# think sociology!

### Thoughts from the Head

elcome to the Fall 2016 issue of *Think Sociology*? The fall is often a time when we begin to settle in for the coming winter. The sun begins to set a little earlier, the temperature starts to cool, the rain picks up and we hunker down. This fall, however, the Sociology Department is experiencing revival and growth.

Revival is most notable in our building. Visiting the Sociology Department today finds our space in a state of transformation. Our classrooms, halls, washrooms, and stairwells are getting a makeover with new carpeting or tiles on the floors, and new paint or tiles on the walls and doors. Everyday workmen are about and the corridors are full of the signs of improvements to the building. Things are looking brighter indeed.

Growth is taking place in our faculty where we are currently in the process of hiring two new faculty members in the Department. The hiring process is similarly busy. Candidates from around the world to visit our department, give lectures on their research, and meet with faculty and grad students. The halls are a buzz of intellectual life as the research and ideas of these scholars invigorate the Department.

Similar signs of revitalization are taking place in areas such as our curriculum where we have recently approved new courses on topics like ageing in Canada and drugs in society. Apparently we will have to wait until later to hunker down.

One clear theme of this issue is the importance of relationships to sociology. This is seen first in the contribution of our newest colleague, Yue Qian. Yue is a bright star among young scholars, and her research focuses on one of the most central relationships: marriage. Nathan Lauster examines how we live together, in his new book on housing and the single family home. Relationships are not only an important subject for sociologists to study, they are also essential in the production of sociology. This is beautifully captured by Becki Ross, Jamie Lee Hamilton, and Anne Martin-Matthews as they detail the outcomes of fruitful long-term collaborations in their respective work.

Our department is unique for making important contribu-

tions both locally and internationally. This is a second theme that stands out in this issue. For instance, Becki tells the story of an important act of public sociology here in Vancouver, while Yue explores online dating in China. Anne's work with the International Summer School on Ageing will have impact around the globe. Nathan uses his research on housing in Vancouver as a model to rethink housing far beyond our local city.

To learn more, I invite you to visit our department's website soci.ubc.ca for updates and recent news. And we are on Twitter (UBC Sociology). ■

Sean Lauer (Acting Head)



### Educated Women Still Tend to Marry Higher Earning Men



Intimate relationship, marriage, family, and gender relations are topics that make headlines. Committed partner and family relationships are indeed important to most people. As a family demographer, I am interested in understanding how gender intersects with family and population processes, such as assortative mating (i.e., who partners with whom), divisions of labor, parenthood, and migration, to shape individual wellbeing and societal inequality. Specifically, I have pursued my research interests through addressing one ma-

jor research question in the American and Chinese contexts: How do changing gender roles shape assortative mating patterns? This is a topic of great importance, not only because people care deeply about who their romantic partners are, but also because assortative mating patterns have implications for social boundaries across groups,

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economic equalities among families, and intergenerational transmissions of social and biological traits.

When it comes to falling in love, it's not just fate or serendipity that brings people together—often times structural factors matter! Structural factors, such as gender inequalities in education and employment as well as societal expectations of men's and women's adult and marital roles, could influence the availability of potential partners in the marriage market and also individuals' attitudes about what is a "normative" or "acceptable" match. My research focuses on investigating the consequences of the gender-gap reversal in education for marriage and family lives. Women have made greater gains in educational attainment than men over the past few decades in the United States. Women lagged behind men in college completion before the 1980s, but by 2013 women earned about 60 percent of bachelor's and master's degrees and half of all doctoral degrees. Does the rising female advantage in education reshape assortative mating patterns? I use data from the 1980 U.S. Census and the 2008-2012 American Community Surveys to examine educational and income assortative mating among newlyweds. Results show that between 1980 and 2008–2012, although women were increasingly likely to marry men with less education than themselves, they continued to marry men whose income exceeded their own. Moreover, the tendency for women to "marry up" in terms of income was greater when they "married down" in education. These results indicate a stalled progress toward gender equality in mate selection as men and women still tend to form marriages in which the wife's socioeconomic status does not exceed that of the husband. This research has been published in the Journal of Marriage and Family.

