Interactions

Volume 5, Issue 1
February, 2007

Editor: Dana Moss,
Research Associate

A Message from the Chair

The Department of Sociology would like your help with our program review. The College of Arts and Sciences requires each academic department to undertake a periodic review of its program. The “primary purpose of the periodic review of academic departments is to enhance academic quality.” There are a variety of components to this review, one of which is a visit by an external reviewer. Dr. Marge Zahn from North Carolina State University will be here to evaluate our program on March 26th and 27th. No review would be complete without input from our students. I would like to extend an invitation to our sociology majors to meet with Dr. Zahn on March 27th. It will be sometime mid-day, and we will be offering all participants a light lunch. Please mark the date on your calendar (details will follow).

Speaking of opportunities to contribute, the department is planning on offering four excellent courses with Service Learning components during the fall semester. Service learning opportunities provide students with the chance to apply their “sociological imaginations” outside of the classroom. Not only is this a wonderful educational experience, but it is also a fine addition to an employment or graduate application. See page 2 of this newsletter for details about these courses. As always, feel free to contact the department with your questions.

—Dr. Tom Arvanites

Featured Professor—Dr. Allison Payne

During my first year of college, I was a theatre and voice major. Then, in my sophomore year, I took a Criminology course and I fell in love. I was fascinated by the idea that there was a whole field dedicated to researching crime. Every time we learned a theory, I thought “That’s it! That’s why people commit crime!”...until we discussed the next theory. And so I became a Criminology major.

For about two weeks, I thought about going to law school. Then I realized that what I really wanted to do was stay in college for the rest of my life, so I decided to become a professor. During my senior year, I took a graduate Criminology course and learned about school-based delinquency prevention, and I fell in love again. I have always believed that education is the key to so many social issues (maybe because so many of my family members and friends are teachers!), and here was an area of Criminology that dealt specifically with helping schools prevent crime.

Doing research on school delinquency has led me to schools in urban, suburban, and rural areas of all social classes in states such as Maryland, South Carolina, Texas, Illinois, Colorado, New Jersey and Washington, D.C. I go into schools and work with members of the school community to implement and evaluate programs and policies designed to prevent (Continued on page 4)
As a senior at Villanova, I have taken many classes about social problems, particularly regarding social and economic inequality. However, since beginning an internship with the Unity Clinic, a medical organization sponsored by the Augustinian Defenders of the Rights of the Poor (ADROP), I have had the opportunity to view these issues first-hand. Located at the St. Agnes Hospital on Broad Street, the clinic I volunteer at offers medical services to those without insurance once a week.

My first night working at the clinic shattered every preconceived notion I had. Working in the basement of St. Agnes, the clinic workers had only the scantest of resources. The make-shift reception area consisted of one table with filing crates propped on top, and there were only three examination rooms for dozens of desperate patients. With their limited funding, the clinic distributes generic medications (as simple as Tylenol) given to the patients in zip-lock bags. The dedication and level of care provided by the volunteers was especially amazing in these bare conditions.

One major challenge the workers have is the language barrier. Many of the patients are immigrants, particularly from Indonesia or China, and most of the volunteers do not speak the various languages required for communication. They must rely on volunteer interpreters to come in and facilitate the dialogue between the patients and the volunteers; this can be a tedious and frustrating process for everyone involved.

Although we read about disparities in health care, both in textbooks and in the news, many students do not realize how tough it is to provide the medical care to disadvantaged people in need. It was only when I was given the opportunity to volunteer at this clinic that I was able to view this crisis first-hand. Not only has my internship reinforced my desire to become a nurse, but it also inspires me to continue volunteering with organizations such as ADROP.

See Dr. Arvanites for credit-earning internship opportunities next semester!
Dr. Richard Juliani’s new work titled *Priest, Parish, and People: Saving the Faith in Philadelphia’s "Little Italy"* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2007) has just been published. From the perspective of historical sociology, Dr. Juliani traces the role of religion in the lives and communities of Italian immigrants in Philadelphia from the 1850s to the early 1930s. By the end of the nineteenth century, Philadelphia had one of the largest Italian populations in the country. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia eventually established twenty-three parishes for the exclusive use of Italians. Juliani describes the role these parishes played in developing and anchoring an ethnic community and in shaping its members’ new identity as Italian Americans during the years of mass migration from Italy to America.

*Priest, Parish, and People* blends the history of Monsignor Antonio Isoleri—pastor from 1870 to 1926 of St. Mary Magdalen dePazzi, the first Italian parish founded in the country—with that of the Italian immigrant community in Philadelphia. Relying on parish and archdiocesan records, secular and church newspapers, archives of religious orders, and Father Isoleri’s personal papers, Juliani chronicles the history of St. Mary Magdalen dePazzi as it grew from immigrant refuge to a large, stable, ethnic community that anchored “Little Italy” in South Philadelphia. In charting that growth, Juliani also examines conflicts between laity and clergy and between clergy and church hierarchy, as well as the remarkable fifty-six-year career of Isoleri as a spiritual and secular leader. *Priest, Parish, and People* provides both the details of parish history in Philadelphia and the larger context of Italian-American Catholic history. (Continued on Page 4)

Hood College Hosts the 26th Annual Mid-Atlantic Undergraduate Social Research Conference

Hood College, located in historic Frederick, Maryland, will be hosting this year’s 27th annual meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Undergraduate Social Research Conference on Friday, April 13th. The conference, which provides students in the region a forum for reporting the results of research projects and internship experiences, will feature panel and poster presentations by undergraduates from assorted universities and academic backgrounds. Villanova students have gained valuable presentation experience and recognition by participating in this conference in the past, which was held last year at our very own Conference Center. It is an excellent addition to a job application or resume as well! All faculty and students are welcome to attend and learn about the contributions of undergraduates to empirical and theoretical research. Feel free to visit the conference website for up-to-date information as it becomes available at [www.mausrc.com](http://www.mausrc.com) as the session schedule is subject to change. If you are interested in presenting, feel free to discuss your ideas with Dr. Arvanites or Dr. Pattnayak. The Department will make efforts to enable our students to attend by providing transportation and support. More details will be provided within the coming month. We hope to see you there!

More events to look for...

Attend Villanova’s Annual Fritz Nova Lecture:

Presenting Dr. Juliet B. Schor, Boston College:

“Getting to Sustainability: Beyond the Work and Spend Cycle”

and

“The Social Death of Things”

April 11th

Times and locations TBA

Students from Dr. Jones’ Social Networks Seminar will be attending the *Eastern Sociological Society’s Annual Conference* held at the Sheraton Philadelphia City Center Hotel from March 15th to the 18th.

If you are interested in seeing sociologists, criminologists, and other professionals in the field present their research, contact Dr. Brian Jones at brian.jones@villanova.edu
Helping school members select and successfully implement research-based practices is at the heart of my work. I also enjoy discussing these concepts in my classes. I am particularly excited about a new service learning course I will be teaching in the fall semester, titled Delinquency and Crime Prevention. In the classroom, we will discuss various family, school, and community-based prevention practices. Outside of the classroom, we will be working with students in several Philadelphia middle schools to develop a program that helps them transition successfully into high school. To me, this is the perfect combination of class and field work.

I am still involved in singing and acting (although having two kids has greatly reduced this involvement), but I am thankful every day that I took that first Criminology course!