Globalization in our Backyard: The Albany Park Conference

Celebrating the close of another jam-packed academic year in our Sociology Department. Acting Chair, Brett Stockdill, did a fantastic job in the summer and fall, 2010 while I was on educational leave. He brought in some exciting speakers through his past work on Chicago police torture in the 1970s-1980s (p.3), and helped support our Sociology Club’s activities (p.5) while simultaneously taking care of Chair business.

Our Department’s main activity this spring semester was our conference: Experience the World in Albany Park—Globalization in Our Backyard. Andreas Savos Kourvetaris and I began information gathering in March, 2010, attempting to interview activists and community leaders from the key organizations and non-profits in Albany Park. We formed a dynamic Conference Advisory Board which included some of these community representatives. We were interested in exploring how globalization plays out on the ground in one of the most ethnically diverse neighborhoods in the U.S. (neiu.edu/sociology/confindex). Over 70 invited community presenters participated in 40 conference sessions with over 1700 in attendance over the length of the conference.

Many of you were able to attend one or more of our conference sessions and hopefully you left the session(s) knowing much more about the exciting initiatives that are taking place in Albany Park. Several of our faculty had their sociology students conduct research assignments in Albany Park including: Mike Armato’s Urban Sociology class, Barbara Sherry’s Social Demography class; Lisa Berube’s Introduction to Sociology class, and Sonia Oliva’s First Year Experience course on Chicago Immigration. Also, sociology major, Muhadji Smith, interned as an ESL instructor in Albany Park, and David Kozin worked on a video about the challenges of employment in this community. Sonia Oliva’s Schools and Society course took a fieldtrip to view the Changing Worlds photographic exhibit featuring the stories of immigrant families at Hubbard School in Albany Park. Many of our faculty were presenters and/or conference session moderators or hosts of guest speakers or panels, including myself, Andreas Kourvetaris, Michael Armato, Brett Stockdill, Sonia Oliva, Barbara Sherry, Aneta Galaxy, Cristen Jenkins, Maria Luna-Duarte, and Barbara Scott. While Olivia Perlow, Mark Wodziak, Jerome Hendricks, and Lucius Black all brought their classes to one or more sessions (pgs 1 & 4). This conference really did involve the whole university since, in addition to Sociology, it had the participation of 20 other NEIU departments, plus the co-sponsorship and the participation of faculty and presenters from North Park University.

In keeping with the globalization theme—Barbara Sherry traveled through Egypt in December, before the burgeoning of the “Arab Spring,” and Sociology graduate, Delia Saucedo took a 12 week intensive course in Mexico City this past April and May to expand her understanding of violence against women (p 6). We are proud that one of our Sociology majors, Jody Ahlm, won a Student Paper Competition Award at the Illinois Sociological Society meetings last fall. And once again NEIU’s Sociology Department was well represented at this spring’s Midwest Sociological Society (MSS) meetings in downtown St. Louis (p. 2). The 75th Anniversary of the MSS will be celebrated in Minneapolis at the meetings there next spring, 2012—plan on attending and consider presenting a paper.

This spring semester 23 of our graduating majors worked in internships ranging from a Drop-in Worker at the Broadway Youth Center to a Communication Social Media Associate for LGBTChange. Within the seminar we focused more directly on applying our sociological lens to the study of non-profits and to deepen our understanding of what is involved in becoming a “civic professional.” In addition to the 5 Sociology alumnae who spoke in our seminar, one of our most exciting speakers was sociologist and social entrepreneur Maramee Kaba, who shared her expertise in founding the Chicago-based organizations Chicago Freedom School, and now Project NIA.

This summer three of our instructors will be leaving us. Georgiann Davis has accepted a position at the University of Southern Illinois at Edwardsville (p. 3); Sonia Oliva was hired for a tenure track position at the College of Lake County; and Diana Almanza is moving with her daughter to Austin, Texas, where she will be pursuing instructor positions and enjoying the warmer weather. In the fall we are excited that we will be joined by our new tenure-track faculty, Brooke Johnson (p.3), and several intriguing new part time instructors.

