

# SOCIOLOGY DEPT.



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## 2007-08 Masters Degrees

*Sustaining Forests, Sustaining  
Place: Changing Socio-  
Natures in Revelstoke, B.C.*

Patrick Bixler

*Perceptions of Borough Incorporation Held by Community  
Leaders in Delta Junction,  
AK*

Michelle Johnson

*Masculine Overcompensation:  
Rural Men in Montana*

Sarah Moesser

*A Test of General Strain Theory: Exploring Gender Specific Emotional & Behavioral Variation*

Sarah Puckett

*Community, Family and Peer Influences on Alcohol and Drug Use Among Native American Youth: An Analysis of Protective Factors*

Aislinn Rioux

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

This is our second on-line newsletter as we try to keep in touch with our graduates and friends of the Sociology Department. In a discipline that studies social change, we should not be surprised that academic departments too are subject to change. This newsletter tells you what is new and exciting in our department.

Since our mission is all about cultivating students' academic success, it is notable that 80 students were awarded a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology at UM's 111<sup>th</sup> Commencement on May 10<sup>th</sup>. At our Departmental ceremony, we had students write a short statement of what they valued most from their study of sociology. It was gratifying to hear that many students are eager to put sociology to work, and that they seem to have a solid working understanding of the discipline and how it applies to the real world. In keeping with a practical theme, the Department recently launched the *Sociology Alumni Speaker Series*, subtitled "What I did with my sociology degree." Our first speaker was Karen Kracher (BA '78). Karen did a wonderful job of sharing how her sociology degree proved relevant and useful to her career path. As the series continues, we are eager to hear the insights that other Sociology Alumni have to share with our students.

Change has also entered the ranks of our faculty and staff. In the last newsletter, I made much ado about the retirement of our one and only administrative associate, Shari Linjala, who retired in June 2007, after 23 years of exceptional service. The Department was indeed fortunate to hire Brandie Terpe as our new administrative associate and I am happy to say that she has filled Shari's shoes remarkably well! Brandie has proven to be a very capable, and always pleasant administrative associate. Brandie and her husband Eric, who also works on campus, are thrilled to be expecting their first child in September. We also hired a new tenure-track professor in the area of social inequality and theory. Daisy Rooks will join us in January 2009 after she completes a post-doctoral position at Rutgers University. She earned her Ph.D. from UCLA in 2007.

We have also made some much needed improvements in the Department itself. We expanded the central office by adding a second work room: one for copying, printing and scanning documents, the other for duplicating and collating. We purchased a new conference table and chairs to create a small, but much used meeting room. We have plans to refurbish the Department's large seminar room with new tables and chairs, new carpeting, and a fresh coat of paint. The room is used for teaching, thesis defenses, and Department meetings—it is a well-used space! Unfortunately, there is no budget allocation for the updating of physical space. As is the case with added support for scholarships and other needs not included in a very tight budget, the Department increasingly relies on donations from alumni and friends. If you would like to give a gift to the Department, please do so by using the information highlighted later in this newsletter. Thank you for your continued support of the Department!

## ROOKS JOINS SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT



This winter, the Sociology Department undertook a national search for a new assistant professor to teach primarily in our new Inequality and Social Justice option. We are pleased to announce that (Anne) Daisy Rooks has accepted our offer to become the newest member of our faculty.

A native of the Washington, D.C. area, Rooks earned a B.A. in urban studies from Smith College, then Masters and Doctoral degrees in Sociology from UCLA, where she specialized in the study of labor unions and organizing. Much of her research to date has examined the nature of commitment among labor organizers and their working conditions.

Rooks is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor in the School of Management and Labor Relations at Rutgers University, and will join our department in January of 2009.

## WHAT I DID WITH MY SOCIOLOGY DEGREE: KRACHER GIVES INAUGURAL SOCIOLOGY ALUMNI SERIES SPEECH

What can I do with a sociology degree? The department's new Alumni Speaker Series tries to offer current students answers to this perpetual question. The series was inaugurated this April by Karen Kracher (BA '78). Though Ms. Kracher is currently not working in a field related to the criminology emphasis she earned at UM, she told students that her sociology degree proved extremely relevant and useful to her career path in the business world. She is currently the Vice President of National Accounts for De La Rue, the world's largest commercial security printer and provider of cash handling equipment and software products for banks.