I also pursue research on gender and assortative mating in China. In a paper published in *Demographic Research* and featured in the *Economist*, my coauthor and I find that as education increases, the likelihood of marriage increases for men but decreases for women in contemporary urban China.



In addition, despite the reversal of the college gender gap, the traditional practice of men marrying women less educated than themselves persists. We argue that rigid gendered family roles and high levels of parental involvement in children's marital decisions contribute to the low marriage prospects of highly-educated women in China. This research, combined with my aforementioned research which finds that men now tend to marry women more educated than themselves in the United States, provides a comparative lens for understanding how the consequences of the gender-gap reversal in education for marriage and family outcomes are shaped by structural factors such as prevailing gender norms and family systems in the society.

My current interdisciplinary project examines how new technologies, such as online dating, shape relationship behavior. Indeed, online dating is replacing traditional venues, such as meeting through family and friends, at school, or in the workplace, for unmarried couples to meet. The rise of online dating has profoundly changed the dating landscape, as Internet search for romantic partners allows daters to identify a new pool of potential partners that they would not otherwise meet via traditional venues. My project uses online dating as a lens to understand modern coupling as well as gender differences in mate preferences and strategies during the Internet era in China.

Technology changes not only "how I met your mother" but also how we, as scholars, could disseminate research findings. To convey academic research to a wider audience, I serve as the primary founder, editor, and contributor of a public account "Ms-Muses (缪斯夫  $\lambda$ )" on WeChat (China's largest social media platform). I write research-based commentaries on gender and family issues. The number of account subscribers has exceeded 20,000 and is still growing. With the help of social media, I aim to promote gender equality by helping the general public see and understand gender inequality through a sociological lens. ■

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Dr. Yue Qian is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at UBC

<sup>&</sup>quot;Women still marrying up for money ... " continues from front cover ...



hat if we treated every day like a holiday? Imagine prioritizing time with family, over and over again; constantly travelling at the most hustlybustly times; eating so much rich food that we practically burst; and buying so many expensive gifts that we drive ourselves into debt, every single day!

I suspect it would quickly become awful (even for those who like their families)! It would also be bad for democracy, bad for our health, and bad for the planet, not to mention absolutely unaffordable. Yet all across North America, this is pretty much the ideal behind how we've fashioned our cities, at least since the first half of the twentieth century. Insofar as it matters, we're zoned for the holidays.

Zoning is the primary legal force behind the sprawling wall of single-family detached houses we see choking off the older, denser workaday urban cores of every major metropolis on the continent. Most people live in singlefamily residential zoned neighborhoods, which we might also think of as Great House Reserves. Nothing but houses, houses, and more houses is allowed across the majority of our metropolitan landscapes.

All those houses prioritize privacy and the focusing of time on our families, or at least one particular version of our families, to the exclusion of sharing more public spac-

es with those around us. The more we live in houses, the less we tend to encounter people different from ourselves, diminishing our sense of community, and also our sense of obligation to others. What's more, to get anywhere interesting, or even just to get to work, people who live in houses tend to first have to get past many other houses that look much like their own houses. So they drive on roads clogged with other drivers. And lengthy travel to work isn't optional – much like the obligatory travelling across the country for that holiday turkey dinner.

Living in a house is really, really expensive. In many cases, zoning for houses has been used to keep out the poor on purpose. Yet we all pay for houses, even people who don't live in them. That's because houses take up a lot of land and eat up a lot of energy, leading to all sorts of broadly shared environmental costs. And living in a house isn't even very good for us! People tend to be healthier when they integrate walking or cycling into their daily lives, and to do that, it helps to have your destinations nearby.

Could we build our cities differently? Are we ready to stop treating every day like a holiday? One answer might be found here in Vancouver, Canada's third largest metropolis. Over the last fifty years, Vancouver has moved farther and faster away from reliance upon the single-family house than any other metro area in North America. Indeed, as residents will quickly confirm, no one except millionaires can afford a house in Vancouver any longer. How has this dramatic transformation affected the people who live here? Well, let's start with how the city is regularly ranked as the most livable on the continent.

