

SSA Newsletter

Issue 1
October 2005

Think you're clever? Submit your idea for a newsletter title to ssa.sociology@mail.mcgill.ca

Interview: Professor Catherine Montgomery

Dr. Catherine Montgomery teaches SOCI 422: Health Care Providers. Since 1997, she has also conducted research on ethnicity and health care for the Conseil Québécois de la Recherche Sociale.

What was your area of study in sociology when you were a student?

I actually varied- I started in journalism then moved to sociology, specialized fields in ethnic relations and the health and social services. My postdoctorate was in trans-cultural psychiatry.

Do you find it difficult being in-between the academic realm and the professional realm?

In a sense it's more stimulating. My research work sometimes has clinical applications but not always. It's funded by the same organizations as any university so we go through the same types of evaluation criteria. What is different is the balance between research work and teaching work. My task is 75% research and 25% teaching which gives me one course a year— that's the difference. But balancing the two? More stimulating maybe because it gives me more variety. It makes for a heavy term in the fall.

If you couldn't have studied sociology, what do you think you would have studied?

I always thought I would be a social worker, working in the street with marginalized youth or something like that- something very related to field work and the whole social idea of helping people. But now that I know what the conditions of social workers are in the field... maybe I'm better off.

Do you find some of the major theories that are taught in most sociology classes actually apply to your research?

We were actually talking about that in class today, about the professional programs like social work, medicine or education, where students actually have to do internships in some kind of outside setting. I think it's a bit of a shame that in sociology, anthropology or political science that there isn't some form of internship where you have to go outside and apply your models, but also see where your models don't fit, because they don't always. I went from a theory-based academic setting directly into a field where I'm still doing research, but in a completely different setting. You adapt. You take what you've learned and you apply it in your environment, it's not a bad thing. But I still think some kind of internship would be a good idea— just to get an idea of how things are done *outside* the university.

What kind of application does your research have?

Aside from research we have what we call valorization activities. I might do training programs with you. I might take research findings and translate them into some kind of tool and use them with, for instance, programs with immigrant youth. I'm working on one at the moment. I do research on immigrant families and health care as well, developing a tool known as the family novel, which is the idea of using the family history as an intervention tool in the process of migration and adaptation.

Do you ever get nervous when you teach?

I guess I do. I like that I do one class a year because I can interact with the students, especially in a group like a seminar with only 20 some students. It's not the same as teaching in a theater. I like having the comments and the reflections. This year we have a majority of sociology students; last year it was a majority of social work students. But it's a mix: education, sociology, political science... But all these people have different experiences from the work that they've done within their discipline.

“A Message from Los Presidentes”

On behalf of all of us on the SSA, we would like to welcome you all to the 2005-2006 academic year. To get you folks thinking outside of the box, we've decided to introduce a monthly newsletter to complement what we learn in class. So far, our newsletter will consist of a 'Professor Profile', a list of upcoming events taking place on campus and in the city, and a handy Marx's advice column. We want to add more things so please contribute your thoughts. Can you think of, or have you seen anything interesting that could enlighten our minds, expand our newsletter, or simply humour us? This is the place to contribute your thoughts: ssa.sociology@mail.mcgill.ca. We have a great team lined up, along with a bunch of events, so speak up, speak out, and join us for what promises to be a wonderful rest-of-the-year. Our weekly meetings are at 1:30 on Wednesdays in the AUS lounge.

Cheers,
Aziza Virani and Ashton Verdery
Co-Presidents

PS. Look out in your inbox for details of our upcoming fun night, taking place on November the 22nd!

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Do you find that students from different disciplines have a different take on your topic?

They certainly come from different points of view, but I think it's a wealth for the class. Like I said the class is more homogeneous this year, mostly sociology. In previous courses I have seen a difference- some of the professional or clinical students perhaps don't have the same theoretical background, which is a shame because the theory can be used to analyze situations and that's perhaps lacking in other disciplines.

What advice would you give to sociology students who are interested in entering the health care field?

I would most definitely recommend doing some form of internship in some sort of health and social service institution. In Montreal we have university affiliated centers, we're one of them where I work, they have research centers. They all have different themes- one is on social inequality, one on intergenerational relationships, ours is on multi-ethnicity and health care. The hospitals and health institutes also have research centers. They are fascinating places to work, coming into *real* contact with *real* people who are working in health care.