Have a wonderful summer! Come back refreshed to excel in your classes, to become engaged in club activities, and to get involved in community-based service or research.

From The Chair:

Susan Stall at Albany Park Conference

Globalization in Our Backyard: The Albany Park Conference

Counter-Clockwise from left: Musician Stann Champion, members of the Ochi K’ijau Marimba Group, images from the North Park Nature Center, an example of the work of a community artist, faculty and staff attendees at a conference event
This spring, 5 of our sociology majors and 6 of our sociology faculty traveled to St. Louis, Missouri to attend the annual MSS Conference, “The Dynamics of Inequality.” Our NEIU sociology students, who worked within the Sociology Club to raise the matching dollars needed to fund this trip, were an enthusiastic group. The fact that they found the meetings to be an amazing experience is evident from their comments below. They also enjoyed their time outside of the conference sessions: touring St. Louis, and attending our annual NEIU faculty-student dinner on Friday night of the 3 ½ day conference weekend. Why don’t you plan on attending the 2012 MSS Conference in Chicago?

--Susan Stall

**NEIU Presenters**

Michael Armato “Gendering our Understanding of Violence: Violence Against Male Students and its Academic Implications”

Georgiann Davis “From Collective Confrontation to Contested Collaboration: A Divided Intersex Rights Movement”

Andreas Savas Kourvetaris & Susan Stall “Globalization on the Ground-A Glimpse from one of Chicago’s Neighborhoods”

Sonia Oliva “The Racial Triangulation of Puerto Rican, Black and Mexican Students”

Catherine Siebel “Lost in Translation: Converting Sociological Jargon into Real World Skills”

**MSS Honors NEIU Faculty Members**

Winners of the 48th Annual MSS Graduate Student Paper Competition:

(1st Place) Jerome Hendricks
“The Picture or the Frame: Narratives and Mechanisms of Community Change

(3rd Place) Georgiann Davis
"DSD is a Perfectly Fine Term": Reasserting Medical Authority through a Shift in Intersex

**Student Experiences of the MSS Conference**

I loved attending the Midwest Sociological Society's annual meeting "The Dynamics of Inequality". It helped me attain a better understanding of what specific areas of Sociology I would be interested in entering. Not only were the presentations captivating, but they also showcased various areas of sociology that I have been learning about in NEIU. All in all, it was a great trip to St. Louis, MO and I'm definitely going to go again!

-Bilal Hussain

My trip to St. Louis for this year's Midwest Sociological Society was an all around amazing experience. From meeting new people, to listening to panel speakers present their research, MSS gave me an opportunity to see how wonderful sociological research can be. It presents a formal and relaxed setting where even undergraduate students, like myself, can learn and discuss various sociological concepts. There are many topics covered ranging from sociology of religion to feminist theory. For me personally, the ability to network and get insights from both graduate students and professors about graduate programs was truly an invaluable opportunity. Throughout this entire trip I felt more like a colleague, rather than a student, which was a tremendous feeling. Graduate school and PhD programs suddenly don't feel like an unachievable goal. I feel more confident in the type of research that I would like to someday perform. MSS is a conference that I believe every sociology student should take advantage of. I look forward to attending many more in the future.

-Milica Zivkovic

I was fortunate enough to take part in a school funded trip to the Midwestern Sociological Society’s meeting that took place in St. Louis, MO. Being around all different types of individuals with a similar passion for research and understanding of various social inequalities made me feel like nothing I had ever felt before. I felt confident and fortunate to be surrounded by students and scholars presenting on such a broad scale of sociological dialogue. It was truly an amazing moment in my life, it was the first time I felt passionate about any career path.

-Ronnie Saravia
NEIU’s Sociology Department will always be home to me.

