UNLV
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES REPORT
2008-PRESENT
SUMMARY
In the fall of 2009, the Department of Sociology was ranked toward the bottom of mid-level performing departments in the College of Liberal Arts Program Evaluation Report. These rankings were based on average merit pay increases for work performed during the 2004-2007 academic years, graduate degrees awarded, and the number of departmental majors. Members of the Sociology faculty strongly believe that these particular metrics neither reflect the true current level of productivity nor the extent to which the Sociology faculty and graduate students are engaging in activities that fulfill the University’s stated missions.

In the summary below, we present data from 2008 through the present that demonstrate how the activities of departmental faculty and graduate students contribute to the following University missions:

- Discovery through research, scholarship, and creative activity
- High expectations for student learning and success
- Social, environmental, and economic sustainability
- Strong, reciprocal, and interdependent relationships between UNLV and the region around us

In the last two years, Sociology faculty have published five books (with two more currently under contract), 53 peer-reviewed journal articles and chapters, and 11 non-refereed articles and research reports. Several of these pieces were co-authored with former and current graduate students. Faculty also presented 63 papers at professional conferences, 27 of which (45%) were invited presentations. When we take into account the fact that the department had only 13 (non-administration) faculty members during this period, these numbers translate into 5.3 publications and 4.8 conferences presentations per faculty member.

Sociology faculty have also secured $835,065 in research funding since 2008, and Robert Futrell serves as a faculty research advisor and investigator for a $15,000,000 National Science Foundation grant. In addition, five faculty members have been honored with research awards over the past two years, including two Presidential Research Awards.

A breakdown of faculty books, articles, presentations, research grants, and awards for 2008-present is presented below. Graduate student co-authors are identified with asterisks.

UNLV MISSION STATEMENT GOAL:
“Discovery through research, scholarship, and creative activity”

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BOOKS


**REFEREED RESEARCH ARTICLES and CHAPTERS**


Breints, Barbara G. and Kathryn Hausbeck. *Forthcoming*. “Sex Work Now: What the Blurring Boundaries around the Sex Industry Mean for Sex Work, Research and Activism.” Chapter in *Sex Work*


Prepared February 23, 2010


Dassopoulos, Andrea* and **Shannon M. Monnat.** *Forthcoming.* “Do Perceptions of Social Cohesion, Social Support, and Social Control Mediate the Effects of Local Community Participation on Neighborhood Satisfaction?” *Environment and Behavior.*


NON-REFEREED ARTICLES and RESEARCH REPORTS


PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS


Bernhard, Bo J. 2009. “Casino Operations Management: Research, Myths, and Realities.” Moderated, organized, and introduced panel at 13th International Conference on Gambling and Risk Taking, Lake Tahoe, NV.


Sanders, Teela and Barb Brents. 2009. “Mainstreaming the sex industry: from economic inclusion to social ambivalence,” Socio-legal Studies Association DeMonfort University, Leicester, UK.


*Indicates SOC Dept. Graduate Student co-author
**Indicates former SOC Dept. Graduate Student co-author
^Indicates SOC Dept. Undergraduate Student co-author

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Batson, Christie J.

2008  “Immigrant Occupational and Economic Incorporation in the Hotel and Resort Industry of Las Vegas.” Women’s Research Institute of Nevada, University of Nevada Las Vegas.

Bernhard, Bo J.
2009  “Plenary Presentation: Las Vegas as the Australia of the United States.” Keynote Address at the National Association for Gambling Studies (Australian international conference), Canberra, Australia.

“Responsible Gaming and Industry.” Presented at University of Nevada, Reno Annual Casino Executive Retreat, Lake Tahoe, NV.

“Global Responses to Problem Gambling.” Keynote address at Asian Gaming Summit, Taipei, Taiwan.

“Gamblers Anonymous and the Role of 12 Step Programs in Recovery.” Keynote address at Annual Gamblers Anonymous Conference, Las Vegas, NV.

“Yes We Can? Internet Gambling in a Post-Obama America.” Keynote address presented at the Alberta Annual Conference on Gambling, Banff, Alberta, Canada.

