

# Sociological VIUs

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## Department of Sociology Launches Newsletter



Welcome to the first Sociology Department newsletter! The newsletter is produced by the Department of Sociology at VIU. It is intended to keep the sociology community at VIU informed about departmental and student events. As you'll soon read, we also highlight sociology-related stories and events that extend beyond the borders of VIU. We hope to make the publication of the newsletter an annual or semi-annual event. We are open to suggestions for content and ideas for stories for future issues of the newsletter. Thanks to Gillian Baker for her help on this first issue.



“Every time I see an adult on a bicycle, I no longer despair for the human race” (Joey Moore, 2010).

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### NEWS HEADLINES: CHECK OUT ONLINE

- “Does inequality make us unhappy?” *Yes Magazine*—August 25, 2011
- “Australian passports to allow 3 gender options” *The Globe and Mail*—September 15, 2011
- “In NHL, subtle forms of racism linger” *The Globe and Mail*—September 23, 2011
- “Ottawa radio station offers couples a chance to win IVF treatments” *Global News*—September 28, 2011
- “Occupy Wall Street” <http://orghory.wordpress.com/2011/10/02/occupy-wall-street/>
- “Employers less likely to interview openly gay men for job openings: Study” *University of Chicago Press Journal*—October 3, 2011
- “Suicide prevention strategy pushed by federal Liberals” *CBC News*—October 4, 2011
- “Something brewing beneath transphobic ads in Ontario” *rabble.ca*—October 5, 2011
- “Nobel peace prize goes to women striving for peace in Liberia and Yemen” *NPR*—October 7, 2011
- “Occupy Vancouver” October 15th, 2011 <http://occupyvancouver.com/>

## Events: Past, Present and Future!

### Did You Know?

- On October 13th, 2011 NASA hosted a Sociology Meet and Greet—“Sociology?? What’s it all about?”
- In the spring of 2010, the Department of Sociology held a photo contest “Social Spaces”. Numerous photos were displayed as part of a gallery showing on March 26th, 2010. Some of these photos are reproduced, with permission, in this edition of the newsletter.

Photo: Katelyn McDougall, 2010.



- In November 2010, the Department of Sociology co-hosted CLIFF, the second annual Canadian Labour International Film Fest. Both short and feature films were screened including: *The Nanny Business*, *Home Safe Calgary*, *The Incredible Case of the Missing Recovery*, and *Workers’ Republic*.



- In November 2010 the Department of Sociology also held an informal potluck grad school information session that was attended by students from the Social Sciences, alumni and Sociology faculty members.

### Mark Your Calendars!



A number of events are happening on campus, come and see what is going on!

- NASA is holding a Grad School Information Night on Wednesday November 9th, 2011. Contact NASA or check Facebook for more details.
- The Department of Sociology is holding its second annual photo contest in the spring of 2012. Stay tuned for more information.

## Current Student Projects: A Sociological Snapshot @ VIU

**Student:** Gillian Baker, VIU Class of 2012

**Major:** Sociology **Minor:** Women's Studies

**SOCI 490 Project Title:** "Women's Studies and Experiential Learning: A Match Made in Heaven?"

**Project Overview:** This project examines feminist pedagogy and experiential learning as a mechanism for (re)engaging students of women's studies in scholarship, community and action (Love and Helmbrecht, 2007), as activists,

citizens and critical thinkers (Kezar and Kinzie, 2006), thereby highlighting the link between learning and action.  
- Gillian Baker



## Alumni Update: Student Profile — Shakira Lynch



Recently, I completed my Masters Degree in Popular Culture at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario, after graduating with my BA from VIU with a major in Anthropology and minor in Sociology. Brock's MA in Popular Culture can be described as a twelve-month interdisciplinary cultural studies program focusing on the communicative practices and experiences of everyday life.

In addition to my own core courses, I was also required to complete a six-week intensive summer class along with a Major Research Paper (MRP) of my own original research over the

course of the summer with the help of my supervisor and second reader. My MRP was titled *OUH81t??: A Discourse Analysis of Txt Msging in Popular Culture*, and undertook a discourse analysis of the public opinion within popular culture with relation to the recent technological phenomenon of text messaging and its social effects across media platforms. Furthermore, I was offered a Teaching Assistantship for a first year Film course and was responsible for facilitating two seminars totaling forty students, evaluating participation, and grading assignments and exams.

Each and every one of my professors including my supervisory committee were great, and I couldn't have asked for a better experience during my time at Brock and while living in the Niagara Region! I ultimately chose to apply to programs in Ontario due to the support of extended family, and was eager to try something different by attending a University a little farther from home this time.

