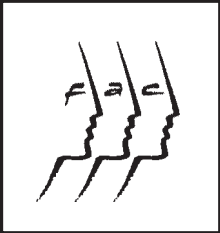


VANIER COLLEGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Vol 23 N° 1
SEPTEMBER
2005



From the Editor...



Welcome to Volume 23 of our Newsletter. Its aim is to provide a window into some aspects of Vanier culture: the syndical, pedagogical and social issues of concern to teachers and the wider community. If a piece touches your heart or tickles your funny bone, all the better.

While our central focus is topics of importance to teachers, everyone in the Vanier community—from student to Board member—is invited to contribute.

A complaint: As we go to press, past issues of the *VCTA Newsletter*, once archived under 'V' on the Vanier

web site and deleted during the summer, have not yet been reinstated, despite the VCTA Executive meeting with Administration and getting the go-ahead to do so. A problem with the chain of command? Who knows? What we do know is that archived issues had been frequently consulted, by the Vanier community and beyond. Hopefully we can get Newsletter archives up and running soon.

An invitation: Last year, guest co-editors added a much appreciated touch. I extend the invitation again to all teachers—new and old—to take up my offer. The guest co-editor may come up with ideas for articles or may be a sounding board for the editor. S/he may (or may not) participate in layout and proof reading—it all depends on you. If you're interested in finding out about the steps of Newsletter production, let me know. I promise not to overload you with work and past co-editors will tell you that it's kind of fun.

-Shirley Pettifer, Sociology Teacher

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: October 14, 2005 All contributions welcome!

pettifes@vaniercollege.qc.ca

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Vice Presidents: Eric Durling
Alena Perout
Secretary-Treasurer: Ian MacArthur

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Mon.	1:30 - 4:00	(Sylvie)
	4:00 - 5:30	(Eric)
Tues.	1:00 - 4:00	(Alena)
Wed.	12:00 - 1:00	(Sylvie)
	1:30 - 2:30	(Ian)
	3:30 - 5:00	(Eric)
Thurs.	8:30 - 9:30	(Ian)
	10:00-12:00	(Alena)

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8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Closed for lunch 12:00-1:00

The NEWSLETTER is published by the Vanier College Teachers Association, 821 Ste-Croix Ave., St-Laurent, QC H4L 3X9.

Shirley Pettifer is the Editor.

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V.C.T.A.

VANIER COLLEGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



Message from the President: SYLVIE TARDIF

**Acronyms are explained at end of article*

Welcome Back!

I hope you all had a great summer and a chance to relax! Your executive has decided to be in touch with you on a more regular basis this year. In addition to the regular issues of the *VCTA Newsletter*, we will produce frequent News Bulletins to keep you informed about local issues and the ongoing negotiations for our Collective Agreement. We have also decided to make the creation of a VCTA website a top priority.

We expect this year to be a very busy one with local matters such as SRAM, summative evaluation and the implementation of pedagogical activities related to the 173 hours. Arbitrations related to the two former matters are scheduled to be held at Vanier on Oct. 24 and Nov.16, 2005.

A General Assembly will be called for Thurs. Sept. 29 to address these local issues, including the pertinence of maintaining the work-to-rule campaign which is still in effect. We will also discuss priorities and recommendations related to the negotiation of our Collective Agreement and an action plan for the fall. Let me give you an overview of all these issues:

SRAM

Although we all agree that the College's consultation process was deficient at all levels—from Academic Council, to Joint Coordinators, to the Board of Directors—we will have to make a collective decision about whether we want to pursue the mandate given by the General Assembly, June 1, 2005. The Association Council of September 1, 2005 suggested that Academic Council members push for an «Overseeing Committee on SRAM» which would have college wide representation and which would run parallel to the «Transition Committee» proposed by the College.

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

The College has informed new teachers with less than three years seniority that they will apply the College Policy on summative evaluation. The VCTA disputes the Ad-

ministration's approach to carrying out this procedure. Arbitration hearings related to this matter will take place at Vanier on Oct. 14 and Nov. 16, 2005. I remind everyone that this is part of the government/employer's negotiation demand to append an evaluation process to our Collective Agreement, including requiring peer participation and coordinators doing administrative tasks.

WORK-TO-RULE and the IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 173 HOURS

Although less restrictive than it was three years ago, we ask all teachers to respect what is left of our work-to-rule campaign until our next General Assembly.

According to *Letter of Agreement No.12* which is about the *Recognition of the Working Hours of College Professors and the Application of New Salary Structure as of 2005-2006*, signed by FAC* and the CPNC*, on June 14, 2005: «...Prior to the beginning of each regular semester, the Academic Administration shall inform a professor, in writing, of the pedagogical activities that he or she is required to perform in addition to the activities inherent to the program.» **Please note that no specific project should be given to or accepted by any particular teacher or group of teachers.**

The 173 hours will not be implemented this semester. That means we are in a transition period during which we can initiate department discussions on possible pedagogical activities and participation in program activities, as per clause 4-1.03 of the Collective Agreement.