“Gaming Machines and Public Policy.” Keynote address at the Gaming Labs International Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV.


“Opening Keynote: Problem Gambling in Society.” Ohio State Lottery Commission Annual Conference, Columbus, OH.

“Responsible Gaming Technologies.”  Academic panel sponsored by the Ontario Responsible Gaming Council, Toronto, Canada.

“Online Gaming and the Gaming Industry.”  Panel presentation at National Center for Responsible Gaming (Harvard Medical School) Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV.

“A Global Responsible Gaming Scan.”  Presentation at University of NV, Reno’s Executive Development Annual Program, Lake Tahoe, NV.

“Closing Keynote: Hughie, Stigma, and Problem Gambling” and “What We Don’t Know about Gambling”  Closing address and Special Session at National Council on Problem Gambling Annual Meetings, Long Beach, CA.


“The Vices of Yesterday” and “Hughie: Theatric Portrayals of the Gambler on Broadway”  Invited luncheon keynote and opening address at Oklahoma First Annual Conference on Problem Gambling, Norman, OK.

“Internet Gambling in Nevada: Final Report.”  First public convening of both NV Gaming Control Board and NV Gaming Commission since 2000; meeting held to present, review, and apply findings from the state’s first study of internet gambling behaviors (see grants section). Grant Sawyer Government Building, Las Vegas, NV.

Borer, Michael Ian

Breants, Barbara G. and Crystal Jackson*

Monnat, Shannon M
2010  “The Role of Race and Residence on Cancer Screenings among Women.”  Presented at the Women’s Research Institute of Nevada Gender Research Series.


Shalin, Dmitri
2009  Organizer and co-moderator (with Judge Lloyd George), Public Forum with Kazakhstan Judges, “The Relationship between the Judiciary and Executive Branches of Government in Kazakhstan,” cosponsored with the William S. Boyd School of Law.

Organizer and co-moderator (with Judge Lloyd George), Public Forum with Ukrainian Judges, “Legal Reform in Ukraine: Achievements and Setbacks,” cosponsored with the William S. Boyd School of Law.

2008  Guest Lecturer, “Presentation of Self in Russian Culture: The Case of Vladimir Putin.” George Kennan Institute, Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington DC.


RESEARCH FUNDING
Bernhard, Bo J.


Futrell, Robert
EPSCoR-Nevada Infrastructure for Climate Change Science. Role: Education, and Outreach, Policy, Decision Making, and Outreach component faculty research advisor and investigator. National Science Foundation. Ongoing. $15,000,000

Futrell, Robert, Barbara Brents, and Christie Batson.
‘Your City, Your Way’ Citizen Engagement Initiative. City of Las Vegas. 2009. $10,000.

Las Vegas Metropolitan Social Survey. Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition. 2009. $20,000.
RESEARCH AWARDS and HONORS

Batson, Christie D. 2008. UNLV, College of Liberal Arts. Summer Research Stipend. $6,500.

Bernard, Bo J. 2008. Sam and Mary Boyd Distinguished Professor of Research Award.


Spivak, Andrew. 2009. University Faculty Travel Award. Office of the Vice President & Provost. $972.00.


The Department of Sociology’s commitment to student learning and success is evidenced by multiple examples of graduate student research success that has resulted from faculty mentorship, the participation of numerous graduate students in faculty research, the development of new internship opportunities for undergraduate students, and the initiation of a local chapter of Alpha Kappa Delta, the national Sociological Honor Society.

