

## **New USC President a Sociologist**

Dr. Andrew A. Sorensen became the 27th president of USC in 2002. Dr. Sorensen previously served as president of the University of Alabama (1996-2002) and provost and vice president for academic affairs at the University of Florida (1990-1996). Dr. Sorensen has been a faculty member and an administrator at various universities.



Among Dr. Sorensen's degrees are Master's and Doctoral degrees in Medical Sociology from Yale University and a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Michigan. His work has focused on health policy and other health-related matters.

Dr. Sorensen has been a member of, or served in a leadership position in, many associations, councils, and task forces. In 2001 he was appointed to the Health and Human Services Secretary's Advisory Council on Public Health Preparedness. He has received numerous awards for his service and leadership.

Under Dr. Sorensen's leadership, the University of South Carolina is moving forward vigorously to serve the state of South Carolina, the nation, and the world.

## From the Chair

*"After changes upon changes we are more or less the same."*



I love the way that the quote from Paul Simon applies to USC Sociology. The line was in the version of his famous anthem "The Boxer" performed at a Simon & Garfunkel reunion concert in Central Park, NY. The song was a sort of newsletter from the artists, mirroring the hills and valleys in the long roads they'd traveled together and apart, as well as the continuities and changes in American society. In the end, the words return us to the song's emotional center: Through all the ups and downs of our lives, there are filaments and essences that connect our pasts to our present, and ourselves to others.

Sociology at USC is "more or less the same" as it has always been, at least in the sense of maintaining its commitment to disseminate sociological ideas to students, to the community and state, to the field of sociology, and to the world. Our faculty continue to win teaching awards, serve as mentors for students, and develop new and exciting courses that cover material from across the sociological landscape.

Most students know their professors as teachers, but the "instructor hat" is only one of several that USC Sociologists don on any given work day. As a group we also devote hundreds of hours each week to conducting original research, and this is another quality of our Department that has not changed over the years. As a result of our faculty's dozens of research publications each year, we are known around the world as a source of cutting-edge knowledge on a variety of topics.

It will take multiple newsletters to review just the recent "changes upon changes" USC Sociology has experienced. We have new faculty, new programs, a new building, new courses, new research—plenty to talk about in this and future issues. Here I'll just mention one change that is especially near and dear to my heart: I recently moved here to become Chair of the USC Sociology Department after 18 years at the University of Iowa. The decision was not an easy one for me and for my family, but it has turned out to be a good one. We find Columbia to be a fascinating and fun place to live and work, and South Carolina has a remarkable array of people and places to get to know.

Finally, I want to state in no uncertain terms what this newsletter implies: We have renewed our commitment to keeping in touch with our friends and alumni from around the country. In these pages you will find contact information so that you may send or e-mail us updates on *your* news. We'll publish as many of these as we can in future issues of this newsletter. Enjoy!

Barry Markovsky  
barry@sc.edu

## What I Learned in Sociology

M. Malissa Burnette, Esq. (B.A. '71; J.D. '77)

As a child of the 60's counter-culture, the Sociology Department at USC drew me like a magnet to its studies of the influences of such factors as religion, wealth and ethnicity on our culture. But beyond the "touchy-feely" aspects was the idea that these things could be measured, quantified and charted through statistical and demographic analysis. Wow!

Sociology whetted my appetite to step out of my white-bread, middle-class, daughter-of-a-doctor-and-a-homemaker existence and risk adventures in different places. That led me to my first job after college: prison guard. In hindsight, my job choice may have had as much to do with annoying my parents as it did with social experimentation, but it served both purposes. I saw immediately that the inmates in the state's only women's prison were overwhelmingly poor, uneducated and black.

Most were single mothers who were being trained by the State to return to society and support their children as cooks and seamstresses. Male inmates attended college classes and learned higher-paying skills such as carpentry.

My sense of outrage was exceeded only by my over-estimation of what I, as one person, could do to correct these injustices. I decided I should be a lawyer. Lawyers were respected and had the power to change the way people treat their fellow citizens. It's true. No modern societal advancement, such as the racial integration of schools, has been achieved without lawyers representing citizens in challenging the status quo.