If you don't believe the rankings, try talking to some of the residents. As one middle class apartment dweller recently explained to me: "I can walk to the end of my street and there are probably, at a minimum, thirty ethnic restaurants within three minutes of my front door. I overlook the ocean. Access to transportation, to work, it's so central. It doesn't matter where I go, I'm in the middle of everything! And yet, I feel like I'm in a tiny little community. I know all the shopkeepers. I know all my neighbors. It's like being in a small town, but living in the center of a huge city. I really feel like I have the best of all worlds." Vancouver is proof that alternatives to the house can be made imminently livable for all types of families as well as for those living alone.

Despite the travel, the cost, the overindulgence, and the occasional family fractiousness, the holidays can be nice. But treating every day like a holiday is a recipe for disaster. In much the same way, living in a house can also be pleasant. But it's only one way to live the good life.



The Death and Life of the Single-Family House: Lessons from Vancouver on Building a Livable City.





or the past twenty years, we have worked in partnership: Jamie Lee Hamilton is an Indigenous, trans sex worker, anti-poverty activist, and advocate for sex workers' rights. Becki is a long-time feminist, queer, and anti-racist activist-academic in Sociology and the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Social Justice. Our most recent collaboration involved an eight-year campaign to secure a public apology and financial reparations from Vancouver's Mayor Gregor Robertson. In July 1984, the Chief Justice of the BC Supreme Court, Allan McEachern, violently expelled sex workers from living and working in the West End. In so doing, McEachern affirmed the antiprostitution agenda of municipal and provincial politicians who framed on-street sex work as a "dangerous public nuisance." Decades later, in 2008, we co-founded the West End Sex Workers Memorial Committee to honour the lives, and remember the deaths, of "hookers on Davie Street." To bolster our case for redress and reconciliation, we secured a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to pay for research-related costs of archival work, interviewing, and transcription. At every stage, we leveraged our scholarly efforts to achieve social justice in the spirit of African American sociologist W.E.B. Dubois's inspiring commitment to radical academic activism.

Historical context is important: in the late 1960s, the West End's Davie Street stroll emerged as home and workplace to approximately 200 cis-women, trans women, and male hustlers. They solicited on-street sexual commerce, educated police, patronized retail shops, lived in apartments, and fund-raised for community organizations, including their elaborate drag court system, Dogwood Monarchist Society. Working pimp-free, they invented harm reduction and risk assessment strategies, built kin and community relations, and earned steady income. As members of the Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes (ASP), they circulated 'bad trick' sheets and published a newsletter, the Whorganzier. For close to 20 years, on-street sex workers were part and parcel of the pulse, noise, and bustle of the West End's densely populated, mixed commercial-residential district. Many businesses operated 24 hours a day. In a three-block area, there were four nightclubs and a 24-hour gambling den. Ten restaurants operated all day and night, in addition to a 24-hour per day grocery store, three 24-hour gas stations, and a 24-hour Shoppers Drug Mart.

In 1981, Concerned Residents of the West End



(CROWE) reframed the West End as an exclusively 'residential' enclave. Led by white, middle-class gay men, they fought to blame on-street sex workers for what they argued were the "plunging property values" of a "de facto red light district." From archival research we learned that the City of Vancouver's traffic department spent thousands of dollars to "deter prostitution-related traffic" in the West End. In 1982, \$28,000 in fines was collected from sex workers charged under a municipal by-law later struck down as ultra vires of the federal Criminal Code. More than 800 mainstream news articles reveal that Mayor Mike Harcourt, Member of Parliament Pat Carney, Attorney General Brian Smith, CROWE, and Shame the Johns forged a "war on hookers."

Throughout the early 1980s, as the city prepared to

host World's Fair, Expo 1986, on -street sex workers, especially trans women of colour, were cast as threatening, disposable trespassers undeserving of dignity, voice, or sovereignty. Criminologist John Lowman has meticulously mapped the sequence of displacements that occurred in the 10 years after McEachern's unprecedented legal injunction pushed sex workers out of the West End. Forcibly relocated east

to poorly lit industrial zones, 65 sex workers, disproportionately Indigenous, were brutally murdered on a Port Coquitlam farm - cut up and fed to pigs. We know that these human tragedies were preventable.

