

# The Interactionist

## An Informative Newsletter for Sociology Students

### Letter from the Chair

Dear Sociology Students, Majors, Minors, Colleagues and Friends:

These are tumultuous times for the Sociology Department. Several colleagues are on leave or sabbatical. Professor Linda Lewis is on a one-year leave. Professor Stephen Smith is on a leave this spring. Professor Alan McEvoy is on full-year sabbatical. And, of course, we miss Professor Rebecca Plante, who took a position teaching sociology in at a university in upper-state New York.

This issue introduces our new visiting faculty, Professors Kiesha Warren and Sharon Houseknecht. Professor Warren will be teaching in the sociology department next year as well. I feel fortunate that these outstanding sociology colleagues are with us this year. I am grateful as well that Professor Victor F. Ayoub is teaching Cultural Anthropology

course for Wittenberg this semester. Professor Ayoub is professor emeritus at Antioch College and has twice been a Fulbright Scholar in Jordan. Presently, the Sociology Department has an exciting proposal for a new Cultural Anthropology Minor under review with the Educational Policies Committee. We are hopeful it will be approved.

This issue also notifies you about our Spring Colloquia. Professors Warren and Houseknecht, two leading researchers in the sociology of the family, will make presentations. We will also hold our annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium. This year we will discuss Dr. King's famous text, "Letter from Birmingham Jail." And, finally, mark your calendar for this year's Senior Thesis Presentations. These two days



will be comparable to having a sociology conference on campus where we will be both the hosts and the guests. Our "sociology conference" could prove to be one of the best, not only in the State of Ohio but also in the region.

Please also read the recent news on student research, alumni endeavors, and graduate school announcements.

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#### Special points of interest inside this issue:

- Meet the new faculty
- Colloquia schedule
- Join the new Sociology Club
- Graduate school opportunities
- Updates on Sociology graduates
- Call for student paper presenters



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR SPRING 2004 COLLOQUIA

January 19, Monday 4:00 - 5:00 PM	Symposium on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's "Letter from Birmingham Jail" Presentation by students and faculty
January 26, Monday 4:00 - 5:00 PM	"A True Understanding of African American Family Structure" Presented by Dr. Kiesha Warren
February 24 & 25 8:30 - 4:30 PM	Senior Thesis Presentations 201 Shouplin
March 22, Monday 4:00 - 5:00 PM	"Family Legislation: The Dynamics of Support and Opposition" Presented by Dr. Sharon Houseknecht

## Meet Dr. Sharon Houseknecht

I grew up in central Pennsylvania, w-a-a-y out in the country -- in Keller Hollow, not far from Unityville. I received my B.A. from Bloomsburg University, but I spent two years as an undergraduate student at the University of Minnesota. Both my Masters and Ph.D. degrees were earned in Sociology at Penn State. My major areas of specialization have been family sociology and social change. At times, my research has focused on the family institution itself and at other times on family in relation to other major institutions such as religion, polity, education, and economy.

My most recent publication (co-authored with a graduate student and advisee from Ohio State and published August 2003 in *Journal of Marriage and the Family*) was entitled "Cohabiting and Married Couples' Income Organization: Approaches in Sweden and the United States." These two countries provided two legally and normatively different contexts in which to examine the extent to which partners combine their finances or keep their incomes separate. Previous research on this topic had focused almost exclusively on married couples, so our inclusion of both married and cohabiting couples helps to fill a gap in the literature, making it possible to see whether type of relationship makes a difference.

Other research topics that I have pursued extensively include factors influencing the well-being of children; the implications of high levels of education for women on marital and family patterns; voluntary childlessness; and the family and religion linkage.



I enjoy gardening, traveling, and going to movies. Over the last four years, my husband and I have slowly developed (all on our own!) a rather large Japanese garden – complete with rocks, dry stream bed and bridge, Japanese lanterns, etc. This summer, my husband and I spent two and a half weeks on the northwest coast of Spain (in Galicia) and had a wonderful time. And the best two movies I've seen recently are "Mystic River" and "Runaway Jury."

