This Month’s Highlights

- The position of Chair in Social Work has been approved by the Vice Chancellor and will be advertised as the Margaret Whitlam Chair of Social Work.
- A big highlight has been the relatively smooth start to the semester thanks in part to the new administrative processes associated with tutorial registration.

News from SoSS Researchers

Sanja Milivojevic has been teaching at an EU-Australia Summer School in Criminology in Grenoble, France. The School has been run by Griffith, UWS, Monash, Keele and Maribor University. The Summer School was a three year program and this was the final year.

Sharyn McGee returned from LSL in June. She spent 5 weeks doing a Tibetan Buddhist philosophy and practice course which was led by His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin, who is head of the Sakya lineage of Tibetan Buddhism and second to the Dalai Lama in terms of Tibetan hierarchy. She also had the opportunity to attend a meeting of the emerging Australian Peace Studies Group/Association in April at the University of Sydney. This meeting was attended by a wide range of Australian academics (from various institutions) concerned with peace studies, research, teaching and more broadly, peace education. One topic of conversation was the International Peace Research Association conference to be hosted by CPACS, at the University of Sydney from July 6-10, 2010. The theme of the conference is Communicating Peace and one of the keynote speakers is Professor Johan Galtung, one of the founders of Peace Research.

Julie Wen undertook her PDP in Autumn 2009 by spending most of her time at Zhongshan University, Guangzhou, China. Her research focused on inbound tourism in China, change of social and economic status of female workers/managers, and the impacts of Daoism in contemporary China. She had a productive time, and her daughter Spring picked up mandarin during their stay. Hopefully this PDP has helped both Julie and Spring to boost their research career (oops - Spring is only four years old!). Julie survived heat and humidity in Southern China, and got out of Xinjiang, the area with long term tension between Han Chinese and ethnic groups in Northwest China, just one week before the violence broke out in early July. Julie wishes to express her gratitude to the School and colleagues, for approving her PDP and taking extra workload during her absence.

Garth Lean is off to the Royal Geographical Society’s Annual Conference in Manchester from 24 August - 5 September. He will present a paper titled ‘Landmines, Rebels, Voodoo Gods and a Website: An Exploration of Transformative Travel through Mobile Methods’. He heads home via Berlin and Singapore.
SoSS Seminar and Events

Chinese Capitalism and Chinese Religion

Jack Barbalet

1-3pm, 3 August 2009

Bankstown Campus Building 1.1.114 (video-link to Kingswood 0.2.02)

The Chinese economy is the most dynamic in the world today, a situation which arises against all expectations. Sociological expectations, fashioned by Max Weber’s theories of Western capitalism in The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism and more especially his argument in The Religion of China, that the Chinese family structure and religions are inhibiting factors in the development of capitalism in China, have been shown to be in need of revision. Weber’s account has proved to be unhelpful. The paper will outline the nature of Chinese capitalism, and propose an alternative to Weber’s theory of action and his characterisation of both capitalism and Chinese religions.

Stephen Tomsen will present ‘Navigating by Neon: Inclusion and Diversity in the City after Dark’ as part of the Australian Institute of Urban Studies Seminar Series on 12 August, 4-7pm, at the Sydney Town Hall.

Publications and Presentations


Kevin Dunn and Alanna Kamp presented Standing by Australian Muslims: Bearing Witness to Racism at the National Social Cohesion Conference. This was based on the chapter ‘The Hopeful and Exclusionary Politics of Islam in Australia: Looking for Alternative Geographies of “Western Islam”’ in R. Phillips (Ed.) Muslims in the West: Spaces of Hope (London, Zed Books). At the same conference, Jacqueline Nelson gave a paper, From Cultural Diversity to Cohesive Communities?

SoSS Travels

Stephanie-Alice Baker travels to Lisbon, Portugal from 20 August to 7 September to present at the European Sociological Association Conference.

Robyn Bushell is off to Bangkok and Phuket from 7-14 August for the ASEAN Healthy Tourism project.

Stephen Tomsen travels to Mito, Japan from 21 August - 2 September to present at the 13th International Symposium on Victimology.