In April 2015, after eight years of meetings, events, lobbying, and organizing with our Memorial Committee, Jamie Lee and I were told that Mayor Robertson and City Councillors were prepared to right a historical wrong. For the next 18 months we met monthly with city staff in Social Planning, Communications, and Engineering. We held a Community Forum, gave workshops, and consulted on the design of an elegant Victorian-style lamp post, with a red light that glows at night, and bronzed messaging on a four-sided base:

#### Today we commemorate and Honour their Lives; People Who Lived and Worked Here, Late 1960s – 1984; Dedicated to a Diverse Community of Sex Workers; and, In Memory of their Ongoing Struggle for Equality.

On September 16, 2016, we co-hosted a public unveiling of our West End Sex Workers Memorial. With close to 150 in attendance, we had 25 speakers - half spoke outdoors at the corner of Jervis and Pendrell Streets and half spoke indoors at St. Paul's Anglican Church. Superintendent Michelle Davey offered an official apology from the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) for disrespect towards sex workers over many decades. Davey affirmed the VPD's radical shift to placing sex workers' safety and security atop their agenda. Philip Owen, the city's longestserving mayor, stressed his support for sex workers' rights and the need to press for "equality for everyone." City councilor Andrea Reimer declared, "Harm is a soft word for the abductions, torture, and murders of hundreds of sex workers." And Jessica Schaap, rector of St Paul's Anglican Church reminded us: "Jesus kept the company of sex workers." Becki and Jamie Lee declared that "Davie Street hookers" must be recognized as the West End's first champions for the rights of sexual, gender, and racial minorities – the founders of the "Hooker-Hood" and arguably the queerest of all queers.

While our Memorial is the first in Canada, we found six others in the West: in addition to three small plaques in San Francisco, Marysville, and Uriah, California, there is a life-sized statue of "Belle" (2007) to honour Dutch sex workers in Amsterdam; Cross Bones Graveyard

plaque and memorial shrine in South London, England (2010) to honour unnamed sex workers known as the "the 'Winchester Geese' who were buried underground during medieval times; and 'Joy' (2004), a cement sculpture designed to honour the history of inner-city prostitution in Sydney, Australia. Like these, our Monument disrupts the history of statuary. An estimated 90% of commemorations around

world pedestalize "great men": military leaders, captains of industry, politicians, miners, lumberjacks, mill and cannery workers, and sporting heroes.

We are aware of the modesty of our imposition on the municipal white settler colonial state. We appreciate how Indigenous scholar Glen Coulthard warns us of the assimilative lure of the state politics of recognition and accommodation. Our Memorial will not 'reconcile' the structural and symbolic violence that imperils sex workers, LGBTQI and two spirit people, low-income folks, those living with mental illness and/or addictions, and immigrants of colour on the stolen land of the Coast Salish peo-

ples. And yet we are all diminished when loss is not tenderly marked or mourned. For sex workers all too familiar with misrecognition, criminalization, and whorephobia, our Memorial may enable affirmative self-recognition, empowerment, and belonging. The once vibrant outdoor brothel culture of 'hos and hustlers' on Davie Street deserves at least that much. 🔳





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### ISSA-3@UBC International Summer School in Ageing, Summer 2016

By Anne Martin-Matthews

The world's population is aging on a historically unprecedented scale. More people are living <u>to</u> old age and more are living longer <u>in</u> old age. Those aged 80 years and over, and centenarians, are the fastest growing segments of the population. With population aging now recognized as an enduring characteristic of many societies, the building of research capacity in aging is a priority for countries around the globe.

In 2011, the European Union's FUTURAGE *Road Map for European Ageing Research* identified priority research areas in ageing for the next fifteen years, and called for increasing investments in cross-national, interdisciplinary joint training opportunities for early career researchers The Road Map noted the "dire lack of ageing research capacity and career structure for scientists in the field" and recommended efforts to "develop joint career paths for researchers and notice boards for scientists looking for job or training opportunities".

