

Sociological Illumination

Willamette University Sociology Department Newsletter

A Message from the Incoming Chair...

We are completing a terrific year in the Willamette University Department of Sociology! We have a large graduating class, a longer-than-normal list of honors recipients, and an even larger number of honors-eligible majors for next Fall. Also, for the first time in awhile, we were at "full strength" as a department, with all five members of our faculty in residence this year. That will be short-lived, as Linda Heuser embarks on a very well-deserved year-long sabbatical, Emily Drew transitions to fulltime American Ethnic Studies duties (while remaining a member of our department), and, in Spring 2011, Jade Aguilar takes a junior sabbatical leave. Filling in ably for the year will be Seth Crawford, as well as an additional adjunct to be hired for Spring. Stas Vysotsky and I will be here throughout the year.

We expect the coming year to be every bit as dynamic as the last. I will chair a tenure track search committee to hire another new colleague. This individual will be a sociologist specializing in the comparative study of racialized groups, and we hope this person will also bring with them expertise in the sociology of education, public policy, or the environment. Additionally, my colleagues and I will carry out initiatives put on our agenda while Linda was chair, in particular the division of our research methodology course into two courses (one quantitative and one qualitative), the cultivation of opportunities to link our current majors with Sociology alumni via social networking sites, and a redesign of our department website. These and other projects will keep us all busy, to be sure!

I invite you to read on in this newsletter for other updates and information about the Sociology Department. As always, we would like to know more about what YOU are doing, too, so please send us a note sometime soon and give us an update.

- Kelley Strawn

May 2010

Volume 3, Issue 1

Inside this issue:

A Message from the Chair	1
Catching Up with Alumni	3
Comings and Goings	1
Current Student News	2
Current Faculty News	3
Fall 2010 Courses	4
New Faculty sort of	3
Where are you now?	1

Where are you now?

Please email hwilson@willamette.edu describing what you are currently doing with your major in sociology. We want to feature you in an upcoming newsletter.

If you would be willing to talk with current WU sociology majors about what you do and how you got to where you are today, please mail your business card, resume, brochures etc... to:

Honey Wilson
Willamette University
Sociology Department
900 State St.
Salem, OR 97301

Calling all WU
Sociology graduates!
We want to connect with you!

CURRENT STUDENT NEWS...

C. Wright Mills Award
for Outstanding Senior in Sociology
Amanda Geck & Bethany Robinson

Outstanding Social Justice Award
Ruth Ubaldo & Angela Fujii

**Phi Beta
Kappa**
2010 inductees
Bethany Robinson
and
Shannon Stewart



James B. Bjorkquist Award
for Outstanding Juniors in Sociology
Megan Horning & Steve Kimmet

Departmental Honors
Katie Lutz
Jessica Parker
Amy Rising
Bethany Robinson
Shannon Stewart
Tanya Tran

Hi! I'm **Amanda Geck** and I am almost done with my senior year at Willamette. I didn't find Sociology until the Registrar's office demanded that I pick a major, and Sociology was the best fit in terms of credits. I hadn't even taken a Sociology class yet! However, in the past year and a half I have grown so much from my experiences within the Sociology Department, and have come to know and respect all of the wonderful professors we have here. What I have learned through my study of Sociology has changed my life. I no longer watch television aimlessly without a critical review of what I am seeing in terms of gender, race, sexuality and any of the other "isms". My political opinions have changed and I've gained a stronger voice and more confidence in my knowledge and academic ability. Not only have I learned information that I was never exposed to anywhere else, such as serious talk about race relations and gender within American society, but I have learned how to think critically, which is a skill that I will have and use for the rest of my life. In fact, I am learning how to put my sociological knowledge to use in a real-world setting through my internship with Mid-Valley Women's Crisis Service. Taking calls on the crisis hotline and examining the relationships between power and gender in our society that affect Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault have added to my thoughts on gender and my outlook on the world in general. I am so grateful for the opportunities I have been given through Sociology and know that I made the right choice. The path of my life has changed through taking these classes, so that instead of a stable job, I want to spend my life using the knowledge I've gained to help others, whether that be through direct services or as an educator working to spread the knowledge I've gained to other people. Either way I feel is a powerful and meaningful way to put my degree in Sociology to good use.



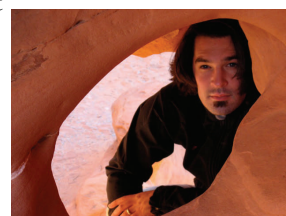
Spotlight on Faculty...