—Interview by Caitlin McMullin

Announcements and Upcoming Events

Dept. of Sociology Speaker's Series:

Friday, 21 Oct 2005 • McGill University • 3pm

And if the shoe doesn't fit? (wear it anyway?): Economic transformation and Western paradigms of 'women in development' in Post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe

Kristen Ghodsee, Women's Studies, Bowdoin College
Location: Leacock Building, 855 Sherbrooke Street West, 738

Friday, 11 Nov 2005 • McGill University • 3pm

Families on the Move: Family Law Reforms and Rebellions in Afghanistan

Homa Hoodfar, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Concordia University
Location: Leacock Building 855 Sherbrooke Street West, 738

More information:
Prof. Fallon 398-6851; Prof. Weiner 398-6843

Other Events:

Wednesday, 2 Nov. 2005 • UQAM • 12:30pm to 2pm

Politics and American Culture after September 11th

Joseph-Yvon Thériault, University of Ottawa & Anne Legaré, UQAM
Address: Hubert-Aquin (A), 400, Sainte-Catherine East, A-3316

Information : (514) 987-3000, extension 1609
Email: herivault.jacques@uqam.ca Website: <http://www.politis.uqam.ca>

Monday, 24 Oct. 2005 • Concordia University • 7pm to 10pm

Book Launch: Sex Change, Social Change: Reflections on Identity, Institutions and Imperialism (Sponsored by the Simone de Beauvoir Institute)

Presented By: Viviane Namaste.
Location: 2170 Bishop St., SGW Campus, Room MU-01-Lounge, MU Building

This is a provocative, thoughtful book that challenges readers to think carefully about human rights, feminism, lesbian and gay struggles, and current transgender politics. Namaste's essays make up a useful collection, suitable for courses in Women's Studies, Gender Studies, Sexuality Studies, Sociology, and Canadian Studies.

Dr. Meg Luxton, Director, Women's Studies, York University

Additional information :
Contact: m_macphe@alcor.concordia.ca
Visit: <http://artsandscience.concordia.ca/wsdb/>

East European and Russian Film/ Documentary Series Fall 2005:

Every Tuesday • McGill University • 6pm

October 25: *Black Cat, White Cat* (Serbia, film, 135 min.)
November 1: *Sex Traffic* (England/Canada, film, 180+ min.)
November 8: *Disbelief* (USA/Russia, film, 105 min.)
November 15: *Tycoon - A New Russian* (Russia, film, 128 min.)
November 22: *No Man's Land* (former Yugoslavia, film, 98 min.)
November 29: *Meet the Stans- Program One and Program Two*
(England, documentary, 50 min. each)

Location: Arts Building, 853 Sherbrooke Street West, Rm 265

More information:
Prof. Johnson, 514-398-6120; Prof. Weiner, 514-398-6843

A Call For Papers

The McGill Sociology Students' Association is looking for paper submissions for *Verstehen: The McGill Journal of Sociology*. Sociology major or minor applicants are encouraged to submit a paper marked with a minimum grade of A-. We will also consider papers written for non-sociology classes, as long as they are sociologically relevant.

Papers should range from 5- 20 pages and can cover a wide range of sociological topics. The deadline for submission is **January 31st, 2006**.

The *Verstehen* team is excited to put out their third outstanding publication for 2005-2006. We look forward to receiving your submissions. Please send them to ssa.sociology@mail.mcgill.ca, or deliver them to the SSA mailbox at Leacock 822A.

A Call For Speakers

The McGill Sociology Students' Association is hosting our second Symposium in mid-March. Are you an undergraduate Honours or graduate student in Sociology? Would you like to share your research findings and methodology with other Sociology students in casual and short lecture format? If so, we welcome your submissions.

Please contact us at ssa.sociology@mail.mcgill.ca by **January 31st, 2006**.

The SSA Exec!



Aziza Virani
President

Aziza is an Honours Sociology student in her final year, and hopes to go to grad school for Sociolinguistics. She's quite taken by sociological theories that explore the nature of space and society...which is why she often needs to be pulled away from strange and distant head spaces. If you want to take part in the SSA in any way, let her know!



Ashton Verdery
Co-President

I'm a third year honors sociology student from Massachusetts with an interest in conflict resolution. Recently, I've been particularly interested in ethnic conflict. I hope to pursue graduate work in political science using my undergraduate background to further understand the dynamics of political sociology.



Sarah Blanchard
Vice President

Hi guys, my name's Sarah and I'm a third year sociology major. This year I will be working with Carol on preparing the Sociology Symposium, which will take place in March. It should be awesome this year so I hope to see you all there. If you have any questions about it don't be shy to ask if you see me. I hope everyone's having a great year so far!



Caitlin McMullin
Newsletter Coordinator

I'm a 3rd year student (got a year and a half to go, but I'm taking my time) doing a Joint Honours in Sociology and Political Science. I'm really interested in media studies, so I plan on going to grad school for Political Communications (whatever that means).