This transition period gives us the opportunity to decide what we want to do about the activities we boycotted under the work-to-rule campaign with no contravention to the *Letter of Agreement No.12*, cited above.

NEW SALARY STRUCTURE

(also addressed in *Letter of Agreement no. 12*)

All of us have now received a «TEACHING CONTRACT» stamped «FOR YOUR INFORMATION»

from the College. You do not need to sign it, nor do you need to return it to the College. This piece of paper replaces the “status of employee” form we used to get by mail.

Teachers with a Master’s degree will discover that the new salary structure in *Letter of Agreement No.12* is not reflected in the «TEACHER CONTRACT». The College has until Oct.14, 2005 to inform teachers in writing of its decision concerning the recognition of his or her Master’s degree for salary classification purposes. The College will return the bottom portion of the form that teachers were required to submit to the College by Sept.16, 2005 (Recognition of Master’s Degree for Remuneration Purposes). Shortly thereafter, teachers’ salaries will be adjusted retroactive to the 1st day of the 2005-06 contract year.

NEGOTIATIONS OF OUR COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT AND MOBILIZATION

One might well question the strike actions we took last spring given that we were required to make up those teaching days (to meet the 82 day semester rule) and given that we still saw our pay cut by 3.923 days plus the corresponding 20% pro-rata cut to our vacation pay.

But our actions did force the government to state exactly how it intends to write the orientations and objectives it deposited in February 2004 into our Collective Agreement. We now know that the gap between the government position and union demands is not just a result of the cost of our demands. We certainly share concerns on topics such as the legal framework of Cegeps, the declining enrolment in regional Cegeps, the ageing faculty and consequent need for massive renewal, the involvement of teachers in the pedagogical mission of Cegeps. However, we disagree about how to address these concerns.

To give you an idea: as of June 17, 2005, the government/employer side is demanding:

- The redefinition of department coordination to include a host of administrative duties related to department, program and institutional priorities of the College. They propose adding 145 FTE’s* to the whole Cegep system (48 Cegeps) at an average cost of \$60,000 per FTE. These FTE’s are designated as Type 1 (**teaching**), Type 2 (coordination) and Type 3 (program related activities including implementation, research, institutional development).

Note: Type 1—teaching—is their lowest priority. They are refusing to commit to adding designated teaching FTE’s unless we agree to take on all the other responsibilities described

above.

- The right to verify a new teacher’s disciplinary competence and pedagogical skill. The teacher would keep his/her hiring priority only after a “confirmation” at the end of his/her 2nd year of teaching and only after the Administration has done an evaluation in accord with the College’s policy.

Note: The teacher would have no grievance rights regarding any of the reasons for being refused “confirmation”... until after being granted “confirmation”.

- The possibility of inserting an appendix into the Collective Agreement, allowing the College to implement new teaching models that use ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies).
- The right to give Colleges provisional program authorization (PPA)—programs that meet very specific training needs for a pre-determined duration and, therefore, without any real possibility of becoming part of a permanent program offered.

Note: Any full time workload in these programs would not be regarded as a “poste” and therefore would have none of the rights and benefits related to a poste.

At our meeting of Sept. 8 and 9, 2005, our Negotiation Cartel Council (FAC-FEC {CSQ}*) voted unanimously to make TEACHING (so-called “Type 1” workload activity) our first priority by demanding the following:

- a reduction in the number of course preparations;
- a reduction in the number of students per class;
- a maximum CI* of 80 for all teachers and abolishing the CI 88 measure (teachers are paid extra when exceeding a CI of 88 for the year).

Regarding the other Cegep teachers’ federation, FNEEQ*, we have heard that they are just now getting the employer’s offer on the table, and that they plan to coordinate their mobilization efforts with their larger affiliation, the CSN* and the health sector, late this Fall.

More detailed documents will be distributed prior to General Assembly consultations of all FAC-FEC local unions. Collectively, we will have to decide what we are willing to do and how far we are willing to go to reach our negotiation goals. One thing is clear, the government/employer is not willing to accept even the status quo of our present Collective Agreement. Much is at stake.

Syndically yours,
Sylvie

**See bottom of page 5 for explanation of acronyms*

In the VCTA Office • C-101



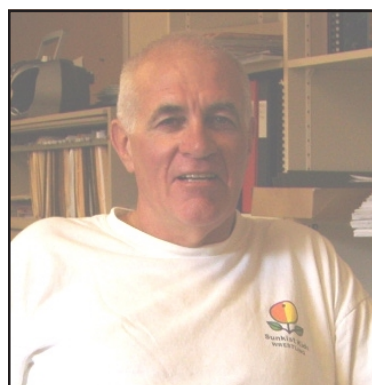
*Sylvie Tardif • President
Chemistry Teacher*



*Eric Durling • Vice-President
English Teacher*



*Alena Perout • Vice-President
Geography Teacher*



*Ian MacArthur • Sec./Treas.
Physical Education Teacher*



*Susan • Office Assistant
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday*