As an undergraduate, NEIU is where my intellectual journey into the field of sociology was cultivated. It is also the place where I was able to refine my teaching pedagogy and teaching techniques having taught almost thirty courses since the fall of 2006.

As I prepare to teach my last course for NEIU’s Department of Sociology, I can’t help but reflect on my time at this extraordinary university.

Like many of our undergraduates, I started out at NEIU as a part-time student searching for opportunity, purpose, and most importantly, answers to questions about the wide range of inequalities I observed all around me. The Sociology Department provided me with not only the tools to begin working on my questions, but also the much needed encouragement to challenge myself in ways I never thought was possible.

What you may not know is that I have a very unusual educational history. I left school far too early to help my economically struggling parents. While I’ve patched that hole in my educational trajectory long ago, I will never forget those at NEIU that have made such repair possible. I received incredible mentorship and training from the entire NEIU community, including students past and present, and I strive everyday to do the same for my students now and in the future.

I’m facing a lot of change this summer. I will be finishing my PhD in Sociology from the University of Illinois at Chicago. I will also be transitioning into my new position as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice Studies at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville. While change can be daunting, and it certainly is for me, I want each of you to know that I find a tremendous amount of comfort knowing I can always call NEIU’s Sociology Department home.

I grew up in a very small farming town high up in The Rockies of Eastern Idaho. The excitement and energy of “the city” drew me to the capital city of Boise where I earned a B.A. in Sociology at Boise State University. After completing my degree, I spent several years traveling and working abroad as an English language instructor after which I returned to The States to complete my M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Calif., Riverside.

My research and teaching interests include: education, militarism, gender and sexualities. I am committed to applied sociology in classroom teaching, research and service as well as to the growth and mentorship of students. I am looking forward to joining the Department of Sociology at Northeastern in the fall.

This Fall Brooke Johnson will be teaching the following classes:

- **Soc. 100 - Introduction to Sociology, Sections 4 & 6.**
- **Sociology 340 - Sociology of Sexualities.**

Speaking Out Against Police Torture at NEIU - Brett Stockdill

On October 28, 2010, anti-police torture activists Darrell Cannon and Joey Mogul delivered riveting addresses at Northeastern Illinois University about the campaign against racist torture committed by former Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge. The African & African American Studies Program, Justice Studies Club, Justice Studies Department, Sociology Club, Sociology Department, and Women’s Studies Program co-sponsored the two talks. Darrell Cannon eloquently described how, in 1983, Chicago Police detectives under the command of Jon Burge arrested and proceeded to torture him. They beat him repeatedly. One detective put a gun in Cannon’s mouth and played Russian Roulette while another declared, “OK, blow that n*ger’s head off.” At another point, the detectives took off Cannon’s pants and electrocuted his testicles. To stop the torture, Cannon confessed to a crime he did not commit. He described the inhuman treatment he received in prison over the course of 24 years, which included spending nearly 10 years in the torturous conditions at Tamms Super-max prison, tearfully recalling how he felt when a number of loved ones died during his incarceration and he was not allowed to attend their funerals. Yet he never gave up hope and fought valiantly for justice. After decades of struggling for his release with the assistance of his attorneys, he was released in 2006. He continues to speak out about his experiences and demand justice for torture survivors, some of whom are still in prison.

