

## **FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK**

This issue's featured student affiliate:  
Crystal M. Stephens (Sociology)

Hello, everyone.

We were sad to learn that Martha Reckless died on July 15 at the age of 94. A native of Nashville, Tennessee, Martha was a graduate of that city's Vanderbilt University. However, she lived most of her life in Dublin, Ohio. This past year, we missed her presence at our annual Reckless Memorial Lecture, which is held in memory of her husband, Ohio State criminologist Walter Reckless. However, in prior years, she could be counted on to be front-and-center at the lecture, often posing challenging and thoughtful questions. I also had the good fortune to entertain her in my home, and she was a lively guest who made it a special point to engage emerging scholars in discussions of the discipline. We will all miss her very much, and offer our condolences to her son, Walter W. Reckless, and her extended family.

On a brighter note, Avelardo Valdez, Professor of Social Work and Director of the Office for Drug and Social Policy Research at the University of Houston, was the final speaker for our 2004-2005 seminar series. Dr. Valdez presented his research entitled, "Consequences of Gang Membership: A Life Course Approach" to an enthusiastic group. He and his fellow researchers are conducting qualitative analyses of gang life in the Latino community, with a particular interest in family-level social processes. For example, many young people become familiar with gang participation through their own families: older brothers and sisters, and, in some cases, even parents. His presentation also highlighted the dramatic differences between the tourist areas of San Antonio, and the bleaker picture found in some of its low-income residential neighborhoods, with comparison/contrast photos used for emphasis. The presentation was of special interest to instructors of the Sociology Department's new course on the Sociology of Gangs, which considers the social processes that tend to produce gang activity and has been received enthusiastically by undergraduate students from all disciplines.

Those who would like to learn more about Dr. Valdez's research may wish to visit the Office for Drug and Social Policy Research website at [http://www.uh.edu/odspr/ODSPR%20Folder/About\\_us.htm](http://www.uh.edu/odspr/ODSPR%20Folder/About_us.htm). Dr. Valdez also provided information on the National Hispanic Science Network on Drug Abuse, an organization that helps to bring together professors and graduate students who are interested in research on drug abuse among Latinos, and sponsors a well-received annual conference. The website for the organization is located at: <http://nhsn.med.miami.edu/default.asp>. Thank you, Avelardo, for sharing your research with us.

--Ruth

## **UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST**

During the upcoming academic year, CJRC's seminar series will be coordinated by Rob Greenbaum and Chris Browning. They will be meeting soon to schedule events for Autumn Quarter. In the meantime, keep the following date open for the first seminar: Friday, September 30, 2005, 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. Stay tuned for additional information about the presenter and the topic, as well as the rest of our fall lineup.

Announcements

Jack Nasar reports that a new network is forming on the topic of environmental criminology. The network is for those who are interested in a systematic approach to crime prevention and addressing

environmental, organizational, and community facets of crime, vandalism, etc. If you are interested, please contact Peter Hecht (prhecht@comcast.net) for details. The first network meeting is planned for the Atlanta conference of the Environmental Design Research Association.

Mary Reiter (ColumbusState) points out a fun, short course at Columbus State that might be of interest to CJRC affiliates. Titled "Making the Dead Speak: Anthropology Applied to Criminal Investigations," the course is three days, from August 26-28. The description indicates that the course will provide an introduction to forensic anthropology, and the panel of instructors will discuss the retrieval of burials, crime scene techniques, and other topics. For more information about the course, contact Dr. Tracy Little, Social and Behavioral Sciences Department, at tlittle@csc.edu. Seth Feinberg (WesternWashingtonUniversity, formerly MontanaStateUniversity) asks that you update your address books to include his new e-mail address, seth.feinberg@wwu.edu.

### **WHAT CENTER PARTICIPANTS ARE DOING**

Rudy Alexander (College of Social Work) submitted a prospectus for possible nomination for a Carnegie Fellowship. The title is "The Impact of Islam on African American Prisoners and Ex-Offenders." If approved, he hopes to base a book on this study. In addition, he gave a presentation at the end of July at a social work conference at the University of Toledo. The presentation addressed the myths surrounding African Americans and affirmative action. In addition, he elaborated upon a recent article in the Stanford Law Review that asserted that affirmative action has been detrimental to African American law students.

Walter DeKeseredy (University of Ontario Institute of Technology) has a new article co-authored with Martin D. Schwartz and Shahid Alvi titled, "An Economic Exclusion/Male Peer Support Model Looks at 'Wedfare' and Woman Abuse," that will be published in an upcoming issue of Critical Criminology. He also will be giving a keynote address at a student conference on social justice to be held at the University of Windsor in mid-August.

