



March – May 2009 News, School of Social Sciences

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Professor John Warhurst** who is one of five Canberrans to be appointed an Officer in the Order of Australia (AO).

He has been recognised for his service to higher education as an academic, author and political commentator.

Congratulations to **Kim Huynh and Jessica Haag** on their recent engagement.

Congratulations to **Gwen Gray** who has been made a life member of the Sexual Health and Family Planning Association of the ACT for contributions to sexual and reproductive health in the Canberra community.

Congratulations to **Marian Sawer** who has been awarded a Vice-Chancellor's Travel Grant to bring Professor Yvonne Galligan to the School in February-March 2010. Professor Galligan is Director of the Centre for the

Advancement of Women in Politics at Queen's University, Belfast and Editor of the International Political Science Review.

Congratulations to **Kevin White** whose volume of essays from the conference *Negotiating the Sacred: Medicine Religion and the Body* hosted by Elizabeth Coleman (Monash) and Kevin White has been accepted for publication by Brill in its International Studies in Religion and Society Series. It will be out at the end of the year. This is the third volume in this series, with the fourth, *Negotiating the Sacred: Tolerance, Education and the Curriculum* currently under preparation.

Sad Farewell



George Zubrzycki, Founding Chair of Sociology 1970-1986:

Recollections of an Era

Around 9am Wednesday, 20 May 2009, George Zubrzycki passed away. He was 89. As the Founding Professor of Sociology in the Faculty of Arts, George represented much of the early history of that discipline on this side of the ANU campus. Much has been written about George's WWII experiences, his contribution to Australia's multiculturalism policy, and his time at RSSS. Less has been written about his period in the Faculty of Arts. For sociologists in Arts, past and present, it is important to pay tribute to George as an Arts academic, and as a teaching sociologist. He spent the final 16 years of his academic career in the Haydon-Allen Building.

George came from RSSS to the Faculty in 1970 in what was then called the School of General Studies. He brought with him a Master's Degree Program in Sociology (by coursework and thesis), which at the time had 16 students. The first undergraduate lectures for Soc I did not begin until 1971. There was a large backlog demand for entry, and enrolments were restricted to 120 out of 436 applicants. In 1972 the cap for Soc I was increased to 160, with almost the same number of applicants. Acceptance was determined by academic merit. Before each academic year in the 1970s, George's office would be covered with hand completed application forms as the sorting process took place for admission. This lasted until the backlog in demand disappeared and staffing increased. By 1975 the department produced its first cohort of five honours students, and there were 16 MA Qual, 22 MA and 2 PhD students enrolled.

The department staff grew quickly. In 1970, George was assisted only by one temporary lecturer who came with him from RSSS. By the end of 1971 the department consisted of six teaching staff and two senior research fellows who worked on externally funded projects. By 1979 the department consisted of 13 full-time staff and one full-time senior research fellow with an external grant. It remained about this size throughout the 1980s and early 1990s.

George was passionate about sociology, and was deeply committed to establishing it in Australian universities. In 1970, he edited a small book *The Teaching of Sociology in Australia and New Zealand* (Cheshire), which contains 15 chapters covering a wide range of topics about the history of sociology in the region. Today, 40 years later, it is a valuable historical document about Australian sociology. But perhaps because of his European origins, George had a strong international orientation. During the 1970s and 1980s the department hosted, for a month or more, sociologists like Talcott Parsons (USA), Goren Therborn (Sweden), and Anthony Giddens (UK), Frank Vallee (Canada), Else Øyen (Norway) and many others. Such was the awe and excitement that these visitors created, that one young lecturer, having given a seminar while Talcott Parsons was in attendance, recorded it in his CV followed by the phrase: "Given in the presence of Talcott Parsons".

