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## Press release :2009 : 09 : 16 : Sokolovsky Spends Summer as Visiting Scholar at Oxford

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## Sokolovsky Spends Summer as Visiting Scholar at Oxford



Filed under [Press Releases](#), [eNews Newsletter](#) on Wednesday, September 16, 2009 by Author: Melanie Marquez.

**(St. Petersburg, Fla.) September 16, 2009** - Jay Sokolovsky, professor of anthropology, spent a month this summer at the Oxford University Centre on Ageing in England as a Visiting Scholar. He met with graduate students and professors to discuss the third edition of his book, *The Cultural Context of Aging: Worldwide Perspectives*, and his self-produced documentary, *Urban Garden: Fighting for Life and Beauty*, about urban greening in New York City.

He also began a research project on British Allotment Gardens and their role in transforming urban neighborhoods. Many of the allotment gardens, created in the mid-19th century in places around Europe where industrialization was causing starvation among factory workers, still exist and are in use, but lack as much community effort as is found in urban U.S. gardens.

They remain individualized efforts with residents cultivating their plot and not using the gardens as much for community events or initiatives, but the concept of civic ecology is taking hold in Europe, Sokolovsky said.

While at Oxford, he focused on the 150-year-old Osney Allotment Garden, an 11-acre spot where several hundred people have plots. Sokolovsky learned about the garden's greening plan to use solar power to provide electricity to nearby houses and factories and met residents eager to keep their publicly-managed green space for the long-term.

"They see the importance of fighting to maintain these in the community," he said.

Sokolovsky will continue to study these gardens and how the cultural interplay of community gardening in the U.S. is influencing local governments to transform the allotment gardens into more community-oriented greening spaces.

**-USF St. Petersburg-**

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