Presently, I have returned to Nanaimo to search for work in either the media, or communications sector, and expect to receive

my Masters degree in the mail towards the end of October. My undergraduate foundations in Anthropology and Sociology have helped to pave the way for a variety of rewarding opportunities and contacts; both academically, and career wise, by encouraging me to be not only culturally open, but socially aware. I am eager to begin the job hunt, and am excited to see where my life will take me from here on out!

- Shakira Lynch



Congratulations Shakira Lynch — soon to be Shakira Lynch, M.A.!

## Faculty Forum: News and Views

Each of the professors in the Sociology Department has a strong background in sociology, specific areas of teaching and research interests, as well as familiarity and experience working across disciplines. Each is unique in their approach, but all are in agreement that graduates of this department will be able to bring their understanding of society and social interaction into their communities to contribute to strong self-reliant neighbourhoods, and towards a better quality of life for themselves and others. Our Faculty Members' current sociological interests include:

**Gillian Anderson:** Gender and family relations; mothering and motherwork; "Yummy Mummies" and representations of modern

motherhood; social inequality, social policy and women's organizing for change.

**Linda Derksen:** The public understanding of science; sociology of science and scientific knowledge, especially the dynamics of scientific controversies; sociology of technology; contemporary social theory; history of DNA profiling; and measurement and standardization.

**Richard Fredericks:** Community self-reliance and local food security; social change and revolutionary thinking; health and illness, emphasizing alternative practices; anomalous phenomena and speculative literature.

**Jerry Hinbest:** Program evaluation, particularly program evaluation in non-profit organizations and the politics of the non-profit sector; community based research and

collaboration with a substantive focus on youth suicide, school based suicide prevention strategies and FAS.

**Sylvie Lafrenière:** Social research methods and statistics; language, official language issues and minority groups; communication; literacy

**Joey Moore:** Transportation and social, ecological justice, urban social movements especially those for public space, the (urban) future of environmental activism and the place of labour/workers' movements in all of this.

**Laura Suski:** Global ethics; humanitarianism; new theories of class, taste and consumption; the social and cultural construction of childhood; sociology of emotions, "hope" as a political emotion.



## NASA News: Newly Assembled Sociological Association

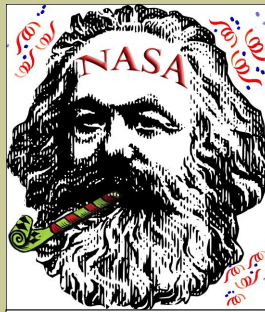
The Newly Assembled Sociology Association (NASA) is an organization of students at Vancouver Island University who are linked through sociology. We are not exclusively sociology students, and we encourage all student and community members to get involved and come to our events.

Our main goal is to expose undergraduate students to the practical application of sociology, while providing a platform for new academic experiences. The NASA provides an outlet for students to get involved with philanthropy; last year we organized two beer and burger nights to help raise money for Little Fern Daycare and N.A.L.T (Nanaimo Area Land Trust). Some of our more student oriented events include movie nights, grad school information night, and free peer tutoring.

The NASA plans on starting this year off with a really fun, positive Sociology Mixer, for

students to interact with their professors and peers--greet, eat, and talk sociology. We also plan to get our free peer tutoring up and running again this year, with a far more approachable structure.

Our main fundraising goal for the 2011-2012 year is geared toward establishing an Award for outstanding VIU Sociology students.



*NASA: The VIU Student Club Fair was held September 21st, 2011, from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm in the upper cafeteria, Nanaimo campus.*

Please feel free to join our NASA Facebook group; you can get there by searching "Newly Assembled Sociology Association" in the facebook search bar. Also, feel free to e-mail us at [viusociology@gmail.com](mailto:viusociology@gmail.com) if you have any other questions!

### An Award for Sociology!

VIU's Newly Assembled Sociology Association (NASA) is in the process of establishing the "NASA Award" in recognition of outstanding achievement in Sociology. The Sociology club is interested in leaving a legacy for up and coming VIU students of Sociology. We will be hosting a variety of events to raise funds for this exciting opportunity. For more information, to donate, or to get involved, please contact [viusociology@gmail.com](mailto:viusociology@gmail.com) or [gillibaker@gmail.com](mailto:gillibaker@gmail.com).

## A Shout Out to Our VIU Sociology Students!



The 2010-2011 Academic year was a challenging one for the Sociology Department. We faced the potential of serious budget cuts that were followed soon after by a lengthy faculty strike. We extend our gratitude to all students who engaged themselves in debates around the

strike, regardless of the position that they took. We extend our particular gratitude to the members of NASA who were at the center of many activities leading up to and during the strike, and who provided a much-needed platform for sociology students to voice their concerns.

## Sociology Conferences 2012 — Sociologists Meet

A number of sociological associations will be hosting annual meetings and conferences in 2012. Please check out some of the dates, locations and conference themes noted below. And for more information, follow up on-line.

