Yes, three out of four did not respond. (Could it be they were not pleased with their salary?) The Wall Street Journal* recently reported that the job market for law students has become stingier than ever, and that law schools’ statistics on their graduates’ salaries can be very misleading.

The dramatic increase of the number of lawyers entering the profession is one reason that can explain these findings. The number of graduates from law schools has increased significantly, and the number of law school graduates entering the job market has also increased. This has led to a decrease in job opportunities for law students and a decrease in the average starting salary for new graduates.

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The idea of working for justice while making a six-figure income continues to make a J.D. degree very appealing. For example, Tulane University reported to U.S. News World Report that the median annual income of their 2005 law school graduates was $135,000 per year in 2005. However, this was based on a survey with a response rate of only 24%.

Many sociology and criminal justice majors decide to pursue a law degree in order to work for economic or social justice. Others opt for law school because it provides a great educational experience. Villanova alumni Eric Gibson (1992) is a classic example. After graduating from Temple Law school, he spent ten years with the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office. He recently moved to the U.S. Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division, and last June, Eric was on the team that successfully prosecuted a former Klansman for a 1964 murder of a civil rights worker in Mississippi.

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Dr. Lance Hannon, Back from Leave

After teaching at Villanova for 6 years, and obtaining tenure and promotion, I was granted a 2-year leave of absence. I used this time to live and work in a different environment: a diverse and selective liberal arts college in Southern California (Occidental College). It was an amazing experience on many levels: wonderful students, wonderful colleagues, and of course, wonderful weather. The campus, which was actually the backdrop for the movie "Clueless" and the TV show "Beverly Hills 90210", was constantly hosting film crews. But alas, I was not discovered by any Hollywood agents (practically a prerequisite for buying a home there).

While I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Southern California, I am happy to be back in historic Philadelphia and back with my friends and colleagues at Villanova. As I did before I left, I teach mainly in the area of the Sociology of Crime and Justice. My research also continues to focus on issues of inequality and violent crime. For example, some of my recent studies have investigated whether poverty's crime-producing effects are universal or different for different demographic groups.
Learning by Serving in Philadelphia
by Latishia James, Class of 2010

I am a Human Services major with a minor in Sociology, and am currently taking Dr. Payne’s service learning course, “Crime and Delinquency Prevention.” An integral part of this class is tutoring students at Cooke Middle School in Philadelphia. Being involved in a service learning class makes what I learn in the classroom a hundred times more fulfilling, because I can apply the theories we learn to real life situations. When I go to my service every Thursday, I see examples of social control theory, as well as how social bonds act as a form of deterrence from delinquency.

Taking a service learning course complements my sociology minor perfectly by helping me to employ my “sociological imagination” and think about the world outside of Villanova. I can recognize how students may be in danger of delinquency and actually do something to help deter them.

Service is an unexpected two-way street; just when you think that you are getting acclimated to the situation, you learn something new. I love working with kids because they always end up teaching me something. This is the point of Service Learning: not just to serve but to learn from those you serve, and to hope that they benefit from what you provide. It is the best feeling to be able to walk away from your work and feel that you have benefited a child by being a consistent, positive presence. Some people think that they cannot make much of (cont. on page 4)

The Graduate Student Experience:
From Criminal Justice to Social Work
By Kate Cecich, Class of 2005

I will admit that there were times when I felt slightly overwhelmed prior to my graduation from Villanova University in 2005. What was I going to do with the rest of my life? What career will be the best for me? Should I pursue graduate school, or even consider law school? What if I’m not making right decisions? And so on.

I learned to focus on the positives—that as a graduate of the College of Arts and Sciences, I had established many options along with valuable resources to help guide my life after graduation. As a student with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Criminal Justice, it became evident that graduate school was necessary to further my career.

I am currently pursuing my Masters of Social Work at San Jose State University in San Jose, California. I am in my first year of a two-year program that is heavily influenced by field work. In addition to the importance of the field practicum, the Social Work program is centered profoundly on research studies. My “Research Methods and Design” course will be my first of many at San Jose State in order to fulfill my graduate social work research sequence.

Although research can seem taxing, I am pleased to recognize that my undergraduate courses in research, specifically Criminal Justice Research and Statistics, have provided me with the foundational concepts and skills for conducting proper research. Through my Villanova studies within the Sociology and Criminal Justice department, I certainly feel confident in my preparedness to critically assess current knowledge and demonstrate literary skills, while designing a research project in a professional social work context.

Did You Know?

One in six children is being raised in poverty in the United States.
That’s a 22% increase within 10 years.