Good ideas are often born of serendipity. I had been involved in Road Map consultations, and happened to be in Italy in the spring of 2011 when several colleagues discussed how to respond to the *Road Map's* call for action on cross-national, interdisciplinary training opportunities in ag (e)ing. The idea of an International Summer School in Ageing (ISSA) was raised. I had established an annual weeklong Summer Programme in Aging (SPA) in Canada in 2006 under the sponsorship of the national Institute of Aging, and had learned from that experience. Thus, lessons from SPA and the experiences of Swedish colleagues in running national graduate courses in ageing together inspired the creation of an International Summer School in Ageing (ISSA) as a tangible response to the Road Map.

From June 5-10, 2016, I had the pleasure of hosting at UBC, in collaboration with the Dept of Sociology, the third International Summer School in Aging - held for the first time in Canada. The ISSA provided doctoral and post-doctoral students in aging with unique opportunities for advanced training, professional development, and international and interdisciplinary networking. It built on the success of two earlier offerings of ISSA – the inaugural event organized by Dr. Giovanni Lamura of the Italian National Institute of Health & Science on Ageing in Ancona, Italy in 2012, and the second organized by Professor Torbjörn Svensson of the Centre for Age-Supportive Environments (CASE) at Lund University, Sweden, in 2014.

The ISSA-3 program was informed by feedback at four points in time from participants in the two previous ISSA. It included modules on socio-economic, psychological, and environmental aspects of aging, on the epidemiology of aging, and issues of care giving and receipt. These were integrated and linked to the students' research areas through interactive mentoring sessions and through professional development modules.

Other modules emphasized methodological innovation, longitudinal research, international collaborations, ethics, and knowledge mobilization. In a program bridging disciplines, ISSA-3 at UBC uniquely emphasized the social and behavioural aspects of aging, and introduced the humanities into the program (via analyses of rhetoric and discourse, and of representations of aging in theatre) – to engage students in 'new ways of knowing' about aging.

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**Elic Chan** From The University of Toronto. Teaching: "Crime & society, research methods, crime & justice" Inspiration: "Be able to understand structure over the individual and to come away with a way to solve some of the issues by middling with the structure to focus on the individual"

### Quick Q&A with our New Lecturers...

Oral Robinson

From The University of Saskatoon Currently teaching: "Research methods, race and ethnic inequality, families" Inspiration: "Just to be able to explain individual actions through wider social processes"

Katherine Lyon From UBC Teaching: two section of "Intro to sociology and VANT 148, Interdisciplinary research methods" Inspiration: "The diverse perspectives that students bring"

Through a week-long intensive summer school experience, participants gained an understanding of processes critical to carry out high quality scientific research, and professional work in the field of aging. They learned about multidisciplinary collaboration through interactive and participatory training modules on grant preparation, peer review, communication, knowledge transfer, professional engagement and ethics in research on aging. And they had the opportunity to network with other emerging researchers in aging and with leading academic mentors from Europe and Canada.

The two core pillars of the ISSA are cross-nationality and inter-disciplinarity. Selected from a pool of over 120 applicants, the 20 successful applicants included 15 doctoral students and 5 post-doctoral fellows. Of these, six were from Canadian universities (including three doctoral students from UBC), one a Canadian studying in the USA, three each from Italy and Sweden, and the remaining participants were from research centres in Austria, Brazil, England (2), Germany, Northern Ireland and the Netherlands. In order to enhance networking opportunities, participants were housed on the UBC campus in four bedroom suites at Ponderosa Commons, grouped in terms of broad areas of interest in aging research and/ or clinical practice.

The group was also highly inter-disciplinary: the postdoctoral fellows included two sociologists, one schol-

ar in public health and two clinical researchers (geriatrics, nursing); the doctoral students included seven social scientists (economics, geography, psychology, and social gerontology), three epidemiologists, and five participants from clinical and health sciences – including nursing and pharmacy. Two participants had medical degrees in geriatrics. This mix of training in social and behavioural science, alongside biomedical and clinical research and practice, is unique to the ISSA model. It brings together a very diverse group of early career researchers whose backgrounds span the field of 'aging' research, and introduces them to people and perspectives that reflect the study of aging across the full spectrum from 'cells to society'.