- Eighth International Conference on Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability. Robson Square, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada 10-12 January 2012  
<http://www.SustainabilityConference.com>
- Pacific Sociological Association (PSA) 2012 Annual Meeting The 2012 Annual Meeting will be held in San Diego, CA., March 22-25 at the Sheraton Hotel, Harbor Island-Source:<http://www.pacificsoc.org/2006/08/2012-annual-meeting.html>
- National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) 2012, hosted by Weber

State University in Ogden, Utah, March 29-31, 2012. The theme for faculty sessions is "Undergraduate Research in Times of Financial Constraints". Source: [weber.edu/ncur2012](http://weber.edu/ncur2012)

- Athens Institute for Education and Research-ATINER ([www.atiner.gr](http://www.atiner.gr)). 6th Annual International Conference on Sociology, 7-10 May 2012, Athens, Greece. Source: [www.atiner.gr/sociology.htm](http://www.atiner.gr/sociology.htm)
- Canadian Sociological Association (CSA) Annual Meeting In conjunction with the Canadian Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences, our next annual conference will be held at University of Wilfrid Laurier and the University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Saturday, May 26 to Saturday, June 02, 2012. Source: <http://www.csa-scs.ca/cnf-home>



Photo Source: <http://www.csa-scs.ca/cnf-home>

- The 29th Annual Qualitative Analysis Conference: Cultures of Narrative/ Narratives of Culture will be held at Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's Campus, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, June 20-22, 2012 Source: <http://www.qualitatives.ca/>
- American Sociological Association (ASA) "Emancipatory Projects, Institutional Designs, Possible Futures" August 17-20, 2012 Denver, Colorado, Colorado Convention Center and Hyatt Regency. Source: <http://www.asanet.org/AM2012/index.cfm>

## What Did You Read This Summer?

- **The Paradox of Choice: Why More is Less** by Barry Schwartz
- **The Spirit Level** by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett
- **The Help** by Kathryn Stockett
- **Room** by Emma Donoghue
- **The Rebel Sell** by Andrew Potter
- **The Professor** by Charlotte Bronte
- **Bossypants** by Tina Fey
- **Bright-sided: How Positive Thinking is Undermining America** by Barbara Ehrenreich
- **The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo Trilogy** by Stieg Larsson
- **The Politics of Home** by Jan Willem Duyvendak
- **The Right to the City** by Don Mitchell
- **Fighting Traffic: The Dawn of the Motor Age in the American City** by Peter D. Norton
- **A Perfect Night to Go to China** by David Gilmour
- **The Source Field Investigations: The Hidden Science and Lost Civilizations behind the 2012 Prophecies** by David Wilcock
- **Homesteading in the 21st Century: How one Family Created a More Sustainable, Self-Sufficient, and Satisfying Life** by George Nash
- **Energy Power Shift: Benefiting from Today's New Technologies** by Barry Hanson
- **Townie**, by Andre Dubus III
- **One Hundred Names for Love** by Diane Ackerman
- **The Ten Most Beautiful Experiments** by George Johnson
- **Mindsight** by Dan Siegel
- **Voyages of Hope: The Saga of the Bride-Ships** by Peter Johnson

## "Social Spaces" Photo Contest (2010-2011)



### The Community Bookshelf

This is the "community bookshelf" it started when someone in a house downtown put out a couple books with a sign saying anyone could take one to read and feel free to contribute. It evolved and now as you can see is filled with books and someone even applied a plastic cover so when it rains the books are protected as the first incarnation had its books destroyed. This unites people and allows everyone in the area to gain a sense of community.

*Chris Sorensen*

## Spring 2012 Sociology Course Offerings

In the Spring 2012 term, the Department of Sociology is offering the following courses:

- SOCI 111 Introduction to Sociology
- SOCI 112 Introduction to Sociology: Canadian Society in the Contemporary World
- SOCI 209 Social Inequality
- SOCI 240 Social Control and Resistance
- SOCI 304 Identities in Society
- SOCI 320 Families in Today's World
- SOCI 350 Sociological Research Methods I
- SOCI 372 Urban Sociology



For more information and course descriptions, please check out our webpage or the VIU course calendar. If you have questions about courses or pre-requisites, please contact the Department Chair, Dr. Jerry Hinbest (Jerry.Hinbest@viu.ca) or one of the BA Advisors, Robert Riggan (Robert.Riggan@viu.ca) or Lynda Patterson (Lynda.Patterson@viu.ca).

**Find us online:**

**<http://www.viu.ca/sociology/index.asp>**

## Newsletter Comments? Concerns? Questions? Suggestions?

Please contact: Laura Suski (Laura.Suski@viu.ca) or Gillian Anderson (Gillian.Anderson@viu.ca) in the Department of Sociology, Vancouver Island University (VIU), Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5S5