“Americans earned a smaller average income in 2005 than in 2000... Nearly half of Americans reported incomes of less than $30,000”

Individuals [making more than $1 million dollars a year], who constitute less than 1% of all tax payers, reaped almost 47% of the total income gains in 2005, compared with 2000.
Villanova’s Sociology Graduates Win Funding and Explore Opportunities After Graduation

Not all of Villanova’s high achievers go straight into a Ph.D. program after their senior year. In fact, many Ph.D. programs appreciate applicants who have gained valuable life and work experience. There are many post-Bachelor degree opportunities for scholars who are serious about taking their “sociological imagination” outside of the classroom. Villanova’s College of Arts and Sciences has become a lead producer of Fulbright Scholars, and three Villanova students received Fulbright grants for the 2006-2007 year, including one Sociology and Philosophy graduate, Bruce T. O’Neill (class of 2004). Bruce was awarded a grant to study issues of homelessness in Romania, a post-Communist society. These grants typically include an opportunity to study for at least one year abroad, while supplementing tuition and living expenses. (They can be awarded to both graduate students and non-students as well.) After graduation from Villanova, Bruce moved to New York to work with the city’s Economic Development Corporation as a New York Urban Fellow, before continuing on to the London School of Economics and Political Science. After (cont. on page 4)

What’s Next? J.D. or Ph.D?
Continued from Page 1

of law degrees granted increased from 37,909 in 2002 to 43,883 in 2005-06 (that’s an increase of about 16%). The Dean of New York Law was quoted in 2005 as saying that many students “simply cannot earn enough income after graduation to support the debt they incur. We may be reaching the end of a golden era for law schools.”

Another educational track too few students consider is a Ph.D. These graduates will face a very different job market. According to two surveys by the National Science Foundation, there are three Ph.D.’s retiring every year for every person currently earning a Ph.D. With these numbers, it begs the question of where colleges will find professors for your future children. Currently, we have former students in doctoral programs at American University, Boston College, the University of Albany, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Maryland. Former students have earned their Ph.D.s at Harvard, the University of Pennsylvania and Vanderbilt and are currently professors at Stanford, the University of Texas at Dallas, and Lehigh University. Doctoral programs usually offer tuition waivers and assistantships to fund their students, so there is typically no (additional) debt acquired upon graduation. I encourage you to speak with any of your professors about a doctoral program. If you are interested in graduate school, but not convinced that another four or five-year program is right for you just yet, one option is to earn a master’s degree in our graduate program in Criminal Justice, particularly if you are interested in crime and delinquency. As always, feel free to contact me with questions about internships, Ph.D. programs, and our M.A. in Criminal Justice.

—Dr. Arvanites


Did You Know?

The number of people without health insurance increased from 44.8 million in 2005 to 47 million in 2006. The percentage of minors without health insurance increased to 11.7% from 10.9%.

–U.S. Census Bureau, Sept. 2007

New standards are being adopted by the federal government that would stop the popular Children’s Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP) from expanding to cover more children, particularly in PA, NY, NJ and CA.


There has been a 30% increase nationwide in adults who cannot make their credit payments, leading to an increase in bankruptcy, home closures, and damaged credit.

Excelling after Graduation
Continued from page 3

receiving an MSc in Human Geography, he will eventually pursue a Ph.D. in post-Communist studies. Before winning a Fulbright Scholarship, Bruce has been a Connelly-Delouvrier Scholar, a 2003 Truman Finalist, and a 2004 Rhodes Finalist, among other awards.

Another Sociology and Honors alumna, Diane Coffey (class of 2006), earned a number of awards during her time at Villanova, including the John E. Hughes Medallion of Excellence in Sociology. Diane was also a 2005 Harry S. Truman Scholar and a 2004 Connelly-Delouvrier Scholar to India. She was recently invited to interview for the prestigious British Marshall Scholarship. Diane is currently working toward her MPA in Development Studies at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, and will continue to pursue issues of global poverty in the future.

Learning by Serving
Continued from page 2

an impact through Service Learning once or twice a week. However, if you have some awareness of the social justice issues surrounding those you are helping, or at least a willingness to learn, I guarantee that you will never feel useless at a service site.

My students give me a glimpse of how great our nation could be if only they had the appropriate resources at their fingertips. Despite the slew of behavioral issues, tempers and "I don't care" attitudes, they are extremely bright individuals who will shock and awe you with their capabilities. I only wish they were given more of the attention they so desperately deserve. I hope to continue working with them next semester and even through my Senior year. If I can bond with even one child, I may be able to help them avoid delinquency (such as dropping out of school, which about half of Philadelphians do). Consider making Service Learning part of your college experience.

• Go to www.truman.gov for more information about the Harry S. Truman Scholarship for juniors

• To learn about the Connelly-Delouvrier Scholarship for studying abroad, go to Villanova’s website at www.villanova.edu/artsci/college/academics/uga/internationalscholarships.htm

• For more information about post-Bachelor's Fulbright opportunities in over 140 countries, visit http://us.fulbrightonline.org/

• For information about non-profit jobs, internships, organizations and volunteer opportunities in the U.S. and abroad, check out www.idealist.org