In addition to her business responsibilities, Kracher participates actively in the community,

both as a member of the UM Foundation Board of Directors, and as president of the Board of Directors of Young Audiences of Minnesota, and non-profit organization which provides arts programming for children.

Kracher says that her sociology degree helped her in a number of ways. Because the sociology degree is a broad one, employers knew she was open to a variety of positions and opportunities. "I learned how to think outside the box, to relate and appreciate others points of view...though it may vary drastically from my own. I realized that individuals interpret situations very differently and it is important to be open minded," she added. UM's

excellent reputation helped her job prospects too, and she made sure that employers knew she put herself through college, a mark of her determination.

Would you like to offer your thoughts to current students in as part of this series? If you will be in the Missoula area during the academic year and would like to share your experiences, please let us know. We would be delighted to have you. Please contact Celia Winkler at [celia.winkler@umontana.edu](mailto:celia.winkler@umontana.edu).



Karen Kracher, BA '78.

## SOC UNDERGRADS WIN WATKINS AWARDS

Megan Tanner and Matt McCleary, undergraduates in the Sociology Department, have won prestigious Anna Davis and Gordon S. Watkins Scholarships for the 2008-9 Academic Year. The Watkins Scholarship program awards \$2000 to just sixteen UM students each year, and supports an original senior thesis or project.

Megan, a senior from Kennewick, Georgia, is a double-major in sociology and recreation man-

agement. She has had a very busy year, winning an Irene Evers Undergraduate Research Scholarship, attending the Pacific Sociology Association meeting in Portland in April, and preparing to present her work in Butte at the National Summit of Mining Communities. Her senior thesis is a study of the negotiation process regarding the removal of the Milltown Dam.

Matt, a native of Great Falls, MT, will be investigating health

care access in a rural Montana community with advisor Teresa Sobieszczyk. Matt is a Presidential Leadership Scholar (a four year scholarship administered by the Davidson Honors College).

Both Matt and Megan are also winners of the department's Kain/McKay Scholarship, which will also help support their research. We look forward to seeing their results.

## STUDENT WINS PRESTIGIOUS FBI INTERNSHIP

Kody Goettel is wanted by the FBI— for an internship, that is. Kody is a winner of an extremely competitive internship with the agency's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime. The NCAVC provides research and investigative support to a wide variety of law enforcement agencies. Kody will be conducting social research, observing case consultations, and will have the opportunity to attend classes at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia.

The internship is a full-time but unpaid position. Interns are responsible for their own housing, living, and transportation costs. As one of this year's winners of the Kain/McKay Scholarship, Kody will have some financial support from UM for this important opportunity. We award up



Kody Goettel begins her internship with NCAVC

to three Kain/McKay Scholarships each semester to students who undertake a project or internship in which they apply the sociological knowledge they have learned in the classroom. These awards are a fine example of the ways that generous donors to UM enrich the educational experiences of current students.

**Congratulations to Our  
2008 Outstanding Seniors!**

***Award for Academic  
Excellence***

*Adrienne Kembel  
Michael Sherwood*

***Award for  
Contribution to  
Academic Programs  
in Sociology***

*Lisa Colyer  
Damon Nelson*

***Outstanding  
Performance in  
Applied Sociology***

*Athena Waid  
Seth Whitfield*

***Mortar Board  
Outstanding Seniors***

*Rachelle Cobell  
Lisa Colyer  
Kara Lawrence  
Ingrid Rasmussen  
Dan Rice*

## GOING PRO IN SOCIOLOGY

Just as most NCAA athletes “go pro in something other than sports,” the vast majority of sociology majors “go pro” in something other than sociology. Katherine (Curtis) White (B.A. '98) is an exception. Katherine is now an assistant professor of rural sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a position about which she is thrilled.

But how does one get from the Hi-Line to a job at one of the top sociology departments in the country? For Katherine, the answer has a great deal to do with her experience at UM. Raised in Malta, Mont., Katherine is the daughter of an art teacher and a veterinarian. “So I grew up with the privilege of understanding that I would go to college,” she explains.

In addition, Katherine received

support and encouragement from her mother's friend Judy Blunt (an alumna and Associate Professor of English at UM). It was Blunt who suggested that Katherine prepare to select a major by combing the course catalog. “Sociology best captured my interests,” says Katherine, so “I chose sociology as a major before I took a class.” She also selected the Crim emphasis with the intention of attending law school, but found that she enjoyed social research.

