



# Fall 2009, ApSoc Newsletter

## Welcome and Welcome Back Students!

### Inside this issue:

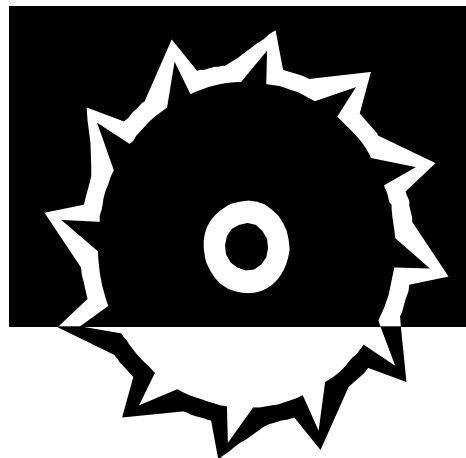
Welcome & Welcome Dr. Keith Bentele	1
Recent Graduates' Exit Survey Results	2
Faculty News/ Student Accomplishments	2
Alumni Corner: Nelly Moura Oliver	3
Upcoming Events: Brown Bags	3
Graduate students summer activities	4
Hot off the Press	4
New Graduate students	5

### Special points of interest:

- Meet our new graduate students on the student page of our website and on page 5
- Fall 2009 Brown Bag dates
- Faculty Publishing, a recent abstract by Glenn Jacobs in Hot Off the Presses

Eighteen (18) students graduated from the Applied Sociology Program Spring 2009 and 17 new students are joining the program for the start of the Fall 2009 semester.

Graduation was a celebratory time. Program award winners included Janet Aronson who received the book award. Janet is continuing her education in the doctoral program at the Heller School at Brandeis University. Nozomi Bartlett won the Blackwell award for her excellence in Applied Sociology. Nozomi was the research assistant on numerous research projects including Dr. Hartwell's Department of Youth Services Desistance from Re-offending Among Delinquent Youth study. Jarrod Rondeau, former coordinator of the Forensic Services Program, graduated and recently took a job coordinating research projects in the Department of Psychiatry at Brigham and Women's Hospital. Keith Lewandowski graduated with a 4.0, receiving special departmental recognition. Elena Engle Moskal attended the student leadership luncheon for her outstanding leadership of the Graduate Sociology Student Association (GSSA). Finally, Raahsaan Mahadeo successfully completed his thesis under the direction of his advisor Dr. Andrea Leverentz.



**AN OBJECT IN MOTION STAYS IN MOTION.**

This fall we welcome 17 outstanding new graduate students, 6 of whom are 5-year students from UMass Boston and wish them many opportunities and the best of luck (see page 5 for new student bios). They are:

*Award winner Janet Aronson with Dean Kuizenga and Professor*



## Department Welcomes New Faculty Person Dr. Keith Bentele

The Sociology Department welcomes Assistant Professor Keith Bentele. Dr. Bentele recently completed his PhD in Sociology from the University of Arizona.

The title of his dissertation was, "Rising Earnings Inequality in the United States: Determinants, Divergent Paths, and State Experiences" Dr. Bentele grew up in Florida and received his BA from the New Col-

lege of Florida in Sociology. His academic areas of interest include stratification, inequality, political sociology, social movements, quantitative methods, and public policy.

Dr. Bentele comes to UMass Boston having earned high marks for teaching at the University of Arizona. His teaching statement summarizes, "In a nutshell, the goals that inform my

teaching are a desire to provoke concern about social issues in students while simultaneously equipping them with intellectual tools that will make these issues more accessible and conceptually manageable."

Dr. Bentele will be teaching an undergraduate course in Stratification.

Jessica Callea  
Angela Cody  
Julianne Cummings  
Martha Klemm  
Britney Kirsner  
Stephanie Lloyd  
Kate Russell  
Elsbeth Simoni  
Jonathan Spence  
Jennifer Walker  
James Wall

*5-year Students*  
Chrystal An  
Mishella Etienne  
Catherine Gauthier  
Karen Herrera  
Edmund Melia  
Micha Methven

*Recent students complete program satisfaction survey.*

## Exit Survey Completed with 2009 Graduates by Sarah Giannetta

In the world of academia, how can a university measure success among its students? To answer this, we can look at graduation rates, career successes, student publications, and many other things; but, what about what the students themselves actually think about the program they have invested in? Students' opinions are vital, especially when a core area of study such as sociology is concerned. Recognizing the importance of such opinions, Professor Stephanie Hartwell wanted to hear what this year's crop of Applied Sociology graduates had to say about the program: what they liked, didn't like, suggested improvements, their career plans, their favorite classes, and more. All to hopefully create a better, even more effective program in the future.