Prof. Heuser- A warm greeting to all of you. While we are in the final throes of the semester, I eagerly look forward to my long awaited sabbatical. Kelley Strawn will assume duties as chair, and I will spend the next year focusing on research. I have two personally meaningful studies on which I am about to embark. I will be interviewing women with breast cancer who have lost hair as a side effect of treatment and/or undergone breast reconstruction. I want to investigate how these experiences influence identity, body image, and interaction with others. In addition, I will be collaborating with my nephew as we interview Iraq and Afghanistan veterans about their communal life with one another especially when deployed to areas of conflict. I cannot possibly get everything done in a period of one year, but therein lies the challenge. Take care.

Prof. Strawn- On the Sociology side, I continue to work on my social movements and protest in Mexico research. Last November, I was invited to present some of my work at the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma* (UNAM), in Mexico City. This also gave me the opportunity to discuss future collaborative research with people there, as well as participate in a public forum on the impact of the economic crisis on Mexican society. On the personal side, my family is doing great! My wife will finish a Masters degree in Communication Disorders at the University of Oregon this June, and my two boys continue in good health and to grow in ways that constantly leave me proud to be their father!

Prof. Aguilar-This summer is shaping up to be another busy summer filled with research and writing, and a little time left for fun of course! The National Cohousing Conference is in Boulder, CO this year and I'll be going to present some research as well as meet other scholars in the field. Also, while I'm in the Southwest I'll be visiting some of the cohousing and communal living groups that I study, continuing my interviews with members. I am taking next spring off from teaching to focus on my writing, so I plan to conduct all my interviews this summer so I have data to work with when I'm off. I also have two river rafting trips planned this summer, one on the Rogue in Oregon and the other on the Hell's Canyon section of the Snake river that borders Oregon and Idaho. I am eagerly anticipating getting wet! I hope that you all have a wonderful summer break and I look forward to seeing you again in the Fall.

Prof. Crawford-I taught two great classes at Willamette this year, and am excited to be back next year with a full schedule of courses. My dissertation research on energy's role in the rise and fall of nations is progressing well, and I look forward to some serious writing and number crunching this summer-I hope to graduate in June 2011. My proudest accomplishment this year: a 20% abv raspberry stout brewed in my garage!



Catching Up with Alumni...

In response to the "Where are you now?" section of the newsletter, I thought I'd share where I've wound up. I don't know that I've followed a path that might be considered "normal" for a sociology major, but that in itself speaks to the value, strength, and diversity of the education I received at Willamette. After graduation from Willamette in 2004, I spent a year pursuing a career in professional football. After a year of traveling across the country for try-outs, training camps, signing 3-day waivers, then being released and sent home, I couldn't help but think of Professor Heuser's work on the sociology surrounding the lawn bowling culture. After realizing football wasn't going to happen, I decided to find a "normal" job, and started work for the American Cancer Society, organizing Relay For Life events in the Seattle area. Relay For Life is a non-competitive 24 hour relay walk typically held at local high-schools. The events raise money for cancer research. While working for the ACS I married Rochelle Kibby ('03, MAT '04) in the summer of 2006. This past April I changed jobs, moving into a new position as Director of Development for Evergreen Healthcare in Kirkland, Washington. It has been of incredible interest to work with companies and individuals to match their philanthropic desires to the everyday reality and needs of these two health-care organizations. When I graduated with my sociology degree, I wasn't too sure how, or if, I would ever apply it in the rest of my work-life. The funny thing is, the things I've learned, and perspectives I developed while at WU, keep finding a way to be useful and to be present in my everyday life.

I'd very much like to make myself available to talk with any current WU sociology majors more about what I do and how I got here. My contact info is below, and please feel free to pass it along.

Duncan Libby
Director of Development - Annual Campaigns
Evergreen Healthcare Foundation
12040 NE 128th St. MS#5
Kirkland, WA 98034-3010
Tel: 425-899-1910
Fax: 425-899-1904
Cell: 206-595-1139

**Willamette University
Sociology Department
Newsletter**

Honey Wilson, Editor
Layout & Production
220 Smullin Hall
503/370.6520

www.willamette.edu/cla/sociology

Sociology Faculty—Fall 2010 Courses

Jade Aguilar

Assistant Professor
213 Smullin Hall, 503.370.6195
aguilarj@willamette.edu

Sexualities; Families; College Colloquium: White Weddings Unveiled: Examining the Wedding Industrial Complex

Seth Crawford

Visiting Instructor
215 Smullin Hall, 503-370-6915
scrawfor@willamette.edu

Soc Inquiry: American Society, Top: Energy & Society

Kelley Strawn

Assistant Professor and Department Chair
212 Smullin Hall, 503.370.6196
kstrawn@willamette.edu

Social Statistics; Methods of Social Research; American Society-TIUA

Stanislav Vysotsky

Assistant Professor, Fall 2009
209 Smullin Hall, 503.370.6313
svysotsk@willamette.edu

Navigating Social Worlds; Sociological Theory