Greg Young will go to Tromso, Norway, from 10-30 August for a conference and then attend meetings in Oslo, Copenhagen and Stockholm.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Adam Possamai, who has been appointed Acting Director of the Centre for the Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies, commencing in August. Under the terms of this appointment Adam will retain his connection with the School, but will not be in a position to continue as Associate Head of School (Research). A call for expressions of interest in this position will go out very soon.

Therese Kenna’s PhD thesis has been accepted and she will be graduating at the ceremony later in the year.

Welcomes and Farewells

Erin Kruger joins the School as a member of the Criminology and Policing team based on the Penrith campus (see profile on next page).

Welcome back to PhD candidate Adam Trau. Adam has been in Vanuatu for 12 months on an AusAID AYAD (Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development) posting. He was ‘Project Coordinator - Sustainable Cultural Tourism and World Heritage’ and helped two local villages manage the complex issues they face as custodians of Vanuatu’s first World Heritage Area, ‘Roi Mata’s Domain’.

Farewell to Margaret Mitchell, who has been transferred to the Centre for Citizenship and Public Policy to allow her to work on her recently-awarded Linkage grant.
Introducing the Criminology and Policing Group

Stephen Tomsen
In 2009 Stephen continued his ARC-funded joint research on security and governance in night-time economies. As part of a group of scholars gathered together by the peak Australian HIV advocacy group (NAPWA), he also began research on the new trend to further criminalisation of HIV transmission in same-sex and heterosexual scenarios. In June he presented papers on this area at the British Criminology Conference (Cardiff, UK), and in July at the Australian Critical Criminology Conference (Melbourne). Violence, Prejudice and Sexuality (Routledge 2009) was also first launched at the Melbourne gathering. In August, Stephen will present a paper to the World Victimology Symposium (Mito, Japan) titled ‘Violence, Hatred and Moral Shocks: Social Movements and Passionate Politics in Criminal Justice’. This addresses issues from his long-term research on hate crimes, violence, victim politics and the emotional dimensions of victimhood. This year he has also published articles in Sexuality and Culture and Event Management as well as a new research monograph on sexuality and public safety from the Australian Institute of Criminology.

Selda Dagistanli
Selda’s research examines the ethnocentrism/culture of the criminal justice system - in particular the courts - and the implications that this has for ethnically and culturally divergent offenders who come before the system. In the past, she has worked on this by tracing broader social reactions to crime, particularly through the framework of moral panic, and how moral panics are dealt with in the space of the courtroom. The case studies used up to this point, have been the gang rapes of Bilal Skaf and cohorts in Bankstown (2000), and the K brothers - also in Sydney (2002). Selda has also examined victims’ rights particularly in violent sexual assault and sought to differentiate between populist victims’ rights movements that arise from law and order politics/sensationalised criminal acts/public outrage and the genuine reforms that are necessary for victims of sexual assault. Arising from this, Selda also looks at the way the courts and criminal justice system deal with emotion in the contexts of: law and order politics, punishment, in providing “cultural defences” (how an emotional attachment to tradition can trump a desire to abide by the law when it comes to “honour” for example), in victims’ issues and social perceptions about their legitimacy as victims.

Michael Kennedy
Michael is a Senior Lecturer and Course Advisor in the Bachelor of Policing Degree at UWS. Between 1978 and 1996 Michael was a detective in the New South Wales Police. During his policing career Michael worked as a detective at the Bureau of Crime Intelligence, Organised Crime Squad, Major Crime Squad and the NSW State Crime Commission. Michael has also worked with the Brigade de répression du Proxénétisme and the Brigade du protection des Mineurs in Paris. As a detective Michael worked extensively with the Arabic speaking community and later specialised in Child Protection and Sexual Assault investigations. At the time of his resignation in 1996 Michael was Senior Investigator at the Lakemba Local Area Command. Michael’s research interests are ethics in Policing, Teaching and Learning, Moral Panic, Zero Tolerance Policing and Policing Education.