## Meet Dr. Kiesha Warren



Dr. Kiesha Warren received her doctoral degree in sociology at Western Michigan University in 2002. Dr. Warren's teaching and research interests are the criminal justice process, conflict resolution, intercultural conflict, research methods, race, ethnicity, and culture, juvenile delinquency, and family. She has several co-authored articles in such journals as *Race Class and Gender*, the anthology, *Brown and Black Communication: Latino and African American Conflict and Convergence in Mass Media*, and the *Journal of Intergroup Relations*. At Western Michigan University Dr. Warren won the All University Research Scholar of the Year Award in 2002.

## Sociology Club



It's final! The cozy Carnegie Library is now home to Wittenberg's first official Sociology Club. What began last year with a few enthusiastic sociology students is now growing to include sociology majors, minors, and those just plain interested in what we want to do.

The goal of the officers (Bri Barclay, Erica Rosian, Ashland Griffin, Becky Barnes, Natalie Hess, and Molly Cloyd) and the rest of the members is to get students interested in the field of sociology and how it relates to our everyday lives. The club meets at 7:00 on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month and has many plans for activities throughout this semester and next. As a kickoff we headed to Yellow Spring's Little Art Theater on November 20th for a movie, followed by a trip to Ha-Ha's Pizza for dinner and discussion. If movies aren't your thing, we are planning for several speakers to visit the school next semester.

Also look for upcoming articles on social change in the *Torch*. If all this sounds interesting but not quite daring enough for you, consider joining for the skydiving trip in the spring. Whoever said sociology wasn't exciting will be proven wrong as we put theory into action by taking the plunge. The Sociology Club is new and it's fun. Give it a try and see what you can learn by having a sociological imagination!

- Bri Barclay

## Graduate School Opportunity—Cleveland State University

About Cleveland State University is a state-supported institution located in a culturally rich urban setting. The University has approximately 16,000 students, and excellent library and computer facilities. Faculty members in the Department of Sociology are active members of the profession and dedicated to both teaching and research. The MA in sociology is a research degree. The Masters Program provides advanced instruction in the essential knowledge of the discipline including its theoretical underpinnings and skills to do social research. Recent graduates

have gone on to Ph.D. programs. Others are employed in probation departments, other government agencies, and non-profit institutions.

"Ours is a small and congenial department, home to a dedicated group of scholars whose research spans a broad range of interests. We are committed to insuring that our students receive a quality degree that includes solid training in theory, research methods, and substantive areas of the discipline. Our program is an appropriate choice both for those who wish to obtain the master's as a terminal degree and for those who ulti-

mately wish to pursue a Ph.D." - Teresa C. LaGrange, Graduate Director; Sarah H. Matthews, Chair

To Apply: The application form is also on the CSU website at [www.csuohio.edu](http://www.csuohio.edu). You may contact the Department (216-687-4500) or the Graduate Director by e-mail [t.lagrange@csuohio.edu](mailto:t.lagrange@csuohio.edu) or by phone at 216-687-4507.



Check out more opportunities on the bulletin board in Carnegie.

## Comments from Sociology Grad

Kevin Hooker writes "I just wanted to let all of you know that my Wittenberg education has really helped out a lot here at U of Michigan, even before classes have started. I was recently notified because of some of the courses I took at Witt and due to my grades in those courses, I have received exemptions from 2 required courses at the School of Social Work. Due to my poli sci classes, socio-

logical theory and social stratification courses, I have been exempted out of the course "Organizations, Community and Societal Structures and Processes". Due to my Methodology course and my Sr. Thesis, I have also been exempted from the course "Basic Social Work Research" also in my program. While, I do not receive the actual credits for those classes, I do not have to take them,

which gives me 2 additional electives to take. So far from what I have seen, I am really enjoying the M.S.W. program."