The research began with a list of the 2009 graduates from the Applied Sociology program and a list of potential questions to be included on a survey, which was to be emailed to the graduates. After a meeting with Professor Hartwell where we discussed what the survey should cover, I brainstormed and came up with a list of specific questions to ask. Various questions were added and subtracted before coming up with the final survey, which was distributed to graduates in mid-June. Recipients were given until July 1<sup>st</sup> to return the survey.

When all was said and done, nine graduates had completed the survey.

That may not seem like many, but their responses have been key in examining the strengths and weaknesses in one of the nation's most unique sociology programs. Graduates cited an abundance of assistantships, strong professors, the freedom to explore courses that reflected individual aspirations, an appropriate program timeline and workload, opportunities to meet members of the Sociology community, and Professor Hartwell's work as Program Director as strengths of the program. Many, many classes were listed as students' favorites, but the winners seemed to be Alcohol, Drugs, and Crime taught by Professor Hartwell and Applied Social Theory taught by Professor Capetillo. Students appreciated the interesting topics covered in both classes, as well as class presentations, and the teaching styles of the professors. Notable mentions include Complex Organizations taught by Professor Schutt, as well as the Research Methods classes taught by Professors Deng, Schutt, and Youngreen.

Speaking of research methods, one might think students would have had enough of these classes, which are probably the most difficult in the program (how many nightmares have we all had about regression analysis?). There seemed to be a calling though, for

more research classes; specifically, the creation of a third class in which students could learn more advanced methods. Not only would this help students in their final research, but would allow for more time to be spent in the master's paper classes discussing findings and reviewing each other's work than going over statistical methods. Other suggestions brought to us by graduates included having winter and summer courses, more opportunities to network with members of the sociology community, and making the master's paper classes smaller to allow for more individual attention.

In the end, it seemed that most students were very satisfied with the program. Whether it was seeing notable guest speakers, meeting other people who are interested in sociology, or enjoying Professor Deng's home-cooked food on the last day of Methods 1, it seemed that everyone had a favorite moment from their time in the program. Even though the number of surveys was small, the responses were big—they will be essential in examining how our program can continue to be one of the premier Applied Sociology programs in the country!

### Alumni Corner: Nelly Moura Oliver

Nelly is a graduate of the Applied Sociology program, class of 2000. Since graduation, Nelly spent two years working as an Assistant Study Director at the Center for Survey Research on campus (UMass Boston) before going back to school. Nelly decided to pursue a PhD degree to enable her to gain access to a senior role in a research organization. She completed her PhD in Sociology at Northeastern University in February 2008.

According to Nelly, the skills she gained in the Applied Sociology program, including knowledge of statistical (SPSS) and research project

management were helpful in her role at the Center for Survey Research and throughout the PhD program. Nelly recently accepted the position of Senior Research Associate at the Human Services Research Institute. Her responsibilities will include data analysis, report writing and project management, all skills she gained through her experience in the Applied Sociology program at UMass Boston.

Nelly is married



*(pictured above): Nelly, her husband Alex and sons Diego 3.5 years and Lucas 16 months*

with two boys Diego and Lucas. She met her husband Alex in the Applied Soc program and have been married for 9 years. Alex is also a graduate of the Applied Sociology program and works as an IT Analyst at Infinity Pharmaceuticals.

One advice Nelly will give to current and incoming graduate students is to "take full advantage of any opportunity that presents itself."

## Faculty & Staff News

**N**ew Director of the Forensic Services Program, **Andrea Leverentz**, ran 2 half marathons this summer and attended the ASAs. She has an article and book chapter forthcoming on neighborhood context and attitudes towards crime.

*Faculty and staff  
enjoy the  
summer months  
as all work and  
no play is dull!*

**Jorge Capetillo** enjoyed himself on the beach in the Caribbean.

**Russell Schutt**'s daughter Julia graduated magna cum laude from Connecticut College and spent the summer in Bolivia, while her dad continued to work on completing his book on homelessness, housing, and mental illness among other projects. Dr. Schutt was also seen at the ASAs before enjoying a Rocky Mountain vacation hiking with his wife Beth.