And she met Dan Doyle. “Dan Doyle was... pivotal in my going to graduate school. I'm fairly confident that I would not have pursued a graduate degree had he not... encouraged me. He helped me identify programs, consoled me when I received my

dismal GRE scores, prepared me for life as a graduate student, and kept in contact with me once I left for the University of Washington.”

Beyond the coursework in which she distinguished herself as a top student, Katherine was also a member of the rodeo team, whose academic advisor, MaryAnn Bonjorni, also encouraged her to pursue a graduate degree.

Katherine's rural roots are evident in her research interests in demography, much of which focuses on the rural US. She also continues to keep Montana in mind in other ways. “I have really wonderful memories of the department... it was remarkable to be a UM student.”



Assistant Professor of Sociology, Katherine White (B.A. '98).

## COLLINS TO SPEAK ON LOW-WAGE LABOR

Jane Collins, a pre-eminent sociologist who studies globalization and low-wage labor will speak in the Sociology Department on Monday, October 6, 2008. The talk will be open to the University community and to the public.

Collins, the Evjue-Bascom Professor of Rural Sociology

and Chair of the Women's Studies Department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is the author of *Threads: Gender, Labor & Power in the Global Apparel Industry* (University of Chicago Press, 2003), among several other books and numerous articles.

The talk will examine the con-

nections among low-wage workers abroad and in the US, and is funded in large part by a Visiting Scholar Faculty Development Grant from the Office of the Provost.

Sociology alumni are welcome to join us for this special event. Please check the department website in the fall for its time and location.

*Please join us  
Monday, October  
6, 2008 for this  
special talk by  
Professor Jane  
Collins.*

## HOWLETT HEADS TO HARVARD

“It will be a culture shock,” says Sierra Howlett (B.A. '05) of her immanent move to Cambridge, MA, where she begins work toward a Masters in Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government in September. Since her graduation from the department's Rural & Environmental Change option three years ago, Sierra, a member of the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes, has been working on the Flathead Reservation as a Family Advocate with the Early Head Start Program. “I worked with new moms,” she explained, “as-

sessing their needs, the family's strengths that could be built on, using a family-centered approach to [help families] become the kinds of families they wanted to be. I loved it.” The best part of her job was watching the dramatic growth and change in the families and in the babies and toddlers enrolled in the program. Through her job she was also able to take part in numerous training programs, even becoming a certified carseat installation technician.

But Howlett was also frustrated by the changes in the program necessitated by a steady

decline in funding. The program now runs fewer days each year and serves fewer families, she said, warning that 2008-9 might be an especially tight year.

Hopes the advanced degree will enhance her ability to serve the Flathead Reservation. She earned a scholarship from the Kennedy School that will cover the cost of her tuition. The Native American Public Service Fellowship requires that recipients dedicate three years of public service to native peoples after graduation— but that's what I was planning to do anyway,” Howlett added.



Sierra Howlett earned a full-tuition scholarship at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

## ALUMNI NEWS

**Mallary Allen** (B.A. '07) is a foster care caseworker in Carbondale, IL. She and her husband William Stodden (poli sci M.A. '07) is a graduate student at SIU. They are the proud parents of two-year-old Victor. Contact Mallary at mallaryballen@gmail.com.

**Jayne (Gerber) Barnes** (M.A. '06) and her husband Isaac welcomed Mason Kenneth on March 6, 2008. Jayne, Isaac, and Jayne's sisters-in-laws are the proud proprietors of Honeyrun Farm in Williamsport, OH, where they produce honey, produce, flowers, and hand-crafted soap, sold through a CSA and at local markets. Contact Jayne at s03.jgerber@wittenberg.edu.

**Patrick Bixler** (M.A. '08) will begin work on a Ph.D. in Natu-

ral Resources at the Rubenstein School of the Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Vermont in September.

**Graig Gilham** (B.A. '00) is currently a CS instructor at Blackfeet Community College. He recently completed his first semester in the Masters in Education Program at MSU-Northern and is on track to receive his degree in the fall of 2009. Graig would love to hear from UM friends at graigg@bfcc.org.

**Michelle Johnson** (M.A. '08) will begin working on a Ph.D. in Rural Sociology at the University of Alberta, Edmonton in September.