*Pat • Office Assistant
Thursday, Friday*

Explanation of Acronyms on pages 3 & 4

CI	Charge Individuel; a mathematical formula used to calculate individual teaching workload.
CPNC	Conseil Patronal de Négociation des Cégeps.
CSN	Conseil Syndical Nationale ; represents many workers, including those in the health field and teachers belonging to FNEEQ.
CSQ	Centrale Syndicale du Québec; represents workers in education, health, social services and daycare centres. FEC, with which we have formed a negotiation carted, is affiliated with

FAC	the CSQ. Fédération Autonome du Collégial, represents teachers in 17 colleges, including Vanier.
FEC	Fédération des Enseignantes et Enseignants de Cégep; represents teachers in 7 Cégeps; affiliated with the CSQ.
FNEEQ	Fédération Nationale des enseignantes et enseignants de Québec; represents teachers in 25 Cégeps and is affiliated with the larger CSN.
FTE	Full Time Equivalent; refers to teaching workload; often refers to total amount of teaching allocation.

October is Women's History Month

Arlene Steiger, Women's Studies Program

Ask your students to name some women who have played important roles in the movement for gender equality. I think you will find, as we have, that they know few. Women's movement is global but here we offer a fairly random short list of the women who have influenced the North American movement.

A small amount of research on any one of them opens the door to discussion of the complex relationship between gender, class, and race. Each life also offers an opportunity to reflect upon historical context and to critically examine the chosen route to gender equality.

Susan B. Anthony	Elizabeth Cady Stanton
Emmeline Pankhurst	Carrie Chapman Cott
Christabel Pankhurst	Sojourner Truth
Sylvia Pankhurst	Betty Friedan
Nellie McClung	Thérèse Casgrain
Emily Murphy	Lea Roback
Simone de Beauvoir	Gloria Steinem
Rosemary Brown	Angela Davis
Margaret Sanger	Mary Wollstonecraft
bell hooks	Françoise David
Alice Walker	Catherine MacKinnon

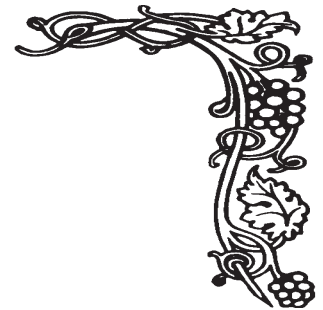


Arlene Steiger has taught in the Humanities Dept. for over a quarter of a century. She has served as a coordinator of curriculum in this department and continues to work here. Women's Studies has been a labour of love that dates from her first years at Vanier.

We hope that you will share this list with your classes and invite your students to add names to the list. There are no geo-political boundaries for this project. Send your additions to: steigera@vaniercollege.qc.ca



Faculty Praising Staff



Nicky Chéné
Mike Demole
Gloria Di Murro
Paul Fournier
Bill Petts
Kevin Roch

Kudos and a very special thanks to all the fine folks in the Print Shop for going above and beyond the call of duty to make sure that all our course outlines and course packs—even those delivered at the very last minute—were ready for the first day of classes. This was no easy feat! Down by at least one employee, we know your workload was brutal. Still, some of you came into work at the crack of dawn, stayed late, and even worked weekends to get the work done—and you did it all with grace and good humour.

A big thank you from all the teachers.
We could not do our jobs without you.



Academic Council Priorities for 2005-2006

Iannis Stavrianos

Academic Council, an important administrative body at Vanier College, is composed of the following member representatives:

Amanda Assaf	Student
Patrick Bouwman	Faculty
Wilma Brown	Administration
Gabriel Bulgarea	Faculty
Eric Durling	Faculty
Hodé Erdogan	Faculty
Caroline Hanrahan	Administration
Ricardo Herrera	Faculty
Serge Hervouet-Zeiber	Faculty
Jeanne Masterson	Faculty
Peggy McCoy	Administration
Janice Paquette	Faculty
Julie Plante	Faculty
Peter Ross	Academic Dean
Danielle Villemaire	Professional
Arlene Yamamoto	Support Staff

We anticipate an Academic Council which will be governed by the principles of mutual respect and honest, concrete debate over a variety of issues affecting the College. Above all, it is hoped that a strong sense of teamwork will lead to intelligent recommendations to other levels in the decision making process at Vanier.

Academic Council will oversee program revisions and evaluations in the coming year. Programs under revision are Building Systems Engineering Technology, Industrial Electronics, and Computer and Digital Systems. Program Evaluations of Special Care Counseling, Communications, Modern Languages, and Bridging Programs will also be discussed.

Revisions to By-Law no. 8 (on Academic Success) and no. 3 (on Academic Council) should preoccupy Council for a good part of the year. Revisions of Academic Policies, relating specifically to Physical Education courses, should be dealt with by the next meeting, Sept. 23, 2005.




Academic Council has already begun the discussions about revisions of AEC's (Attestation d'Etude Collégial; students with an attestation do not take general studies courses).