RECENT GRADUATE STUDENT SUCCESSES:

Our graduate students have been extremely productive and successful, as evidenced by their multiple conference presentations, awards, and scholarships since 2008. In addition to the graduate student/faculty co-authored books, articles, and conferences papers cited above, a number of Sociology graduate students presented their own single-authored research papers at professional conferences and are currently participating in faculty sponsored research. Since 2008, nine graduate students from the Department of Sociology have presented a total of 20 research papers at professional academic conferences. This does not even include the multiple papers presented by our graduate students at the annual GPSA research conference at UNLV. In addition, seven of our graduate students have won a total of 20 awards and scholarships, including some very competitive and prestigious national awards. This level of graduate student professional research activity and success rivals and even surpasses that of higher ranked Sociology PhD programs across the country. Information about specific graduate student accomplishments is presented below:

Suzanne Becker presented two single-authored research papers at the American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting in 2009. The ASA is the flagship organization of our discipline. She also presented papers at the International Association for Feminist Economics in 2009 and the International Interdisciplinary Congress of Women for the International Sociological Association in Madrid, Spain in 2008. A rare event among graduate students, Becker was invited to present her research at Newcastle University in the United Kingdom in 2009 and at the Nevada Council for History Conference in Las
Vegas in 2008. Becker has also been the recipient of multiple awards over the past two years, including the Outstanding Public History Project Award for her Nevada Test Site Oral History Project in 2010, the GPSA Research Forum Outstanding Presentation 2nd place award in 2009, and three GPSA conference presentation travel grants in 2008 and 2009.

Andrea Dassopoulous co-authored a peer-reviewed research article with faculty member Shannon Monnat in 2009 that is forthcoming in the journal Environment and Behavior. She was also the 2008 recipient of the Maria Barbara Woodrich Scholarship.

Allison Heard presented her research at the Annual Meetings of Southwestern Sociological Association in 2008 and the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction in 2009. In 2008, she was awarded a competitive GPSA travel grant, and USA Funds Scholarships in both 2008 and 2009.

Crystal Jackson coauthored a book, The State of Sex: Tourism, Sex and Sin in the New American Heartland with faculty members Barbara Brents and Kathryn Hausbeck in 2010. In addition, she presented several single-authored research papers and a co-authored paper with fellow graduate student, Suzanne Becker at five professional academic conferences over the past two years. For her co-authored paper with Brents and Hausbeck on Nevada’s sex work industry, Jackson received the second place Research Award at the Annual Graduate and Professional Student Association Conference in 2008. She also received numerous professional conference travels grants in 2008 and 2009 and the Beth B. Hess Memorial Scholarship (an extremely competitive award for women graduate students sponsored by the American Sociological Association, Sociologists for Women in Society, and the Society for the Study of Social Problems) in 2008. Jackson was also awarded the $5000 Regents Graduate Scholar Award in 2009, a top honor for graduate students in Nevada’s System of Higher Education. Each year, only one graduate student at UNLV and UNR receive this award! Jackson was also elected the National Student Representative and chaired the Student Concerns Committee for Sociologists for Women in Society in 2009. She also actively participates on WRIN’s New Leadership Advisory Council.

Kerie Francis presented her research at the Annual Meetings of the Pacific Sociological Association in 2009 and was awarded a competitive GPSA travel grant to attend that conference.

Jennifer J. Reed presented research papers at the Annual Meetings for the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction in 2009 and the Southwestern Social Science Association in 2008. She also served as a conference moderator for a Latino Studies section at the Southwestern Social Science Association. In a rare event for first-year graduate students, Reed peer-reviewed a journal article in 2008 for one of the top journals in our field, Social Science Research.

Dan Sahl co-authored a peer-reviewed research article with faculty member Jennifer Keene (forthcoming in the journal Sex Roles) and completed a final research report with fellow graduate student Crystal Jackson and faculty member Barbara Brents on their research findings from the Adult Entertainment Expo in 2009.

Mark Salvaggio has been the recipient of several awards and scholarships over the past two years, including the Urban Sustainability Initiative Graduate Assistantship, the Marie Barbara Woodrich Scholarship, GPSA Conference Travel Awards, and an external USA Funds Scholarship. He spent the summer of 2009 conducting research in Central America, and his research was featured in the media, including in the Las Vegas Review Journal: [http://www.lvrj.com/news/53343382.html](http://www.lvrj.com/news/53343382.html). Salvaggio also presented his research at the 2009 Annual Meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association.