I became deeply involved in the women's movement, marched in Columbia and DC, lobbied the legislature on issues of social justice, studied domestic violence, and worked for equal pay for minorities and women. I served as Chief of Staff for Lt. Governor Nancy Stevenson, the first woman to win state-wide election in South Carolina.

Over the years that followed, I was able to use my education in sociology and law to help make a few changes in South Carolina. Among them: DHEC no longer can force parents to use the father's last name as their child's last name; young women can play contact sports in public schools; women can attend The Citadel; and judges cannot use a professional mother's career against her in custody cases any more than they can use a father's career against him.

But beyond my modest public achievements, I try every day to help people live dignified lives, especially in the workplace. I try to keep people from being eaten alive by the systems and corporations where they toil to earn their pay. Whether a person is a university professor or a maid in a hotel, I believe that people are more important than the bureaucracies they work for.

Hey, I think I learned that in Sociology class!

*[Malissa Burnette is a Certified Specialist in Employment and Labor Law, and a partner in the Burnette & Leclair Law Firm in Columbia, SC. She and her husband, Mike LeFever, have a twelve year old daughter, Grant.]*

## New Home for Sociology

*[In January 2001, the Department of Sociology moved to Sloan College. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was May 24, 2001. To mark the occasion, Professor John Skvoretz, Interim Department Chair, delivered an address from which the following was excerpted.]*

On behalf of the Sociology Department, I would like to thank everyone involved in the restoration of this fine old building. As it so happens, this coming year is the 75th anniversary of the Sociology Department itself. The Sociology Department first appears in the 1926 edition of the University Catalog with one Professor, George Croft Williams. Professor Williams was formerly a member of the Department of Psychology and Philosophy and taught sociology courses in that department before sociology itself was organized as a separate department of instruction.



Courses offered in 1926, all taught by the redoubtable Professor Williams, included Outline of Sociology, Applied Sociology, Community Organization, Educational Sociology, Child Welfare Family Case Work, Scientific Methods in Sociology, and Southern Social Problems. A few years later the department doubled in size with the addition of Ms. Leila Johnson as an instructor. I am pleased to note that we were a diverse faculty from the very beginning.

Our instructional programs have come a long way. We began our MA program in 1966 and our Ph.D. program in 1989. Although course offerings have expanded greatly since then, Family, Education, and Scientific Methods remain important research and teaching areas in the department.

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When the department started in 1926, it was located in Davis College just across Gibbes Green. For many years the department was a joint department of anthropology and sociology and its home was Hamilton College right next door. Then in 1977 the departments split and Sociology was exiled from Gibbes Green. We spent a good portion of the next 24 years jousting for space in Callcott with the Geography Department. Our move to Sloan terminates those "space wars."

## Stay in Touch!

We'd like to create a data base for all of our former students, undergraduate and graduate, or even non-sociology majors whose horizons were expanded through their sociology courses. Please fill out the information sheet and return it to us, or e-mail the information to: [barry@sc.edu](mailto:barry@sc.edu)

## Web NOTES

### Sites of Interest

The USC Sociology website has been completely revamped during the past year. It now offers a wealth of information and links relating to our programs and activities.

USC Sociology: [www.cla.sc.edu/SOCY/](http://www.cla.sc.edu/SOCY/)

The American Sociological Association website has an informative section for the public.

ASA: [www.asanet.org](http://www.asanet.org)

Both web sites also contain numerous links to other sociologically relevant websites. Sociology is all over the web!

## Faculty NEWS

### New Profs!

We are proud and excited to welcome three new Assistant Professors, each of whom adds new dynamism and breadth to our research activities and course offerings.

**Elena Vesselinov** will complete her Ph.D. at SUNY-Albany and joined us for the Fall '03 semester. Her research and teaching are in the areas of urban sociology, housing, immigration and globalization.