Other areas of debate will have to do with SRAM, the new admissions process; the appointment or renewal of the Academic Dean; finally, Academic Council will analyze and discuss the effects of the Academic Success Plan which began in 2004 and runs through to 2009.



Iannis Stavrianos, Vice-Chair of Academic Council, teaches English. His first courses at Vanier were in Cont. Ed in 1997

Kudos!

- 
Serge Hevouet-Zeiber is the recipient of the Vanier College Teaching Excellence Award for 2004-05. The award was presented to Serge, who teaches in the Modern Languages Program, at the June 2005 Graduation Ceremony.
- 
Chris Smith, of the Music Department, is the first to receive a new honour at Vanier College: teacher rookie of the school year 2004-05. This award recognizes exceptional contributions from newer teachers.
- 
Trip For Tolerance received the FAC Award for Contribution to College Life, 2005. On May 28, 2005, the Fédération Autonome du Collégial honoured those responsible for putting together the 2005 edition of the Trip for Tolerance. Marie-Andrée Bousquet (FAC Information Officer) and Jean-Marie Bergeron (FAC Awards Committee) presented the award to the event organizers: Matthieu Sossoyan, Jack Hirschberg, Marcia Goldberg, Ganesh Harilal, Angelika Maeser-Lemieux, Jacqui Paull, Karen Tennenhouse, Roger Guetta, and Pam Berlow.

The Open Door Network

by Maureen Jones

Have you ever heard a homophobic comment in your classroom or office and not known how to deal with it? Have you ever had a student request information or support on issues relating to sexual orientation and/or identity but not known what to do or where to find this information or support? Have you ever wanted to be more informed about issues related to sexual orientation and identity?

The Open Door Network has a mandate to help create a campus that is free of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and sexual identity. To this end, a series of interactive training sessions is being offered this fall to interested **staff, faculty,** and **professionals.**

These workshops are designed to help participants broaden their understanding of issues relating to sexual orientation and sexual identity and to promote understanding and respect in the College. Workshops are interactive and informative, and cover the following topics:

1. **Terms and Community Resources related to Sexual Orientation and Identity**
2. **The Art of Active Listening**
3. **Confronting Homophobia and Transphobia in the Classroom and at Work.**

These workshops will be offered this semester as three separate 45 minute sessions at Universal Break OR as one 2¹/₄ hour session on a select Friday (dates and rooms TBA).

In order to register for these workshops, or for further information, e-mail the Open Door Network at: odn@vaniercollege.qc.ca.

Please note: When registering for the workshops, indicate whether you wish to be registered for the three Wednesday sessions or the one Friday session. Those who preregistered for the workshops at the ODN launch do not have to register a second time.



From L to R: Marilyn More, Nancy Leclerc, Lisa Jorgensen, Maureen Jones, Evangeline Caldwell

New Generation of Vanier Teachers Need Opportunity to Debate the Issues

by John Tromp

I came to Vanier about four years ago, and soon became aware of and involved in the VCTA, serving on the VCTA Association Council from Fall 2003 to Winter 2005.

There are several issues that I would like to present as items for discussion. There are many teachers who have been part of the VCTA for years and have argued these issues in the past.

But there is a new generation of teachers, and if we don't have the same opportunity for discussions, the future of the VCTA will be based on some myths from a dimly remembered past. It is possible that after discussion, we decide that the way things are done now is the best way. But I think such conclusions would have more force if the new generation had the opportunity to debate and understand the issues.

Referendum vs General Assembly for Strike Votes...
Independent Federation vs Affiliation with a Larger Central Union...
Summative vs Formative Assessment...
To Strike or Not to Strike...



Union 101: Response to John Tromp, Part I

by Charles F. Levine

In the May issue of the Newsletter, John Tromp raised several interesting questions about the VCTA (and about unions in general). I would like to respond to the issues John raised in the first few issues of this year's Newsletter.

I'll begin with the issue of Summative v. Formative evaluation. John asks a perfectly sensible question: Wouldn't teachers have to be considered the best judges of their colleagues (presumably along with some input from students)? Why not, therefore, have teachers involved in Summative evaluation?

The answer to this question is relatively straightforward, and comes

from the legal system in which we live. Under Quebec law, you could say that unions and management are seen as legal adversaries. Only the College can fire people. If the Union does not always defend the rights (and jobs) of its teachers, it is subject to sanctions under article 47.2 of the Quebec Labour Code. Since all teachers must be protected by the union (even those who have not paid their \$2 to join the VCTA), having teachers involved in the Summative process (which can lead to dismissal) presents a clear conflict of interest under the law.

Allow me to offer an example. Years ago, we had a few teachers who managed to have problems with colleagues and the College on pretty

much an annual basis. Good union people would often ask: "Why are you defending this person? Everyone knows he/she should be fired!" The answer was then and is now that the Union must defend each and every teacher to the best of its ability, so teachers cannot be involved in the Summative evaluation process.