Erin Kruger
Erin started as an appointed lecturer in the School of Social Sciences, in Criminology and Policing July 2009, having just moved from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. With an interest in how specific regulatory practices create certain rationales and, thus, objects to govern, her general interests are in the areas of criminal law, evidence, legal theory, and forensics. Her most recent research studies and compares how forensic biologists reformulate meanings of corporeality as it relates to the ‘body’ of the accused, from that of a physical, individual presence in the courtroom to the molecular level of DNA analysis in the laboratory.

Sanja Milivojevic
Sanja holds a PhD from Monash University and LL.B and LL.M from Belgrade University’s Law School. Her doctoral research ‘Sex Trafficking in Serbia and Australia’ has a particular focus on how victims have been constructed in Serbian and Australian culture and the criminal justice system. Sanja has worked as a researcher on various projects with the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research in Belgrade. She was also one of the founders of the Victimology Society of Serbia, and was instrumental in establishing the first Victim Support Service in the Balkan region. In 2001-2002, Sanja was a Public Interest Law Fellow at Columbia University Law School in New York City. She has participated in several international and domestic conferences and has published in both Serbian and English. Sanja’s research interests include issues of trafficking in people, transnational crime, migrations and borders, gender and crime, transitional justice and victimology. Her latest book was co-authored with Marie Segrave and Sharon Pickering - Sex Trafficking: International Context and Response.

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Craig Osmond
Craig completed a PhD that conducted a genealogy of the emergence of contemporary regime of child protection practices. He has an ongoing theoretical interest in post-structural work, in particular the work of Foucault, and Deleuze & Guattari. Most recently Craig has researched and published in relation to queer sexualities and their re-territorialisations, including in Rhizomes as well as a recent submission to Social Semiotics. At the moment he is working on the extra-legal controls that are currently being exercised over young people in relation to anti-social behaviour in NSW where he has just submitted a paper to Surveillance and Society. This research is the start of a project over the next two years. Craig is in the process of publishing his doctoral work as a book. He has an interest in space, crime and culture.

Denise Weelands
Denise has taught at UWS for many years. She came from legal practice to teach law in the welfare, youth work and social work programs and until recently had a long involvement with the work of community legal centres first as solicitor then a long stint as Chair of South West Community Legal Centre located at Liverpool. She has also been involved in the development of the UWS criminology program from its beginning. She is currently writing a series of papers on new developments in community corrections in New South Wales the first of which was published earlier this year in Current Issues in Criminal Justice, ‘Residential Centres or Day Prisons? The case of COSP’. She has just presented a paper on a related topic at the Critical Criminology Conference in Melbourne.

Q & A with Therese Kenna

1. What talent do you wish you had? I have always wished I could dance, mostly because dancing is like everything I’m not - graceful, disciplined, I could go on.

2. Favourite pub/restaurant in the Kingswood area?
The Pioneer Tavern! The Friday night raffles with Penrith locals are an entertaining way to end the week (see photo showing Therese with her winnings).

3. What three words would you use to describe yourself? Well, I’d have to say I’m: (ridiculously) social; (hyper) critical; and (intensely) determined. But, if I was being less polite about it that probably translates to: talkative; opinionated and stubborn!

4. What do you like most about academia? The ability to learn and discover new things through research (to create knowledge) - there’s nothing like the buzz of new data - and to share those findings with others, especially students.

5. What’s your favourite city in the world, and why? Sydney tops my list! San Francisco did steal my heart with the mission district, murals, cable cars, ghetto’s, terrace houses and fisherman’s wharf, so it is a close second.

6. Internet sites you visit when procrastinating? Websites selling puppies and real estate.

7. The book that changed my life was… ‘Bridge across my sorrows’, the biography of Christina Noble.

8. If I wasn’t me, I’d like to be… Toni Collette (and married to Jack Black).

9. It’s not fashionable, but I love… Going to the movies by myself!

10. Any advice for current SoSS postgraduate students? Stay connected to your peers throughout your candidature and beyond - they will be your biggest support network. Attend events regularly, like conferences and workshops in your field - these are great opportunities for networking, meeting academics from other institutions, and of course, disseminating your research findings. Maintain a good relationship with your supervisors, hold regular meetings with them, and keep listening to them, even when you think they’re saying things you don’t want to hear! It all makes sense in the end. But, most of all, try to enjoy every minute of it!