Joshua Dressler (MoritzCollege of Law) has a recent publication entitled, "The Wisdom and Morality of Present-Day Criminal Sentencing," in the Akron Law Review [the citation is 38 Akron L. Rev. 853 (2005)].

Stephen Gavazzi (Human Development and Family Science, Co-Director, Center for Family Research) reports that, for the second year in a row, the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) has provided generous support to the Center for Family Research (CFR) to fund two student research associate positions. One of these positions was awarded to Rachael Gossett (Graduate Student, Sociology), and is dedicated to an exploration of issues related to parental incarceration. The other position was awarded to Michelle Bruno (Graduate Student, Education). Michelle's faculty advisor is Paul Granello (Counseling Education). Work on this project provides an opportunity for collaboration among CJRC affiliates Paul Bellair (Sociology), Ruth Peterson (Sociology and CJRC Director), and Steve Gavazzi.

Brian Kowalski (PhD Student, Sociology) was recently hired by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction as a Social Science Research Specialist. Brian has a long-standing relationship with the DRC due to his extensive research on recidivism among Ohio's released inmates. Congratulations, Brian!

Mary Reiter (ColumbusState, and OhioState Sociology PhD graduate) was recently promoted from

Instructor to Assistant Professor at Columbus State Community College. Her promotion is a great recognition of her outstanding teaching. Mary is also a 1990 graduate of the Ohio State University College of Law. Congratulations, Mary!

Victor Streib (OhioNorthernUniversityCollege of Law) has a recent publication in the Pennsylvania State Law Review, entitled, "Prosecutorial Discretion in Juvenile Homicide Cases." The citation is 109 Penn. State Law Review 1071 (2005).

### **CALL FOR PAPERS AND CONFERENCES**

The Midwestern Criminal Justice Association has issued a call for papers for its 2005 Annual Meeting, to be held September 29-October 1, 2005 in Chicago. The theme this year is "Criminal Justice and Criminology: Our Past, Present, and Future." Abstracts are due no later than September 1, 2005, and should be sent to Marvin D. Free, Jr., Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, 800 West Main Street, Whitewater, WI 53190-1790. For more information, see the website at <http://www.mcja.org/>.

Deadline for Abstracts:  
September 1, 2005

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's 2005 Ohio Criminal Justice Research Conference will be held on October 11, 2005 at the Midwest Hotel and Conference Center, 4900 Sinclair Road, Columbus, Ohio. Areas to be addressed include Corrections, Juvenile Justice, Community Corrections, Policing, Sentencing and Courts, and Mental Health in Criminal Justice. If you have questions, please contact Kelly Ward, 2005 Conference Chair, at 614-752-1315 for more information.

Conference:

October 11, 2005

It is time to make reservations for those who plan to attend the 2005 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. The meeting will be held from November 16-19, 2005 in Toronto, Ontario at the Fairmount Royal York Hotel. The program and registration information are listed on ASC's website, <http://www.asc41.com/>.

Conference:

November 16-19, 2005

In other American Society of Criminology news, students should be aware of two student paper competitions. First, submissions for the Corrections and Sentencing Division Student Paper Competition are due September 1, 2005. Eligible papers must be student-authored papers on the area of corrections and/or sentencing, must conform to Criminology format, and must not exceed 7,500 words. Six copies of the manuscript must be submitted along with a letter indicating enrollment status, co-signed by the student's dean, department chair, or program director. Send submissions to Beth Huebner, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of Missouri-St. Louis, 324 Lucas Hall, One University Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63121-4400. For additional information and requirements, please contact [Huebnerb@umsl.edu](mailto:Huebnerb@umsl.edu), and see the formal announcement at the ASC website, <http://www.asc41.com/>.

Deadline:  
September 1, 2005

The second upcoming ASC student paper competition is the Division on Women and Crime Student Paper Competition. Papers must be about or related to feminist scholarship; gender issues; or women as offenders, victims, or professionals. Papers must be no longer than 35 pages, conform to APA or MLA format, and include an abstract of 100 words. Submissions are due September 15, 2005, and must include verification of student status. Please send 4 copies of the manuscript to Venessa Garcia, PhD, Chair of DWC Student Paper Competition, Department of Public Administration, Health Services, and Criminal Justice, Kean University, 311 Willis, Union, N.J. 07083. For additional information and requirements, see the ASC website at <http://www.asc41.com/>, and e-mail Dr. Garcia at [vgarcia@kean.edu](mailto:vgarcia@kean.edu).

Deadline:  
September 15, 2005

### **FEATURED FACULTY PARTICIPANT - CRYSTAL M. STEPHENS, SOCIOLOGY**

Sociology PhD student Crystal Stephens grew up in Dover, Ohio, a small town she describes as “about 30 miles south of the Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio.” For many years, her parents owned and operated a comic book store, and they instilled in her a love for wry humor, social observation, and a fondness for Charlie Brown and his irrepressible, anthropomorphic beagle, Snoopy. Each of these interests has carried forward into her adulthood, and the second, social observation, is expressed in her research and work in the social sciences.