Charles F. Levine, who has been heard to describe himself as a dinosaur, has spent many years on the CRT (the French acronym for Labour Relations Committee), the VCTA Executive and the Executive of FAC, our Provincial Federation. He teaches Political Science and Humanities, has been Co-Editor of the VCTA Newsletter and continues to offer his exceptional proofreading talents.

THE AGELESS AND THE TIMELESS IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS:

A Reply to John Tromp

By Dr. Stephen Block

John Tromp raised some interesting and important questions in the last Newsletter. Most important for me was his reference to “a new generation of teachers [needing] the same opportunity for discussions [lest] the future of the VCTA ... be based on myths from a dimly remembered past.” In my article on the creation of a liaison office (see p. 16), written before I read John’s piece, I describe the liaison office as an urgent need to preserve what we know about our union’s activities and practices. Here, I respond more fully.

When I was a graduate student in the late 1980’s I attended an academic conference in my field of industrial relations. The keynote speaker was someone by the name of Jack Barbash. Barbash was a rare bird. A lifelong unionist and activist, he turned to the academe once his union activities were over. As Einstein would say, he had this uncanny knack of making the most complex matters seem simple. And there was little to dispute in what he was saying, it being immediately evident that his command of the subject was so detailed, precise and complete.

After his talk I had to approach him. As I shook his hand, the only thing I could think to say was: “Professor Barbash, thank you so much for writing *The Elements of Industrial Relations*”. I said it had saved me 15 years of anguished searching for answers. What I was referring to was the very short volume he had written which not only explains and summarizes industrial relations, but most importantly, is ageless and timeless. It lays out, as good science should, unchanging, axiomatic truths within the field in a clear, concise and synoptic manner. (Of course we are not supposed to speak of

social science in this way. But on such a rare occasion, I make an exception.)

Now first and foremost Barbash’s explanations concerned the relative functions, roles and styles of both sides. What became evident immediately was how well developed the systems on both sides were; that we all enter into pre-existing conditions. While there are managers of different types, as there are unions, the roles we expect them to play are essentially the same over time. It is as if they each have their own cultures, their own societies; one is interested in “cost discipline”, the other, mutual protection, adherence to hard fought-for rules governing working conditions, etc.

On the work society side, the union is a «special case» of the work society. Its primary objective being «bargaining effectiveness». John raised the point as to whether the strike is an effective or the most effective tool. But the strike weapon is not the only area where the issue of bargaining efficiency is important. It is the most visible result of considering how to be most effective and so attracts the greatest amount of attention. But without an understanding of what the union faces in order for it to be an effective bargaining agent, condemning the strike vote out of hand may be somewhat facile. There are reasons why the strike weapon now seems ineffective. For one, it is specifically targeted by employers and governments. And so while it is perfectly legitimate to question whether union tactics are effective or not, this requires more thought and time than we have here. So I intend to address this issue more fully in an upcoming column.

What I found most interesting while reading Barbash’s ideas was that while most of us, even those within the union, think we understand what managers do, or are supposed to do, far less is known or understood about the function of unions. In fact a source of contention even within the union is whether “managers should have the right to manage” as this calls into question what is sometimes seen as an unduly obstreperous union style. But then if we ask the question “what do unions do?” the answers become much more vague.

In many respects what unions do is what unions need to do and, as such, is far more complex than what managers do. In large part this is because unions have to react to what managers do. Managers set the agenda, or at least it is their intention to do so. And the law, in many respects, gives them the right to do so. Seldom are stances taken by intelligent unionists the result merely of an argumentative style, an obstreperous attitude or a “status quo” for status quo sake.

Usually the unionist with the stiffened resolve has adopted that stance in order to resist something—something that is, globally speaking, against the general interests of its membership. Such a stance can often look or be made to look inglorious and unflattering and is just as often made fun of by those unaware of or unsympathetic with union issues. But it would be a mistake for members to jump on such a bandwagon as the true purpose and effectiveness of union behaviour is far from evident from the outside.

This is why it is crucial for union members to be informed; especially of the precise reasons why unions behave the way they do concerning the issues that they are compelled to address. This in part explains my answer to one of John’s other questions concerning referenda vs. general assembly motion votes.

Referenda can be, and often are, ruled by gossip and innuendo; ask Arnold Schwarzenegger. A general assembly enables the union to explain its activities. And more often than not, an intelligent decision is taken which supports intelligent union principles, whether it be one which confirms the executive's position or otherwise.

The question is who best understands what those interests are, how do they acquire these understandings and how can we come to judge what legitimate, effective and skillful defenses of labour's side of the issue look like.

The answer to these questions seems to be played out in general assemblies where specific positions are taken and some are recognized to make sense when it comes to defending what unions should defend. Would that necessarily be the case if all discussion were led through this Newsletter? One would like to believe so, but one would also not wish to rely upon this being the case. There is, that is, no substitute for General Assembly attendance and votes.

It can be observed that some who are new to unionism, or those who care less about the details of what their union or its executive and support committees do, can make a lot of assumptions about unions that are unfair, unrealistic, uninformed and in the end contrary to their own interests and to general fairness principles.