Sarah St. John is working closely with faculty member Bo Bernhard on assessing findings from the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services grant that fund evaluation research on patients in
state-sponsored gambling addiction treatment programs. In the past year, she has co-authored three final research reports with Bernhard, and has presented her own research at the Annual Meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association in San Diego, CA.

Brooke Wagner had a single-authored article published in the journal Sexualities in 2009. The article was reprinted in the German Journal of Sex Research. Wagner also completed a book review in 2010 and presented a research paper at the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction.

Jenna Zulauf is a co-PI with faculty member Robert Futrell on the Nevada State Higher Education Student Climate Change Project, a program funded as part of a $15,000,000 National Science Foundation climate change policy and outreach program. Zulauf has also recently presented papers about this project at an annual Climate Change conference.

In addition, a recent graduate from the Sociology PhD program has experienced a great deal of professional success. Pete Simi received his M.A. (1999) and PhD (2003) in Sociology at UNLV. He is presently an Associate Professor in the University of Nebraska-Omaha School of Criminology and Criminal Justice. During the past several years he has published a series of articles with Robert Futrell that, in part, examine the White Power Movement’s organizational dynamics, criminal activity, and music scene. In 2006, he was awarded a grant from the Department of Justice to study recruitment strategies among white supremacist terror groups. His co-authored book with Robert Futrell American Swastika (2010) explains how white supremacists sustain their movement in a highly antagonistic environment. He is currently providing expert witness consultation on several murder cases involving neo-Nazi groups.

NEW UNDERGRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES
Sociology faculty have undertaken efforts to increase undergraduate student involvement in the discipline of sociology and the department community, and to provide new learning opportunities for them. Specific examples since 2008 include the following:

- Undergraduate student Camila Alvarez, under her advisor Robert Futrell, was awarded a $4000 scholarship from the National Science Foundation EPSCoR Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program to study attitudes and behaviors toward sustainability and eco-friendly technologies.
- Over the past two years faculty member Andrew Spivak has coordinated with the Director of the Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC) and the NDOC Education Coordinator in the development of a prison internship program for students in the Department of Sociology and developed undergraduate student internships with the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth, Boyd Gaming Corporation [Gold Coast Security], the Rape Crises Center of Southern Nevada, and Clark County Social Services.
- Andrew Spivak also coordinated with the UNLV Provost’s office and the Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC) to arrange student tours of the Southern Desert Correctional Center for both criminology and penology classes.
- In 2009 faculty member Jennifer Keene established a local chapter of Alpha Kappa Delta, the academic honor society for sociologists, providing UNLV undergraduate sociology students with the opportunity to be inducted into the honor society and become more involved with the discipline of sociology.
Sociology faculty provide a great deal of public outreach to the Las Vegas community and the state of Nevada at large. Multiple faculty members have provided their research expertise to the local media, appeared on radio and television programs, served as research consultants to local agencies and organizations, and performed other forms of “public sociology”. Since 2008, Sociology faculty have been featured in 31 newspaper articles, have conducted eight radio interviews, and appeared on television news programs four times. Specific examples include the following:

**Bernhard, Bo J.**


Interviewed for a forthcoming feature story in *Vanity Fair* about the economic downturn in Las Vegas.

**Borer, Michael Ian**


Interviewed on Penn & Teller’s “Bullshit – The Good Ol’ Days” on Showtime, August 10th, 2008

Interviewed about *Faithful to Fenway* for MLB.com, 1550 WNTN, WMUL 95.1, and WAQY Rock102.

**Brents, Barbara G.**


Quoted in *RH Reality Check* – “Resisting the Sex Panic: Sex Workers Struggle for Evidence-Based Regulation in Nevada.” Tuesday, February 10, 2009.  


2008  Brothel research was cited in testimony regarding a constitutional challenge to Canada’s laws on brothels, Bedford, Lebovitch, Scott v. HMQ, Ontario Superior Court of Justice 07-CV-39807PD1, Nov 2008.  (Research conducted with Kathryn Hausbeck and Crystal Jackson*)


Quoted in *Vox Magazine* – “Late night goes naughty: Home-shopping channels never felt so good” Thursday, May 22, 2008  
http://www.voxmagazine.com/stories/2008/05/22/late-night-goes-naughty/.