After graduating from high school, Crystal moved to the Columbus area to attend Capital University, in Bexley. She capitalized (ahem) on her time there by loading up on courses in the areas that interested her, majoring in criminology and political science, and minoring in sociology and German. She completed all of her coursework within 3 years, but opted to stay an additional year to complete a seminar requirement for the minor in German.

Following the completion of her studies, she opted to pursue criminology and sociology at Ohio State. Her primary interest was social research, particularly in the area of adolescent problem behavior, and she got started quickly. While other students were working to get acclimated to the graduate program, Crystal accepted a challenge presented to her by her faculty advisor, Dana Haynie. Intrigued by a research proposal Crystal submitted in her micro-criminology class during Crystal’s second quarter in graduate school, Dana suggested she complete the research and present it at the American Society of Criminology meetings that fall. Crystal’s paper on the intersection of race and gender in the experience of strain was accepted, and she had the good fortune to present it to an audience that included Robert Agnew, the criminologist who developed general strain theory. Though she was nervous, Agnew complimented her afterward on her work. Impressed with her initiative, Dana hired her as a research associate during her second year in the program.

Crystal continued working with general strain theory, and completed her Master’s thesis, titled, “Gender and Delinquency: Using General Strain Theory and the Gendered Theory of Offending to Explore Differences in Male and Female Delinquency,” in August 2003. In this research, she explored the ways in which general strain theory might help to explain the greater participation of males in delinquency. In the process of working on her thesis, she acquired extensive knowledge about data available in the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), and often has helpful suggestions for ways those data may be used to answer her colleagues’ research questions.

She entered the PhD program in Autumn of 2003, and decided to broaden her research to include family-level social processes, with a particular interest in the effect of family disruption through divorce and remarriage on adolescent outcomes. Her efforts were recognized when she received the Sociology Department's Summer Publishing Fellowship in 2004, which enabled her to polish some of her ongoing research with a goal of submission to a journal. While completing her PhD coursework, Crystal conducted research with other professors (including Dana Haynie and Chris Knoester) and her graduate colleague and friend, Lisa Leach. She again presented at ASC in 2003 and 2004, the Add Health Users' Workshop in 2002 and 2003, and the Population Association of America annual meeting in 2004 and 2005. She twice received a Summer Methods Training Award from the Sociology Department to attend the Add Health workshops.

Currently, she is working on yet more research, while preparing for her general exams, which she hopes to take within the next few months. Despite the warm summer weather, Crystal is ahead of schedule in her exam reading, another outward sign of the tenacity and focus she brings to her work.

When she finishes her exams, Crystal will begin work on the research outlined in her dissertation proposal. She intends to further examine the role of family disruption on crime, delinquency, and substance use, using all three available waves of the Add Health data. Specifically, she will use a life course perspective to examine the ways in which changes in social bonds can alter developmental and young adult trajectories, an extension of the work of John Laub and Robert Sampson. She also hopes to consider the role of "cumulative continuity" in outcomes: to what extent do prior missteps "snowball" to produce increasingly negative effects and responses from others?

In her free time, Crystal continues to enjoy the comics she grew up with, and maintains an extensive collection of "Peanuts" memorabilia (especially items featuring that beagle!) She has twice been to the Charles Schulz museum in Santa Rosa, California, and enjoys the travel associated with academic conferences and following her boyfriend Gavin's favorite football team, the Cleveland Browns. She and Gavin moved into a new home this year in the Dublin area, and have enjoyed making it their own. She listens to music regularly (and lists The Killers as a new favorite band), catches her favorite programs ("The Simpsons," "That 70s Show," and entertainment news and reality programs), and spends time with her friends.

However, Crystal also devotes at least some of her spare time to volunteer work. She is an active fundraiser on behalf of the MS Society. Each year, she and her many friends and graduate school colleagues walk in the MS Walk as "Team Snoopy." She has had no trouble stirring interest in the MS Walk among her associates, as she herself was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2003. As is evident from the extent of her work and the fun she has relaxing with friends and Gavin, Crystal has not allowed her diagnosis (or the associated physical and vision problems) to get her down, or slow her progress toward her goals. Those who know Crystal do not find it surprising that she is still setting the pace for other students to follow.

## **CREDITS AND CONTACT**

Thanks to all of you who sent your suggestions and announcements. We encourage you to keep us informed about any events that might be of interest to CJRC participants as well as any suggestions that you have for activities or programs. To contact the newsletter editor, please e-mail Lori at <muccino.1@osu.edu>. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please send Lori your e-mail address.