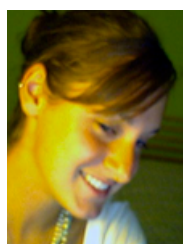
Christina Doan
Undergraduate Coordinator

I'm a U3 student in the process of completing my double major in sociology and psychology, but I will be continuing in physics after I graduate. (Take that Lawrence Summers!) However, that does not mean I'll completely abandon my social science roots, and within sociology, I'm fond of issues related to gender, culture, family and mental illness. I feel fortunate to be one of the few people who are well-versed in both the social and physical universes.



Elizabeth Welch
Vice President

I am in my final semester at McGill, finishing off my major in sociology and minor in environment. I am currently working on applications to law school, which I hope to attend next year. Although I love Montreal and McGill, I am glad to be returning to Vancouver this December, managing to miss the worst of the cold weather



Carol Burbank
Vice President

Carol Burbank, a huge fan of Marx, could not find the room for the Communist Club's weekly meeting so she joined the next best thing... the SSA. Now in her fourth year of an honours sociology degree, Carol will be bringing you such exciting events as the Symposium and Wine'n'Cheeses so keep a look out for them. Next year Carol is setting her sights on Berkeley or New School University; now if only she could get them to set their sights on her!



Andrew Ladd
Newsletter Coordinator

Andrew's job with the SSA involves channelling the spirits of long-dead European men. He's an Honours sociology major in his final year, and is planning to go to grad school for creative writing. He is originally from Scotland, so naturally his likes include haggis, kilts, and deep-fried Mars bars. His dislikes are the English, national stereotypes, and being othered.



Joelle Kelson
Undergraduate Coordinator

I'm in my first year of McGill doing a double major in sociology and Jewish studies. As one of the undergraduate coordinators, I am responsible for getting the word about to you about any sociology event so if you're not receiving any information and want to be don't hesitate to contact me. I look forward to seeing you and all your friends at one of many amazing SSA events.

I have been dating a girl for about six months, and now her birthday is coming up. What would be an appropriate gift for this stage of a relationship?

—Boyfriend Needs Help

Inmargin note by Engels: "Don't have a problem with accepting gifts though, do you, you greedy windbag?"

Gift? GIFT?! Why should man commemorate the birth of a fellow with the expenditure of money towards artificial capitalist sentiment? Well wishes are not reducible to the product of your labour. However, if you feel you must buy something, I recommend *Das Kapital*, available from all good booksellers.

I'm writing a paper for my Classical Sociological Theory class right now, and I was wondering, how would you compare your views on industrial society with those of Durkheim?

—Hopeful Student

I wouldn't compare myself to that balding, no-talent hack.

Have questions for Marx? E-mail them to ssa.sociology@mail.mcgill.ca

Dear Marx...



I've just moved into a new apartment with an old friend of mine from high school. We've always gotten along really well together, but now that I'm spending so much time with him I find myself repulsed by his disgusting personal habits and foul mouth. What would you recommend?

—Living With Slob

Try to start a dialectic with your roommate about what constitutes 'disgusting' personal habits. If that fails, turn to religion— as the opium of the masses, it will soothe your troubled soul. In a pinch, real opium should also do the trick.

Inmargin note by Engels: "Boy, I hear you, buddy."!

Crossword only available in print version...

Across

- 2. Coined the term 'sociology'
- 4. Graph of the five-number summary
- 5. Norms of a less serious nature
- 10. Historically important school of sociology in North America
- 11. Marx's capitalist class
- 13. Discipline studying how individuals make sense of the world around them
- 18. Process of middle class takeover of previously poor area
- 19. Low social integration causing breakdown of norms in society
- 20. Durkheim's term for traditional societies
- 21. Parsons
- 23. Writer of *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*
- 24. Founder of World Systems Theory
- 26. Sociological theorist on fashion
- 27. Numerical average.

Down

- 1. Founder of dramaturgical approach
- 3. Observation that lies outside the overall pattern of the other observations
- 6. Punishments associated with deviation from norms
- 7. Marrying outside of one's social group
- 8. Title of the journal published by the SSA
- 9. Norms of a serious nature
- 12. Ideology believing that women's relationship to the economy is the main source of their disadvantages
- 14. Few large companies dominating the market
- 15. Socialization occurring in schools
- 16. Durkheim's term for modern societies
- 17. Founder of Historical Materialism
- 22. The midpoint of a distribution
- 25. Citizenship as right to certain level of economic security and participation in social life

Answers will appear in the next issue.