Faculty mentors and presenters are fundamental to the success of the ISSA. Reflecting the ISSA's genesis in international collaboration, six core faculty had all participated previously: Giovanni Lamura (with a background in socio-economic and policy issues), Torbjörn Svensson (trained in pedagogics and ageing) and I (a sociologist) had helped launch the inaugural ISSA in 2012, as had Carlos Chiatti, an epidemiologist at the Italian National Centre. Prof. Susanne Iwarsson, of Lund University in Sweden heads the Swedish National Graduate School for Competitive Science on Ageing and Health. Ellen Tullo, a geriatrician at Newcastle University in the UK brought a unique perspective as a former doctoral student participant

**Ph.D. Student Valerie Berseth** has been awarded a Killam Doctoral Scholarship, the most prestigious award available to graduate students at UBC.

### "Reconcilable differences? Integrating Indigenous and Western knowledge"



For over three decades, governments, regulatory bodies, and scientists have embarked on a 'project of integration', attempting to incorporate Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) with Western scientific research about the environment. However, these efforts have been undermined by several problems, and TEK continues to occupy a marginalized and subordinate position to Western science. Yet meaningful and equitable collaboration between scientists and Indigenous communities is imperative in the face of pressing environmental concerns. Across the country, Indigenous communities are experiencing cultural, economic, and dietary losses as vital animal populations, such as polar bear, caribou, and salmon, are in decline. Addressing these issues requires diverse groups to assess the nature of the problem and the risks it poses, and develop sustainable solutions that can be implemented through local governance. My research investigates the ways in which different knowledge paradigms, Western scientific knowledge and TEK, are evaluated and used to inform policy and management of Pacific Salmon, one of the most iconic and valued group of species on the coast..

(Valerie's Research Description.)

"ISSA-3 @UBC" continues from previous page ...

at the 2012 ISSA, now an early career researcher bridging qualitative social science research and clinical practice.

The ISSA also showcased the many strengths of research on aging by faculty at UBC, with presenters demonstrating their skills as mentors and communicators. Faculty included Alison Phinney and Jennifer Baumbusch (Nursing), and, from the Faculty of Medicine: Michael Kobor, Epigenetics; Lynn Beattie and Ken Madden, Geriatric Medicine; Joanie Sims-Gould, Department of Family Practice; Heather McKay and Teresa Liu-Ambrose, Centre for Hip Health & Mobili-ty. Heather Stewart spoke about managing the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging at its UBC and Simon Fraser University sites. Faculty of Arts colleagues also contributed: Judy Segal (English), Julia Henderson (Theatre Studies), Christiane Hoppmann (Psychology) and Lindsey Richardson (Sociology).

A paper analysing the goals and outcomes of ISSA-1 and -2 has recently been published (Barabella et al., 2016). Evaluations of the ISSA model emphasized the benefits of interacting with established researchers, being part of a research network, and learning about other methodologies. Tangible outcomes to date include joint conference presentations and several publications involving students and mentors, as well as collaborative research proposals by former students.

Comparative analyses of ISSA-3 outcomes are in process and will be disseminated at the World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics in July 2017. Data from immediate post-ISSA evaluations highlight the "extremely useful, practical, engaging" aspects of the sessions, the "depth and interdisciplinarity of the content knowledge", describing ISSA as an "incredible experience" that made participants "feel well equipped with new tools to use for ...the future". In a global research context, students especially valued networking opportunities and "making connections at not only the international but also the interdisciplinary level".

ISSA-3 was made possible through the support of the Department of Sociology (with funds generated from housing the national CIHR Institute of Aging, 2008-2011) and from successful grant applications to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and UBC's Hampton Research Fund. The organizational model and lessons learned from IS-SA will hopefully enable the Department to offer a 'Family Studies' Summer School in future years, highlighting the strengths of the Minor within the Sociology department. ■

a place of mind THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA Faculty of Arts Department of Sociology

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