Joey Mogul, attorney at the People’s Law Office and long time Chicago activist, described the legal and activist campaign going back to the 1980s to bring Jon Burge to justice. Jon Burge and the officers who worked under him viciously tortured over 100 African American men and women during the 1970s and 1980s. During much of this time then Cook County State’s Attorney Richard M. Daley (now former mayor of Chicago) repeatedly refused to pursue an investigation of Burge’s crimes of torture and abuse. Lawyers from the People’s Law Office worked diligently with a coalition of grassroots community organizations to not only document the pattern and practice of racist torture committed under Burge’s command and supervision at Area 2 and 3 Police Headquarters, but also to publicize the racist scandal and organize with torture survivors, their family members and activists to seek justice in the cases. In 2006, Mogul successfully presented the torture cases to the United Nations Committee against Torture in Geneva, Switzerland. Over the past 30 years, their legal work and organizing have led to several victories in the Chicago Police torture cases including the exoneration of fourteen of Chicago Police torture survivors, five of whom were sentenced to die and confined on Illinois’ notorious death row. Moreover, in 2010, Burge was finally convicted of perjury and obstruction of justice for the lies he told in a civil case when he denied under oath that he and others engaged in acts of torture. Three months after Cannon and Mogul’s visit to NEIU, he was sentenced to four and half years in prison. The struggle against police abuse and torture continues in Chicago.
I felt that the conference was extremely valuable, especially in terms of the content and the groups that were brought to campus (i.e. I learned about certain advocacy groups), and I was able to make potential community partnerships.

- Olivia Perlow

My Sociological Theory students commented that the discussion of maps at the conference [Session; Remapping Albany Park—What Can We Learn?] prompted them to get into thinking about maps and, for some of them, they went online to seek out maps that conveyed social information about where they live…. I do think having my students conduct research on Albany Park and surrounding areas (in Urban Sociology) helped them to feel informed about the issues prior to and during the conference.

- Mike Armato

[My] Social Demography students did a census paper on Albany Park, and also a paper in which they each took on the role as a stakeholder. Only a few had ever walked around or driven in Albany Park (although NEIU is next door!). Several stated that they wanted to “check out” the neighborhood, with a few saying that they were interested in moving into it. Several of the education majors were interested in the school reform efforts in Albany Park.

This Conference should be institutionalized. It was the most comprehensive and exciting conference here at NEIU in the 5 years that I have been here. We need to connect with the community; doing so will benefit the students, the university, and Albany Park.

- Barbara Sherry

I thought it was really exciting to hear about the experiences of the various Albany Park residents. The diverse backgrounds of the participants made it especially interesting... It was nice to see that people are able to make change in their neighborhoods-- that there are good people that help others. So many creative ways to address the needs of people that are struggling against countless odds were presented... So many different points-of-view were represented. I just think it was so exciting.... Overall I feel that the idea of “globalization on the ground” was met and expressed in a variety of different ways. If we like it or not, we are all connected in some way or another.

- Jason Jaquet, Sociology Major

For more information on the Albany Park Conference, please visit the conference website at: http://www.neiu.edu/~sociology/confIndex.html
The Sociology Club sponsored two Brown Bag Events in the Fall and Spring. Sociology faculty members Sonia Oliva and Rachel Allison presented their research and discussed their findings with students.

Playing the Race Card: Using Race-Conscious and Color-blind Ideologies to "Fix" Latino and Black Tensions in a Multi-Racial School (Presenter Dr. Sonia Oliva)

and

I've Been There, Done That: Racial and Class Variation in College Women's Sexual Strategies (Presenter: Rachel Allison)

Dr. Sonia Oliva presents her research on Multi-Racial schools to students at the Fall Brown Bag Event

Sociology Faculty member Rachel Allison discusses her research on college students’ relationships and sexuality with sociology students.

The Sociology Club convened two Café Society events in Fall '10 and Spring '11. Students were invited to join in discussions with faculty on these two provocative topics: Islamophobia and the Anti-Mosque Protest in the U.S. and Wikileaks, the Media, and the Government.

Students are invited to discuss pressing social issues and other topics at the Sociology Club Sponsored Café Society Events

Ice Cream Scoopers: (l-r) Andreas Savas Kourvetaris, Lisa Berube, Sonia Oliva, Michael Armato, Brett Stockdill and Christina Gomez

Dr. Michael Armato discusses the keys to academic success in the Sociology Department

Dr. Brett Stockdill advises a Sociology student on NEIU’s Sociology Program.
The course I am taking is for professionals who work with women as well as domestic violence are perpetrated not by a few “transgressors” but it is actually part of the existing social norms and how these norms influence our social reality and our social practices.