In the case of John Tromp, clearly we have a success story: new faculty getting involved, getting informed and asking serious questions and in the end, defending union practices.

That is not to say that after careful consideration John would necessarily change his mind about, for example, having a referendum decide a strike. Regardless of whether the referendum idea attains popularity among faculty, my sense would be that such a move could well undermine the wisdom of the aged among us—those who have seen how certain union practices

have helped to advance the legitimate cause of union members while other practices, as appealing as they may seem, often result in the opposite of what is intended.

As a parting thought, we can say that John's reflections may suggest a sense of alienation or disaffection from the union, if not his then certainly that of others. But from my perspective this underscores the need for union members to be as active and involved in their union as they can be, including attending General Assemblies whenever possible. Such involvement itself may lessen the feeling that we are merely banging our heads against the wall when we have to decide to take action. In that respect, being informed, having a sense of "empowerment" and of not feeling disaffected or alienated are all linked. All that aside,

communication has to be a two-way street. And without the continuous input from its members, the union cannot itself be expected to be best informed or to render decisions in the best interests of our members and of those affected by our conditions of work.

In this column I would like to explore some of these questions on a regular basis and perhaps, if I can, respond to questions raised directly with me or those I often hear raised incidentally. I hope you read on.



Dr. Stephen Block teaches Humanities courses in media, history of ideas and in business ethics. He has a background in labour relations and sits on the CRT as well as Association Council.

In Louisiana by Albert Bigelow Paine

THE LONG, GRAY MOSS THAT SOFTLY SWINGS
IN SOLEMN GRANDEUR FROM THE TREES,
LIKE MOURNFUL FUNERAL DRAPERIES,—
A BROWN-WINGED BIRD THAT NEVER SINGS.

A SHALLOW, STAGNANT, INLAND SEA,
WHERE RANK SWAMP GRASSES WAVE, AND WHERE
A DEADLINESS LURKS IN THE AIR,—
A SERE LEAF FALLING SILENTLY.

THE DEATH-LIKE CALM ON EVERY HAND,
THAT ONE MIGHT DEEM IT SIN TO BREAK,
SO PURE, SO PERFECT,—THESE THINGS MAKE
THE MOURNFUL BEAUTY OF THIS LAND.

Albert Bigelow Paine was born in 1861 in New Bedford, Massachusetts. He is best remembered as the biographer of Mark Twain and the editor of Twain's letters. He was also a children's book author and novelist. He died in 1937.

Thanks to **Mark Prentice**, Anthropology teacher and Faculty Representative to the Board of Directors, for this submission.

Centre for Teaching and Learning Excellence: Year Two

Judy Macdonald

Learning Enrichment and Support Services for Programs

The Centre's fall activities began a week before school started. Workshops on PowerPoint (with Julie Plante), Basic First Class (Pam Berlow), Advanced First Class (Philippe Gagné), and Omnivox Grade-Keeper were held. Evaluations indicated a high level of satisfaction on the part of the participants. Subsequently, one teacher has asked for First Class workshops for her classes and now, another teacher has just reported she is using First Class to post weekly summaries of her lectures for students who were unable to attend her classes.

The tip sheets produced for these workshops are posted on the Centre's website (The Centre is listed on the Vanier A-Z and also under For Teachers Only.) Chris Hall, French and Modern Languages, has written a comprehensive guide for the Omnivox program and this guide can also be found on the website. This workshop series, with revisions and additions, will be repeated the week of January 16.

To come later in the semester are Basic and Advanced Word workshops as well as a workshop co-organized with Wanda Kalina, Office of the Academic Dean, on the Master Teacher Program. This last activity is a repeat of last year's very informative workshop in which Dianne Bateman, the coordinator of the program, gave an overview of the program's features and then Vanier teachers talked about their different perspectives as teachers and students in the program. This workshop will take place November 2, during UB.

I am also interested in hearing from department coordinators about what workshops their teachers might

possibly be interested in having the Centre organize for them. I would be pleased to organize workshops Wednesday noons, Friday afternoons, or any time when a number of members of a department could attend. Possible workshop topics include: classroom management/strategies, student evaluation, learning theories, competencies, etc.

The Centre has produced a number of resources for you:

- The website now includes a section on cultural diversity.
- If you are taking your students on day or extended trips, you need to check the section on student trips.
- The bulletin board opposite faculty mailboxes in Building A is constantly updated. One useful resource presently shown is Concordia's Centre for Teaching and Learning Services. Of particular note is the Centre's video series highlighting the practices of excellent teachers. (<http://teaching.concordia.ca/index.shtml>)
- Waiting for you at the Reserve Desk in the Library is Fran Davis' compilation, *Readings on Pedagogical Theory and Classroom Practice*.

On a final note, I want to thank the Advisory Committee of the Centre. We met three times in H05; you gave me wonderful advice, we ate well, and the company was good. Others are still welcome to join. Just let me know.