**Chris Myra** (B.A. \*\*) is a K-9 handler for the U.S. Border patrol. Chris spoke to members of the Crim Club in March.

**Christina Sweetland** (B.A. '06) is living in Idaho Falls, ID, where she is a caseworker for adults with disabilities.

**Brandie Terpe** (B.A. '01) now works in the Sociology Department! She and husband Eric (B.A. Journalism '99) are expecting their first child in the fall.

**Darr Tucknott** (M.A. '06) accepted a new position at UM as the Academic Coordinator in the Athletic Department, where she helps the Griz stay on track with their studies. She also volunteers on campus with the Mortar Board Honor Society. Darr would love to hear from friends and fellow alumni at darr.tucknott@mso.umt.edu

## FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

After completing his three year term as chair, **Jim Burfeind** will be spending this summer hiking and camping and NOT teaching for the first time in twenty years. He was awarded a sabbatical for Fall 2008 to work on the second edition of his textbook: *Juvenile Delinquency: An Integrated Approach* (with co-author Dawn Jeglum Bartusch of Valparaiso University. Published by Jones & Bartlett, the new edition is slated to appear in 2009.

**Rob Balch** hit the road this spring and took the students in his field seminar on alternative religious groups with him. Balch and his students visited a number of alternative religious groups as far away as Nelson, BC and Provo, UT.

**Dan Doyle** completed his term as president of Missoula Aging Services, but has been very busy with service on campus including helping to select the new

CAS dean, and with a study on the effectiveness of undergraduate advising.

Also on the road this spring was **June Ellestad**, who took no less than five students to the meetings of the Pacific Sociological Association in Portland, OR. The students included Allison Withey, a current undergraduate who presented her own research.

**Amit Kapoor**, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Iowa joined us for the year as an adjunct instructor. He will continue teaching in the department through December 2008.

Together with Greg Larson of the Communication Studies Department, **Kathy Kuipers** won a grant through the Office of the Vice President for Research. The grant supports research on high tech entrepreneurs in Montana and how they are able to lever-

age limited resources to be successful.

**Becky Richards** will be hosting Minna Piiponen of the University of Joensuu in eastern Finland (where Richards spent a semester on a Fulbright award in 2005). Piiponen currently leads the border studies program at Joensuu, and has just completed research on communities on the Russo-Finn border. She will be traveling with Richards to learn more about Montana-Canadian border issues.

**Teresa Sobieszczyk** was on research leave during the fall semester, and then was awarded tenure. She also received an award from the Institute of Gerontology Education on campus for outstanding service to gerontology. Congratulations!

**Celia Winkler** has succeeded Jim Burfeind as department Chair. Good luck Celia!



*We're  
Foraging  
for News!  
Please send your  
updates for  
inclusion in our  
next newsletter  
to sociology@  
umontana.edu.*



Another graduation of sorts:  
Dan Doyle presents Jim Bur-  
feind with the "Former Chair's  
Trophy" at the 2008 Com-  
mencement Ceremony.

*The Department of Sociology increasingly relies on donations to continue scholarships and other activities that support research, teaching, and service to the wider community.*

*Please visit the **University of Montana Foundation** to make a gift on-line at*

<http://www.umt.edu/umf>

*Gifts can be designated for use by the Sociology Department at the time of giving.*

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## WHAT DID YOU MOST VALUE ABOUT YOUR TIME IN THE SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT?

*We deeply appreciate your support.*

- \*...exploring the social systems I had always taken for granted.*
- \*...the opportunity to learn about our world, present and past, from so many distinct and intriguing viewpoints.*
- \*...the supportive faculty who value their students' education and go beyond what is required of them to help prepare these stu-*

*dents for their futures.*

- \*...the open and honest discussions we had in classes...*
- \*...the understanding I gained of human nature and what motivates individuals' actions. Most of all, I got the opportunity to learn from extraordinary professors, and make incredible friendships with my classmates.*
- \*...that my professors encouraged me to work hard and pursue what I love to*

*do.*

- \*...the ability to apply critical thinking as well as the warm and open environment.*
- \*...the camaraderie built with my professors throughout my academic career.*
- \*...the knowledge and experience I've gained that will help me work with at-risk children in the future.*
- \*...my family, friends, and the faculty for helping*