If we look at gender violence from the perspective that it emanates from the sexist identity division of power we will not corporatize it into man or woman but into subjects with power that exercise their authority on those who do not have it. We stop seeing the individual as “good or bad” and we analyze his/her conduct as the order marked by the experience of his social relations in a capitalist society.

There have been many readings on the question of sex and gender and its differences. We have also read the history of the struggle for human rights, the processes and laws (international as well as national) also children’s rights as human rights. The international and national laws and how these can be used when seeing cases of abuse and sexual abuse on children.

It is very intense and because of its intensity every session has a relaxation exercise. There are also exercises designed to develop our understanding of how violence has touched each one of us, be it because we suffered violence or because we used violence in our lives or both.

The photo shows Delia Saucedo giving a lecture. The caption reads: Some exercises are designed so we can identify the violence within us because we are part of the experience of violent social relations.

There are two very interesting points about professionals who deal with violence. First, they can use violence against those they are trying to serve sometimes even if they are aware of it. The other point is that violence many times starts at the top and those who work in institutions by not questioning their superior’s authority are not only exercising violence against the people they serve but also they are being subjected to violence. I am really happy to be able to have this experience!

Barbara Sherry in the Mediterranean - Egypt and Greece

I visited the Mediterranean during Winter Break with my partner Audrey Natcone, who teaches in Justice Studies and Women’s Studies. It was a volatile time to be in the Mideast. We spent one day in Athens, Greece; as has been the case in Greece in the past year, a strike was occurring, in this case a public transit strike. The only ways you could get around the city were by private vehicles and by walking. I had the opportunity to reflect upon the role of unions, the effect of economic collapse upon a city and country, and to see firsthand how people organized to express their anger at the government. We saw numerous signs and murals graphically illustrating why people were protesting.

A few days later, we spent two days in Egypt; in fact, we were in Egypt one week before the beginning of the uprising against President Mubarak. We of course wanted to see ancient Egypt while we were there, and squeezed in as much as we could, including the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, Giza Pyramids, mosques, The Citadel, Saqqara, Alexandria, Coptic Cairo, and Khan el Khalili. What we also saw was modern Egypt: our guide passing money to police officers at every one of the frequent road blocks we encountered, children as young as two-years of age begging on the streets, modern hotels with people riding bareback on donkeys on the streets nearby, children fishing in a drainage canal piled with trash, and a government security police officer attaching himself to the three of us and demanding money from me. When I heard the news of the uprising, I was not surprised. When abject poverty and lack of opportunity exists next to excess, people will gather together to effect change. I look forward to returning to Egypt to see what that change has meant for the people of Egypt.

Call for Sociology Majors and Alumni: Join us on Facebook!

Join us on our Facebook group page “NEIU Sociologists Coming Together” for updates on all things Sociology, including campus and community events. All sociology majors past and present welcome!
This spring 23 of our graduating Sociology Majors successfully applied their sociological lens in a vast array of internship placements. Within the seminar, Dr. Lorn Coleman, Director of Career Services, presented an extremely useful workshop on resume writing. While five of our sociology alumnae shared their wisdom and experience about how to make the most out of your internship experience, and what you can do with a sociology degree.

