

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

Adopted by the
Regents
May 15, 2014

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Lars Bjorn, Ph.D., professor of sociology in the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters, University of Michigan-Dearborn, retired from active faculty status on April 30, 2014.

Professor Bjorn received his Fil. Kand. degree from Uppsala University in 1970 and his Ph.D. degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1976. He joined the University of Michigan-Dearborn faculty as an instructor in 1974, and was promoted to assistant professor in 1976, associate professor in 1981, and professor in 1990. Professor Bjorn has served as the sociology discipline coordinator since 1978.

Professor Bjorn's scholarly work focused on exploring, uncovering, and documenting Detroit's rich and extensive jazz history. He critically examined the development of the black jazz community in Detroit, stylistic innovations in jazz, the relationship between jazz musicians and their audiences, and the great Detroit pianist Willie Anderson. In 2001, Professor Bjorn co-authored, with Jim Gallert, *Before Motown: A History of Jazz in Detroit, 1920-1960*, a pioneering work that illuminated the significant impact Detroit has had on the development of jazz in America. He also studied political sociology, social stratification, sociology of the auto industry, and urban sociology. In collaboration with sociologist James Gruber, he conducted a path-breaking study of sexual harassment experienced by female autoworkers in Detroit's factories. An engaging teacher and dedicated mentor, Professor Bjorn played an instrumental role in the development of a multi-disciplinary course entitled Society and the Arts in Detroit. He was actively involved in the Detroit community and generously shared his time and talents as the long-time president of the Southeastern Michigan Jazz Association.

The Regents now salute this distinguished sociology professor for his dedicated service by naming **Lars Bjorn professor emeritus of sociology**.

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill, J.D.
Vice President and Secretary of the University

May 2014