Judy Macdonald has worked at Vanier as Coordinator of The Learning Centre since 1973 and as Coordinator of the Language School since 2002. She is also now responsible for the Mathematics & Science Centre as well as the Centre for Teaching and Learning Excellence. She can be reached at 7903; macdonaj@vaniercollege.qc.ca

Professional Development Funds

The maximum amount available to individual teachers is \$500. Teachers with less than a full time workload receive proportional funds. I.e. half a workload = maximum of \$250. It is possible to combine 2 years of PD funds for one event (maximum \$1000), with a letter addressed to the VCTA prior to filling in an application.

Guidelines and application forms are available at the VCTA office: C101. Applications should be submitted to the PD Committee, c/o VCTA Office, 3 weeks before the start of any activity.

You do not need to submit an application for Employee Fitness activities or CPR renewal courses, but you do need a receipt to claim the expense.

Members of the bipartite PD Committee for the 2005-06 year are Ian MacArthur for the VCTA and Nancy Wargny for the Administration.

When is Enough Enough?

Peggy McCoy

- *There wasn't anything overt the teacher could put her finger on. The student, in her class, was just annoying. He would arrive for class just a few minutes late but the arrival would be heralded by the classroom door loudly bursting open. He would walk in front of her as he made his way to his seat. There was no acknowledgement, on his part, that anything had been going on in class prior to his arrival. After taking his seat, he would lean over to the students near him and ask in an exaggerated whisper what page they were on. His attitude wasn't that much different than many others and she wondered if she should speak to him after class.*
- *This was one of the few times in his 25 year teaching career that he had to psyche himself up to go to class. That student who asked one question after another would inevitably be there. Under the guise of being a student who was motivated to do well, she would hijack the lecture by dissecting a statement he made into the most trivial points. Every time her hand shot up, he groaned inwardly while the rest of the class was not quite so constrained. At the beginning, he had tried to answer her questions, after all, it wasn't everyday you had an interested student actively asking questions. It was now causing the rest of the class to lose interest and become increasing restless.*
- *The student's attendance in class had been sporadic at best. Any of the assignments he had handed in were carelessly done and often had no direct relationship to the instructions that had been given. When he was in class, more often than not, he was asleep. When he wasn't asleep he vacillated between trying to ingratiate himself with his cooing, complimentary comments about her teaching style or her appearance or calling out rudely in class with comments such as "What are you talking about?" "Ya don't know what you're talking about!" "I'm not listening to this shit." Just when she was ready to confront him, he would put his head down and go to sleep. She wondered if it was worth making an issue of his behaviour. His changeling personality was disconcerting and maybe he would just stop coming to class.*
- *He loomed in the doorway of the office. "I wanna talk to you about the mark you gave me on the paper." The teacher looked up from the correcting he was doing and responded "We already spoke about this. You didn't follow the instructions for the assignment and what you did was not well researched." The student moved closer, saying "You don't understand. I need this mark. If I fail this course, my parents are going to*

*kill me and besides it's not my fault I didn't understand what you wanted." Responding, the teacher said, "I'm sorry but there is nothing I can do." Shouting, "You're a f**king a**hole, I'm not finished with this", the student slams out of the office causing books to fall off shelves.*

All of these situations have occurred and represent only a few of the situations I regularly hear about from teachers. Society, in general, appears to be more and more tolerant of rude and even threatening behaviour. Who defines acceptable behaviour? When can behaviour be defined as being disruptive?

Specific examples of disruptive behaviour include, but are not limited to the following:

- A student who physically confronts another person
- A student who verbally abuses another person
- A student who interrupts the classroom process by:
 - consistently being late to class or leaving class early or walking in and out during class
 - using cell phones, pagers, or other electronic devices in class
 - making remarks out of turn
 - taking over the lecture
 - dominating (in many different ways) classroom discussion
 - constant noisy shuffling of papers or food or other material

Some of our students are legalistically overdeveloped and socially underdeveloped: they are much more aware of their rights than of their responsibilities. They commonly hold the belief that they are anonymous within our system and that there are no rules at college.

In the past, the students took their behavioural cue from the teacher. Now, they take their cue from the most disruptive student in the class. Sometimes students are disruptive simply because they can be. It's been my experience that until attention is called to the offending behaviour, it will continue. Furthermore, we cannot assume that the basics of appropriate behaviour have been taught by someone else.

Recently, there have been increased reports of vulgar and offensive language being used. The other new develop-

ment appears to be the use of email to intimidate. Not surprisingly, there is a hesitation or reluctance to confront offenders because of fear of reprisal. Too often, students sense this and use it to their advantage.

What to do? There is no ONE solution to behaviour problems. The first plan of action is to decide what type of behaviour you expect in your classroom and very clearly communicate this. Set limits. Make sure they are consistent and more importantly, enforceable. Nip inappropriate or disruptive behaviour in the bud. Explain which behaviour is inappropriate. Be very specific. It's not enough to demand that a student behave in a respectful way. "Respect" has to be defined in behavioural terms. For example, respect is shown when you do not interrupt a person who is speaking.