Want more info? Contact Kevin at [s02.khooker@wittenberg.edu](mailto:s02.khooker@wittenberg.edu)

## About the ... National Conferences on Undergraduate Research

The National Conferences Undergraduate Research (NCUR) 2004 Conference will be held April 15-17, 2004 at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), IN. NCUR® 2004 will bring together undergraduates involved in scholarly and artistic activities representing a range of disciplines including creative arts, mathematics, business, social sciences, humanities, physical and life sciences, natural resources, and engineering, among others. Participants are expected to come from over 400 colleges and universities representing almost every state in the nation.

Two of our students have had abstracts accepted for the Conference.

### Abstract by Emily A. Richardson

#### SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS EDUCATION AT SMALL COLLEGES: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

For the past two decades, sexual assault on college campuses has been a high profile concern. As a result, nearly every college in the U.S. has established policies, procedures, and programs that focus on a range of concerns regarding sexual violence.

Despite greater attention by college administrators, concerned faculty, students, and parents, one problem is that there is comparatively little research focusing on the effectiveness of policies and programs to end sexual violence on campus. This research advances four basic assumptions. First, some sexual assault awareness education is universal on college campuses. Second, despite a range of programming there is little coordination or consistency in the delivery of such sexual assault programs and services. Third, few schools conduct sufficient research to determine whether their sexual assault awareness programs are making a difference. Finally, those who provide programs and services regarding issues of sexual violence vary considerably in the level of training needed to address such a sensitive topic.

Data were collected by means of structured phone interviews involving representations from the Dean of Students Office at the 30 small liberal arts colleges sampled. One conclusion is that efforts to reduce sexual violence on campus and to serve victims, are hampered by lack of training, poor coordination, and unclear goals.

### Abstract by Ruthie Rodelander

#### A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE LEARNING CHANNEL'S "A MAKEOVER STORY": DOES THE SELF COME IN DIFFERENT SHADES OF LIPSTICK?

It is undeniable that American culture places a great deal of emphasis on appearance, indoctrinating women with the notion that to be valued in this society, one should be beautiful. Powerful prescriptive norms encourage the use of make-up and fashion to produce a particular image of the American woman, and women often ascribe to these norms without thinking about their meaning or significance. These items serve as affirmation of a woman's gender, signaling conformity to the performance of gender that people do on a daily basis. The beauty industry has recently boomed, and research has been conducted on beauty as a commodity and the body as social capital. Through the makeover process, women receive make-up, new clothes, and new hairstyles, thus reasserting their gender; as they do this, perhaps without them being aware, they shape their selves into a societal mold that ensures acceptance. Changing one's physical appearance transcends physicality, however, and seems to produce change of one's inmost self as a function of outer modification. This inductive study examines this process and gender norms in the specific context of The Learning Channel's "A Makeover Story," a framework in which gender is made particularly salient. Qualitative content analysis will explore gender norms in the manner that women chose to perform gender and present themselves on the show, examining closely statements show participants make about their identities. This will be supplemented by the analysis of specific quantitative variables, with gender being the independent variable influencing various behaviors and attitudes. The coding scheme will denote evaluative themes primarily including traditional gender norms, the malleability of the self, self-presentational strategies, and transformation via alteration of outward appearance.

## Another Conference Coming Up . . .

### Butler Undergraduate Research Conference—Indianapolis, Indiana Friday, Apr. 2, 2004

Call for Presentations: Submission deadline Friday, Feb. 13, 2004

Butler University and Eli Lilly and Company invite undergraduates involved in research in a broad spectrum of disciplines to present their work at the 16th annual Undergraduate Research Conference. The purpose of the conference is to provide an opportunity for undergraduates from schools across the Midwest to discuss their work with interested students and faculty from other institutions. The research to be presented may include completed studies or work in progress.