Chairperson **Susan Gore**, another avid hiker, spent time this summer hiking and biking in Mount Rainier National Park, Seattle, and San Juan with her husband Neil.

**Steffi Hartwell** also attended the ASAs before joining her family in a cabin on a lake in New Hampshire for a glorious vacation of hiking/Geocaching and tubing behind a wave runner (her 2 year old drove the wave runner).

**Melissa Morabito** is returning from maternity leave in September with another publication with colleagues forthcoming entitled "Outcomes of Police Contacts with People with Mental Illness: The

Impact of CIT? Administration and Policy in Mental Health: Mental Health Services Research.

Internship coordinator **Alison Moll** is getting married in the Berkshires this fall.

**Estelle Disch** took a photo class on people and had a reunion at Tanglewood with friends she graduated from Tufts with who spent a year abroad in Naples, Italy in the 1960s.

Office Administrative Assistant **Jessica Veira** spent her vacation in Germany traveling with her boyfriend into Tunisia, North Africa.

**Xiaogang Deng** also did some international travel to China.

## Student Accomplishments: 2009 Project Bread Walk for Hunger

**M**embers of the Graduate Sociology Student Association (GSSA) have participated in events within our community. The latest event attended by GSSA members is the 2009 Project Bread's Walk for Hunger. Project Bread is the state's leading anti-hunger organi-

zation and is dedicated to alleviating, preventing, and ultimately ending hunger in Massachusetts, [www.projectbread.org](http://www.projectbread.org). Many of the students and faculty donated money as well as asked friends and families to donate to a good cause. Overall, we raised

\$1,155.00, with all the money going to Project Bread. Thank you to all the students and faculty who donated their time, money or both. See you next year at the walk!

## Upcoming Events

**Soc/Grad program BBQ, Saturday, September 12 at 3:30pm rain or shine. Contact Stephanie Hartwell for details.**

**Convocation 2009:**  
Chancellor J. Keith Motley, PhD  
Cordially Invites You  
to Attend the Events of  
Convocation 2009

Monday, September 14,  
2009

**Fall 2009 Brown Bags\*:**  
Sue Berger  
Sociology Conference  
Room  
Monday September 21<sup>st</sup>,  
12-1:30pm

Andrea Leverentz  
Healey Library 10<sup>th</sup> floor

Wednesday October 21<sup>st</sup>,  
2:30-4pm

Lakshmi Srinivas  
Sociology Conference Room  
Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup>,  
2:30-4pm.

\*More dates and presentations are forthcoming.

## Graduate Students Summer Activities:

This past summer, our graduate students have been out doing some wonderful things while trying to relax so they can tackle the upcoming academic year. Here are few of the things they have been up to:

**Jay Byron** worked as a Research Assistant for Professor Hartwell, working on the Jail Diversion and Trauma Recovery Program for veterans. Jay assisted with revising program evaluation instruments, attended numerous federal trainings, and a two-day workshop in Albany related to the project. Jay also worked as an intern for Transition to Primary Care for ex-inmates at the Shattuck Hospital. In the position Jay revised forms, created and selected evaluation tools, and reviewed the program database.

**Gioacchino Corrao (Gino)** interned over the summer at the Irish Immigration Center. Gino's tasks involved cases dealing with the citizenship/naturalization process and immigration rights.

**Jessica Callea** spent a month studying Irish culture and law at Waterford Institute of Technol-

ogy in Ireland. She researched celiac disease and social support with Dr. Denise Copelton at the College at Brockport and presented some preliminary results at the 2009 University at Buffalo McNair Research Conference in July.

**Angela Cody** worked at a preschool in Maine, and **Elsbeth Simoni** worked as a nanny and a lifeguard while taking two graduate courses.

**Karen Gonzalez** got married on August 21, 2009 (Congratulations!) and worked as the Administrative Assistant for the Institute for Learning and Teaching here at UMass Boston.

**Gifty Debordes-Jackson** worked as a Research Assistant for GEARs Inc. Gifty worked on projects such as data collection and write up (delivered to the Department of Ed.), and literature review on REACH 2010 activities (delivered to the CDC) and HIV/AIDS prevention programs.

**Darrin Korte** worked in Cambridge, at the Cambridge Community Center as a group leader

at their summer camp as well as spent some time vacationing in Florida and Maine.

