two years. Can we say Kilt Lifter?! Please keep in touch and my door's always open... in Hawaii." –Alyce Roman

"Don't procrastinate, shop around to buy your books, and communicate with your professors early and often." –Elisabeth Dietz

### 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>

### Sociology Newsletter Team

*Editor: Katie Musick*

*Faculty Editor: Sheila Katz*

*Contributing Writers: Myrna Goodman, James Dean, Kathy Charmaz, Melinda Milligan, Renee Cook, and Peter Phillips.*

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

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