**Mathieu Deflem** arrived Fall '02 with a Ph.D. from University of Colorado and several highly productive years as an Assistant Professor at Purdue University. His teaching and research areas include sociology of law and social control, historical-comparative sociology and social theory

**Brent Simpson** formerly was Assistant Professor at Texas A & M University. His Ph.D. was from Cornell University, and he began in our department in the Fall of '02. His research and teaching interests are in the areas of collective action, social psychology and social networks.

### Recent Accomplishments

There are far too many to list here, but below are brief notices of a few of the significant events bringing national and international recognition to our faculty.

**Mathieu Deflem** published a book Fall '02, *Policing World Society*, to appear in paperback early '04.

**Barry Markovsky** will be recognized in the '04 editions of *Who's Who in America* and *Who's Who in the World*.

**Jimmy Sanders** published "Ethnic Boundaries and Identity in Plural Societies" in the '02 *Annual Review of Sociology*.

**Ken Shin** received a grant from the Dept. of Education to bring K-12 educators to Korea to learn about their culture.

**Brent Simpson** received a grant from the National Science Foundation to study gender and cooperation.

**John Skvoretz** was a visiting instructor at the University of Essex in Great Britain.

**Lala Steelman** published "Reconsidering Sibling Configuration in the '02 *Annual Review of Sociology*."

**Shane Thye** received a grant from the National Science Foundation to study status effects in social exchange.

**Shelley Smith** served on the National Science Foundation Sociology Advisory Panel.

**Elena Vesselinov** received a Dissertation Improvement Award from the National Science Foundation.

**David Willer** received the James S. Coleman Prize for his book *Network Exchange Theory*.

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## Nolan Receives Teaching Award

In the Fall of '02 Professor Patrick Nolan received the *Excellence in Teaching Award* from the Alpha Chapter of the Mortar Board. The Mortar Board is associated with the Honors College at USC. Congratulations Dr. Nolan!

### Graduate Student NEWS

## Congratulations!

We are proud to recognize a number of current and former students for their recent achievements. Please update us on your own noteworthy accomplishments!

**Virginia Martin** (Ph.D. '02) received the University of South Carolina's Outstanding Dissertation Award. Dr. Martin completed her dissertation last year and is on the faculty at Appalachian State University in North Carolina. Her dissertation is entitled *A Longitudinal Study of the Role of Neighborhoods in the Transition to Home Ownership*.

**John E. Shutt** (Ph.D. candidate) received the Sociology Department's 2002-'03 Outstanding Single-authored Scholarly Publication Award. His paper, "On Criminal Defense, Zealous Advocacy, and Expanded Ethics Dialogue," was published in the *Journal of Crime and Justice*.

**Sangmoon Kim** (Ph.D. candidate) received the Department's 2002-'03 Outstanding Co-Authored Scholarly Publication Award. His paper, "A Longitudinal Analysis of Globalization

and Regionalization in International Trade: A Social Network Approach," appeared in the journal *Social Forces*.

**Danielle Smith** (Ph.D. '03) was recently hired as Assistant Professor at the Rochester Institute of Technology in New York.

**Mamadi Corra** (Ph.D. '02) was recently hired as Assistant Professor at East Carolina State University in North Carolina.

**Joong-Hwan Oh** (Ph.D. '99) was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at Hunter College—City University of New York.

**Pidi Zhang** (Ph.D. '97) has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at Georgia Southern University.



**ALUMNI INFORMATION FORM**

**Help us stay in touch. Your input is appreciated!**

Name (Mr. / Mrs. / Ms. /Dr. / Other) (please type or print)

Birth name (if different)

Spouse's Name

Home Address

City, State, Zip

Home Phone ( ) Home E-mail:

USC Degree and Year Awarded

Your Employer

Your Title Type of Business:

Work Address

City, State, Zip

Work Phone ( ) Work E-mail:

**Thanks for sharing your news, comments, and memories below!**

Mail to: BARRY MARKOVSKY, CHAIR or E-mail to: barry@sc.edu  
Dept. of Sociology  
University of South Carolina  
Columbia, SC 29208

Blank lines for handwritten notes.

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Barry Markovsky, Chair  
Department of Sociology  
University of South Carolina  
Columbia, SC 29208

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