George's vision for sociology was highly professional. He wanted "sociologist" to be an employment category in the public service similar to the category of "psychologist". On one evening in the early 1970s he invited representatives from seven government public service departments to gather in the Tank and discuss the possibility of credentialing sociology. The credentialing never happened, but the event reflects how George saw sociology as a discipline that taught important research skills and which had policy relevance. Although George was educated in the classical sociological

tradition (he knew his Marx, Weber and Durkheim thoroughly), he felt that sociology should have policy relevance. His own research in the field of immigration, and his work on multiculturalism, are testimony of his applied brand of sociology, or what today is called “public sociology”. Even his involvement with Lifeline, which he helped establish in Canberra, and for which he often took shifts answering late-night phone calls, was for him sociology-in-practice.

There was a healthy interaction between sociology in Arts and sociology in RSSH (which George called “our sister department”). There was good mutual attendance at seminar programs (usually followed by questions and discussions over port), and there were common social events. During this time there was an active Students’ Sociology Society, and even a Sociology Cricket Team.

George was an eloquent and inspiring speaker. In Faculty meetings, he shared the podium with other professors, such as Manning Clark (History), Finn Crisp (Political Science), John Mulvany (Archeology), Tony Forge (Anthropology), Dick Johnson (Classics), Basil Johnson (Human Geography, then in Arts), and a number of others. This was still the period of the “God Professor”. Faculty meetings were formal, as *Robert’s Rules of Order* prevailed. But they were also collegial and “genteel”. New academics, especially young ones, were always introduced and applauded after they made their “maiden speech”. George was keenly interested in, and proud of the Faculty, and of sociology’s position in it.

There are many achievements that could be told about George as an academic and Chair Professor in the Faculty of Arts. Although his contribution to building a dynamic department of sociology was a significant contribution, his participation and leadership in the Faculty as a whole was recognized and respected at the time. When he stepped down as Chair in 1984, and fully retired in 1986 to take up other projects, his legacy at the ANU was guaranteed.

Larry Saha
May 2009

New Books

Brooks, K 2009, *Rural Resilience and Prosperity*, VDM Verlag Dr. Muller Aktiengesellschaft & Co. KG, Germany.

George, J. & Huynh K., (eds.) 2009, *The Culture Wars: Australian and American Politics in the 21st Century*, Palgrave MacMillan, Australia.

Saha, L. J. & Dworkin A. G., (eds.) 2009, *International Handbook of Research on Teachers and Teaching*, Springer, New York.

White, K 2008, *An Introduction to the Sociology of Health and Illness*, Sage, London.

PhD Students

Congratulations to **Stephanie Villalta Puig** who was admitted to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Stephanie was approved to graduate by the College Dean on behalf of the Council of the University on 7 April 2009. Her thesis topic is *The Many Bodies of China: A Critical Reading of British Imperial Medicine, c. 1840-90*.

Congratulations to **Peter Brent** who was admitted to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Peter was approved to graduate by the College Dean on behalf of the Council of the University on 18 May 2009. His thesis topic is *Enrolling the People: The Development of Modern Electoral Administration*.

Congratulations to **Melissa McEwan** who was admitted to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Melissa was approved to graduate by the College Dean on behalf of the Council of the University on 12 June 2009. Her thesis topic is *When I was Young ... - the Sixties in the Reagan Era: How the Present Impacts on Representations of the Past*.

Book Launch

Book Launch in San Diego



Larry Saha (R) and Gary Dworkin (L) enjoy the launch of their two volume publication (*International Handbook of Research on Teachers and Teaching*, Springer) at the American Education Research Association meeting in San Diego in April this year. In the middle is Marie Sheldon, the Springer Senior Publishing Editor in the Social Sciences, who sponsored the book launch. Gary, from the University of Houston (Sociology), was Visiting Fellow in SSS several times over the past four years while the handbook was in progress. Larry also spent time in Gary's Department during this period. Sonya Welykyj, formerly of SSS, worked as Project Officer much of the time. The comprehensive handbook has 76 research-based chapters on aspects of teachers and teaching by leading international experts.

Earlier this year, Larry also published *Nation-Building, Identity and Citizenship Education* (Springer), with Joseph Zajda (ACU, Melbourne) and Holger Daun (Stockholm).