**Kate Russell** finished her time with AmeriCorps NCCC as well as well as taking a road trip to visit friends throughout the southeast.

**Steve LeVangie** left his job after ten years in August, and spent some time with family and friends, attended weddings, and took mini vacations.

**Carlotta Hampton** celebrated her birthday in Vegas. Happy Birthday!

**Sarah Giannetta** worked at Span Inc. as the Transition Planner for the Reintegration Support Program.

**Phoebe Lehman** spent her summer working, and volunteering at Boston's city hall council on aging.

**Johnathan Spence** worked with Oxfam - a Human Rights non-profit - as an ambassador in support of climate change awareness.

## Hot off the Press

**G**lenn Jacobs, "Influence and Canonical Supremacy: An Analysis of How George Herbert Mead Demoted Charles Horton Cooley in the Sociological Canon." *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* Vol. 45 (2), 117-144 (Spring).

This analysis assesses the factors underlying Charles Horton Cooley's place in the sociological canon as they relate to George Herbert Mead's puzzling diatribe—echoed in secondary accounts—against Cooley's social psychology and view of the self

published scarcely a year after his death. The illocutionary act of publishing his critique stands as an effort to project the image of Mead's intellectual self and enhance his standing among sociologists within and outside the orbit of the University of Chicago.

It expressed Mead's ambivalence toward his precursor Cooley, whose influence he never fully acknowledged. In addition, it typifies the contending fractal

distinctions of the scientifically discursive versus literary styles of Mead and Cooley, who both founded the interpretive sociological tradition.

The contrasting styles and attitudes toward writing of the two figures are discussed, and their implications for the problems of scale that have stymied the symbolic interactionist tradition are explored.

*What's New in faculty publishing.*



**Angela Cody**  
Angela received her Bachelor's in Sociology with a minor in Labor Studies from the University of Southern Maine in 2009. Angela is interested in policy analysis and teaching.



**Karen Herrera**  
Karen Herrera is a Boston Latin School graduate, class of 2004, and is currently majoring in Social Psychology with a Minor in Criminal Justice. Karen aspires to one day create a Teen Center for young pregnant women.



**James G Wall**  
James graduated from Xaverian Brothers High School and continued his education at UMass Amherst from 2005 – 2009.



**Johnathan Spence**  
Johnathan graduated from Franklin Pierce University in Rindge, NH. with a double major in American Studies and Sociology and a minor in Mathematics.



**Crystal An**  
Crystal received her undergraduate degree in Social Psychology from the UMass Boston. Crystal would like to pursue a career in law in the long term.



**Mishella Etienne:**  
Mishella is currently doing research in Haiti on Polygamist practices and attitudes towards infidelity amongst peasant communities.



**Catherine Gauthier**  
Catherine works full-time as an Administrative Coordinator at a Research Institute in a Rehabilitation center. Catherine is interested in understanding class issues and complexities of our social and cultural world.



**Edmund Melia**  
Edmund is currently a full time employee at UMass Boston. As far as future education is concerned, Edmund would like to either continue on to a PhD program or get an MPH after obtaining his MA in Applied Sociology.



**Elsbeth Simoni**  
Elsbeth graduated in 2004 from UMass Dartmouth with a major in sociology and a concentration in crime and justice. Elsbeth is pursuing a Forensic Services Certificate.



**Kate Russell**  
Kate graduated from Florida State University where she studied Communication Disorders and Sociology. Kate's academic interests include social inequality, stratification and issues involving health and health care.



**Julianne Cummings**  
Julianne obtained her Sociology degree from Clark University. Julianne would like to work in the non-profit sector conducting research and eventually teach Sociology. Julianne has been involved with many organizations including Amnesty International and



**Stephanie Lloyd**  
Stephanie received her B.A. in Communication and Sociology from the College of Wooster in Ohio. Since then, she has served as a corps member at City Year Washington, DC.



**Jenn Walker**  
Jenn Walker graduated from Simmons College in 2005 with a B.A. in Sociology. She currently works full time at Lesley University as an Academic Coordinator.



**Jessica Callea**  
Jessica has a B.S. in Sociology and Psychology from the College at Brockport, State University of New York as a scholar in the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program.



**Martha Klemm**  
Martha graduated from Bates College in 2008 with a BA in Sociology and currently works at the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston.



**Britney Kirsner** graduated from Westfield State College.

**Photo and not yet available for: Micha Methven is a graduate of UMass Boston.**