**SOC 342 Spring Internships**

**Casey Anderson** - Maryville Academy-Madden Center, Asst. Case Manager

**Sebastino Aviles** - Broadway Youth Center, Drop-in Worker

**M. Carter Borho** - Family Matters, Associate Coordinator, Mentor

**Keith Bradley** - LGBTChange, Communication Media Associate

**Bianca Castillo** - Family Matters, Teen Girls Support Staff

**Leticia Fernandini** - Locke J. Elementary School, 3rd Grade Student Teacher

**Yashika Harrell** - Thresholds-John H. Stroger Hospital, Crisis Worker

**Deanna Hejnosz** - KinderCare Learning Center, Program Specialist

**Jessica Holzman** - North Suburban Special Education District: Ravinia School, Teacher’s Assistant

**Nadim Ismail** - Thresholds Services, Community Support Worker

**Jessika Kremer** - American Diabetes Association, Program Intern

**Elizabeth Martinez** - Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), Tutor

**Jessica Mercer** - Chicago Foundation for Women, Leadership Councils Intern

**Lara Mishigian** - Family Matters, Teen Girls Support Staff

**Brittany Peszek** - Orchard Village, Employment Specialist*

**Alyse Ragona** - NEIU Child Care Center, Classroom Intern Associate

**Malory Rivera** - Resurrection Hospital, Office Assistant Manager

**Ronnie Saravia** - Search, Inc., Case Manager*

**Renee Sas** - Teen Center-The Silo, Teen Center Supervisor Intern

**Muhadjir Smith** - Albany Park Community Center, ESL Instructor & Citizenship Program Assistant

**Erica Subkowski** - The Polish Museum of America, Library and Museum Assistant

**Mark Sujak** - Roosevelt High School, English Student Teacher

**Milica Zivkovic** - Village of Niles & Niles Chamber of Commerce, Community Service Assistant, Public Service Intern

* offered a position at their internship
Activist Graduation-Spring 2011-Friday May 6th

Several of our Sociology Majors and Minors and many of our faculty participated in this spring’s third annual Activist Graduation. This festive event is organized to honor our student activists and was held Friday afternoon before NEIU’s formal graduation event. This spring faculty members Nancy Matthews and Shelly Bannister (Justice Studies) were the recipients of the Martha Thompson Outstanding Women’s Studies Faculty Award.

Sociology Graduate David Kozin shows off his sash at the Activist Graduation.

Sociology graduates Jessica Holzman, Julia Gutierrez and Renee Sas decorate their sashes in preparation for the ceremony.

(l-r) Sociology Graduate Sebastino Aviles, and Dr. Victor Ortiz.

Sociology graduates Sebastino Aviles, Julia Gutierrez and Renee Sas decorate their sashes in preparation for the ceremony.

(l-r) Nancy Matthews, Sociology Professor Emeritus Martha Thompson and Shelly Bannister.

(l-r) Dureen Wheeler, Jesus Palafox and Dr. Victor Ortiz.

Dureen Wheeler and Dr. Victor Ortiz celebrate with 2011 graduate Julia Gutierrez.

(l-r) Nancy Matthews, Sociology Professor Emeritus Martha Thompson and Shelly Bannister.

Congratulations Sociology Graduates

Fall 2010
- Ana Bermudez
- Erin Botti
- Tiarra Brown
- Lizeth Corral
- Robin Deegan
- Juan Farris
- Ivonne Flores
- Paige Goldstein
- Isela Guzman
- Milton Hall
- Belinda Hidalgo
- Juan Ibarra Flores
- Lauren Jarrell
- Erica Knightson
- Eric Krietz
- Lisette Luistro
- Sergio Olmos
- Delia Saucedo
- Gabriella Sampedro

Spring 2011
- Jody C. Ahlm
- Carolyn C. Anderson
- Sebastino Aviles
- Ashley N. Baber
- Michael C. Borho
- Keith E. Bradley
- Bianca M. Castillo
- Michael F. Corsini
- Zorin A. Daramjee
- Carrie E. Doney

- Monica Geber
- Deanna M. Hejnosz
- Jessica F. Holzman
- Nadeem Ismail
- David A. Kozin
- Jessica Kremer
- Lara M. Mishigian
- Eric S. Perkins
- Alyse L. Ragona
- Ronnie A. Saravia
- Muhadji S. Smith
- Nasreen Syed
- Agnieszka Szkady
- Allison A. Toomey
- Wynne M. Turkington
- Ayesha Umer
- Marissa J. Wolf
- Milica Zivkovic
- Jonathan J. Yancey