THE SUBCULTURE
News from Sociology at Gettysburg College
December 2009

Eastern Sociological Society 2008
Front (l to r): LiFong Chen, Jason Loh, Jessica Fernandez, Dominique (Missy) Koch, Erin Avery. Back: Emily Harsen, Ambika Kirkland, Stephanie Bonnes, Reagan Matters, Nick Campellone, Jillian Shambaugh.

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE –
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Dept. Lounge, Glatfelter Ground Floor, Sociology majors, minors, and maybes meet to celebrate the season, and schmooze over light refreshments. Pagans, Yule have fun too.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: ANDREA SWITZER

“For those of you who don’t know me, or may be confused by my recent name and office change, I am Andrea Switzer, the Academic Administrative Assistant for the departments of Sociology and Anthropology. I graduated from Kutztown University in 1995 and moved to the Gettysburg area in 2004. I have been working at the College for a little over five years, and I really can’t think of a better place to work. Being surrounded by college students helps me feel young, and being surrounded by college faculty keeps me busy! In addition to my departmental duties, I was recently re-elected to the College’s Support Staff Council, where I chair the Training and Development Committee, which focuses on keeping employees educated, entertained and enlightened. I approve grant money to purchase books and materials for staffers pursuing their college degree. I also coordinate the monthly Brown Bag Lunch presentations. Two years ago another staffer and I brought back the staff newsletter under the new name Pillars, which focuses on the achievements and hidden talents of college employees. I love writing for Pillars because it helps see the people you work with in a different light. My second and most important job is being mom to an amazing 11-year-old and an over-active 4-year-old border collie named Pickles. I enjoy working out, walking my dog, and being a Girl Scout leader. When I volunteer as a camp counselor every summer, I feel like there is nothing I can’t do! For example, wear a snake as a necklace as in the above picture at Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve in Fairfield.”
VISIT of NATE WALKER, Class of 2002

Nate Walker, Sociology graduate, 2002, returned to Gettysburg College October 26, 2009 to give two presentations. In Glatfelter Lodge he chatted with majors about “The Sociological Imagination as a Career Compass: From Teach for America to Working with Community Based Organizations.” That night he gave an inspiring lecture on “Revisioning Urban Education,” talking about the need to change education from a capitalist control system to one relevant to the needs of youth. Nate is a union activist and community organizer in Detroit, and is helping create the Boggs Educational Center, an innovative school projected to open in 2011-2012. One of his two master’s degrees is from Brown in Urban Education Policy.

GARY KLEIN, Class of 1976

Gary Klein, Sociology graduate, 1976, is pictured above, last summer in Chennai, India, with a local boy on the left, and with his daughter on the right. He got his PhD in Sociology from Temple in 1987 and has published widely in medical sociology and ethnicity. In addition to having taught at Drexel and Thomas Jefferson Universities, he is a senior systems analyst for the nonprofit Public Health Management Corp. in Philadelphia. Gary remembers the old photograph of Charles H. Cooley in Wade Hook’s theory class (see this same photo plus the photo of Wade Hook both hanging in the departmental lounge). He also recalls going on a class tour of Gettysburg housing in Prof. Emmons’ car, when Emmons backed his car into the car parked behind. Emmons said, “No one will ever know,” but the realtor sitting beside him said, “That was my car.”

INTERVIEW with the CHAIR

S(ubculture): Synopsize your life for us.
S: Why are you still here?
C: To pay off the mortgage and outlive the cat.
S: What is your favorite course and why?
C: SOC 233, Science, Knowledge and the New Age. Sociology (and anthropology) are the most subversive of disciplines, and this course challenges the way even science constructs knowledge. And it deals with big questions.
S: What’s the best thing about Gettysburg?
C: Sharing ideas with everybody at the college.
S: How about the worst?
C: No lake, and not enough snow.
S: Who’s your favorite sociologist?
C: Erving Goffman.
S: What’s your favorite theory?
C: Exchange theory, chaos theory.
S: Your favorite Beatle?
C: George Harrison.
S: What’s the best thing you’ve published?
S: What are you working on now?
C: A book and a documentary DVD, The Scientific Search for Spirit, based on interviews with scientists and others who comment on alleged evidence for life after death and consciousness apart from the body.
S: What do you do for fun?
C: Work. I also like U. of Illinois football and basketball, music of many kinds, comic books in various languages, watching documentary films and making my own, and traveling with my wife Penelope. Hard crossword puzzles, reading.
S: What advice do you have for students?
C: Learn skills (communication, data analysis, performance), and commit your life to fun and service (not money….well maybe a little).