**Dickens, David**

2009  Quoted on KNPR's State of Nevada local radio program on the lack of community in Las Vegas

2008  Interviewed for *Las Vegas Sun* article on the transient nature of the local population.
Futrell, Robert

Gottschalk, Simon

Focus Group Co-Leader for The Transgenerational Transmission of Trauma. Santa Barbara Jewish Federation. (and 2008)

Keene, Jennifer Reid
2009 Founding Board Member of Adam's Place, the Las Vegas Center for Children and Grief.

2008 Advisor on the Status of Women in Nevada Project for the Women’s Research Institute of Nevada.

Monnat, Shannon M.


Provided statistical consulting services to Dr. Colleen Morris, University of Reno Medical College, on fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

Provided methodological and grant development consulting services to the LiliClaire Foundation, Las Vegas, NV for the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Community Intervention Project.

Shalin, Dmitri
2010 Serves as the Director for the UNLV Center for Democratic Culture, responsible for organizing public forums in the Justice & Democracy series, offering workshops on emotional intelligence, refereeing in civic education programs in Clark County, managing online libraries, maintaining CDC web site, and overseeing web publishing.
Editor for *The Social Health of Nevada Report: Leading Indicators and Quality of Life in the Silver State*.

**Spivak, Andrew**  
2010 Provided expert subject matter consultation for *Citizens for Change-Oklahoma* regarding sex offender recidivism.


Provided expert subject matter and methodological consultation for *The Oklahoma Department of Corrections, Evaluation and Analysis Unit* for a National Institute of Justice Grant Proposal regarding prisoner re-entry programs.

The Department of Sociology also aims to fulfill the University’s mission of creating strong, reciprocal, and interdependent relationships between UNLV and the region around us through various recent and ongoing research projects, including the Las Vegas Metropolitan Area Social Survey, the Social Health of Nevada Report, the Destigmatizing and Understanding Street Kids collaborative service learning project, the Nevada Problem Gambling research and intervention projects, the “My Three Faces” Latino youth and Jewish Holocaust Survivor project, and research on the local sex work industry and urban sustainability. These major local research efforts are detailed in the next section.

**UNLV MISSION STATEMENT GOAL: “Social, environmental, and economic sustainability research”**

The UNLV strategic plan calls on members of our university to “engage in research and service that focuses on enhancing the quality of life of the residents of the state.” The Sociology Department has embraced this call along with UNLV’s mission of social, environmental, and economic sustainability research through the following recent and current research projects:

**The Social Health of Nevada** is an ongoing project that documents and tracks leading indicators of health and well-being in Nevada and compares those to other states. Dmitri Shalin served as the editor of and research contributor to *The Social Health of Nevada Report: Leading Indicators and Quality of Life in the Silver State* that included health reports from multiple university faculty members, including current Sociology faculty members Bo Bernhard, Simon Gottschalk, Robert Futrell, David Dickens, Jennifer Keene, Kathryn Hausbeck, and Barbara Brenets. In his keynote address to a Center for Disease Control forum, Governor Kenny Guinn stressed that “The Social Health of Nevada report, the first of its kind in our state,…will allow those in elected offices to better prioritize and budget in areas such as health and human services, education and the environment [and] bring a new quality of life to less fortunate than we are.”

**The Las Vegas Metropolitan Area Social Survey (LVMASS)** project brings together faculty research team members Robert Futrell (PI), Barbara Brenets, and Christie Batson, graduate student research team members Mark Salvaggio, Andrea Dassopoulos, Christina Nicholas, and Candace Griffiths, and undergraduate research team members John Kuramoto and Gretchen Hill. Through this ongoing project, the research team developed and administered a metropolitan area wide survey to identify the socio-spatial distribution of attitudes and attributes relevant to urban sustainability in the Las Vegas, and conducted targeted focus groups to assess residents’ opinions of quality of life and city service issues in the context of budget deficits and reductions. The LVMASS research team is currently analyzing project data for the purposes of developing research reports and manuscripts for publication.
Various Nevada Sex Industry projects, led by faculty members Barbara Brents and Kathryn Hausbeck encourage the production and dissemination of research findings on the intersections of sexuality, culture and economics in Nevada. The projects regularly bring together graduate students and faculty at UNLV whose research interests intersect with economics, gender, globalization, and sexuality, including scholars in Women's Studies, History, the Boyd School of Law, and Hotel Administration. Project participants are currently collaborating on research that investigates how sexual regulation is integrated into Nevada state politics.

The Nevada Problem Gambling Project, led by faculty member Bo Bernhard tracks the long-term health of problem gamblers who have received treatment in Nevada, Arizona, and Nebraska. In collaboration with Harvard faculty members and UNLV sociology graduate and undergraduate students, Bernhard’s project examines the characteristics of problem gamblers and the effectiveness of treatment interventions. The findings from this project have wide-reaching physical and mental health, social, and economic implications for the city of Las Vegas, the state of Nevada, and the country at large.

My Three Faces is a new community-action research program led by Simon Gottschalk that pairs elderly Holocaust survivors with at-risk Latino youth in Las Vegas. Modeled after a successful project that began in Santa Barbara, this program will link together these two vulnerable populations in order to study how sharing personal stories of adversity, resilience, and success change Holocaust survivors’ and Latino adolescents’ attitudes toward each other and improve various social outcomes, including physical and mental health, educational achievement, community bridges, and deviance-reduction. The research team comprised of Simon Gottschalk, Jennifer Keene, Michael Borer, Shannon Monnat, and Assistant Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, Jose Melendrez, will collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data over several years to conduct comparative and longitudinal analysis and disseminate research findings to the Las Vegas Latino and Jewish communities. This project also provides graduate students with the opportunity to learn social research skills, conduct interviews and focus groups, and coordinate bi-annual events where participants and community members are brought together to discuss the effects of the program and to organize mentorship mechanisms between young participants and their peers in the Latino community.

The Destigmatizing and Understanding Street Kids (DUSK) project is a collaborative service learning program between the Department of Sociology and the Harrah Hotel College designed to address the specific needs of homeless and at-risk Las Vegas youth. Designed by faculty member Kathryn Hausbeck, this project links local social service providers so they can devise ways to best serve the Las Vegas community. DUSK also provides graduate students with the opportunity to learn social research skills, conduct interviews, and coordinate an annual event where social service groups are brought together to provide meals, clothing, health screenings, and other essential services to homeless and at-risk youth.

In addition to the above mentioned research projects, David Dickens is involved in an ongoing comparative study of Las Vegas and Dubai as “economies of fascination.” Jennifer Keene is conducting interdisciplinary research with faculty in the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs that investigates the needs of Jewish senior citizens in Las Vegas, and Shannon Monnat is examining explanations for low rates of cancer screenings among residents of Nevada compared to other states.

At the foundation of each of these research projects is the desire to examine and understand the specific social, economic, and health issues that are integral to the well-being and sustainability of our Las Vegas community and the state of Nevada. The sustainability research conducted by departmental faculty, the integration of graduate and undergraduate students through active research participation and service learning, and the collaborative relationships developed with individuals and entities from the surrounding community are all core to the research mission of the Department of Sociology.
SUMMARY
The research activities outlined in this report reflect the Sociology Department’s ongoing commitment to UNLV’s core missions and success in accomplishing them. Since 2008, faculty and graduate students have produced 70 academic publications, brought in over $800,000 in research funding, been presented with numerous research awards, and engaged in multiple local community research projects. Even prior to the past two years, faculty members have developed strong collaborative relationships with individuals and institutions within the community through outreach and public sociology. These sorts of achievements are difficult to quantify with hard metrics, but are nonetheless important to UNLV’s mission. We know that the recent hiring of four junior faculty (from 2007-2008), the arrival of Brookings Scholar Robert Lang, our association with the Lincy Institute, and our ongoing focus on social, economic, and environmental sustainability issues will even further increase our research activities and visibility both in the local community and in the national academic community at large.