Ignore challenging questions. When a student challenges your authority, redirect the individual's attention to the issue at hand. Answering those questions that are often an attack on your competence and authority diverts the

issue and leads to a power struggle that is counterproductive. Remain professional in your tone of voice and demeanour. If things have reached this point, you want to de-escalate the situation and remove yourself from it. Your response may directly affect what happens next.

Finally, policies and regulations do exist within the college to support you. Numerous cases are handled effectively each year. Often, when I meet with students, describing the offending behaviour and outlining the consequences has an immediate effect. You are not alone and having a problem with classroom discipline does not directly correspond to your effectiveness as a teacher. Please feel free to discuss situations or strategies with me. There is always a solution.

Peggy McCoy joined the staff of Vanier College 32 years ago. For several years as Coordinator of Student Development and more recently as Coordinator of Student Services, Peggy has seen generations of students pass through our hallowed halls and cross the stage as graduates.

Come Join KaBOOM!

Alena Perout

On Thursday, October 20th come join the Vanier College daycare, members of the Vanier Community, KaBOOM!, and the Home Depot, as we work together to build a much needed playground for our daycare children!

We are looking for 150 volunteers from the Vanier Community to participate in this one-day activity. Volunteers will be organized into groups with a group leader, and each group will have one responsibility on the building site. If you are willing and able, bring your hammer, screwdrivers, or wrenches. (Sorry, no power tools—there will be children about).

HOW ALL THIS HAPPENED

After many years of planning, in the Fall of last year the new Vanier Daycare building finally opened its doors. With budgets exhausted, there were no funds to construct a proper play area for the children. We

started fundraising, but we all assumed that it would take at least another 5 years before a play area could be built. And then

KaBOOM!

Our wishes were answered. We were selected as a Canadian KaBOOM! Building site. (The Daycare had made an online application a few years previous.)

WHAT IS KaBOOM!?

KaBOOM! got started shortly after Darrell Hammond, a young community organizer, moved to Washington DC. An article about two toddlers, who had chosen an unlocked car near their home to play in on a hot summer day had caught his attention. Both children were found dead of suffocation.

Darrell Hammond and Dawn Hutchison then founded KaBOOM!, a name that symbolizes the explosion of

energy unleashed through community empowerment. The goal is to provide safe and fun play opportunities for children. You can find more information on KaBOOM! by visiting their website at www.kaboom.org.

HOME DEPOT

Home Depot has had a relationship with KaBOOM! for over 10 years. They have been working together in Canada since 2003. They have agreed to be our corporate partner in this project. Home Depot's promise "to build 1000 playgrounds in 1000 days" can only be answered when communities—like ours—volunteer to work together on these important projects.

I know that the Vanier Community can make our wish for a safe playground come true, with Home Depot and KaBOOM!'s help.

THE SCHEDULE

Although we are still in the beginning stages of our planning, we have already taken many steps to see the project come to fruition.

On August 19th, we had our first planning meeting with the Daycare children. They all had the opportunity to draw and talk about the playground of their dreams. All ideas were considered, all drawings were placed in a pile in the middle of the room, and then we all spoke the magic word—KaBOOM!—to ensure that the adults would get the message through some sort of osmosis. It worked! We came up with ideas that were consistent with what the children wanted.



Between now and October 18th-20th, the various project committees will choose the final plans, organize food donations, organize PR, contact the press, find volunteers, and find group leaders for build-day, among many other tasks that we have been assigned. (Committees are made up of members of KaBOOM!, volunteers from Home Depot and the Vanier Daycare; everything is done by committee)

On **Prep-Day, October 18**, 20 volunteers will prepare the grounds for the project: level the grass, pour concrete posts, and basically prepare the site for build-day. As on build-day, we will provide volunteers with food and beverages.

On **Build-Day, October 20**, we will have over 100 volunteers from Home Depot stores all over the Montreal area. We know we will have full participation from the Vanier Community including students and teachers from Early Childhood Education, Architectural Technology, Explorations, and Communications (to take pictures), not to mention volunteers from all sectors of the College, and anyone else who would like to join us with their tools.

Build-day will start first thing in the morning, rain or shine, and will end when the project has been completed. It will be a great day for St-Laurent, for the College, and for the community as a whole, and we thank everyone involved for the opportunity to work on such a project.

If you are interested in joining us, or have questions about the project, feel free to contact me by e-mail at perouta@vaniercollege.qc.ca. Building volunteers must be confirmed 1 week before the building day for insurance purposes. Everyone is also invited to help with the food and drinks, or also to encourage our builders.

ON THE CREATION OF A LIAISON OFFICE(R)

by Dr. Stephen Block

Sometime prior to the publication of the last *VCTA Newsletter*, I had approached members of the VCTA Executive with the idea of creating, whether formal or informal, official or unofficial, a liaison office. My thoughts on the subject anticipated a column John Tromp wrote in the May issue of the *Newsletter*, or perhaps it was the other way around. Let me explain the premises for the office, not necessarily in order of priority.

1. It is true that in each generation those new to labour relations have their own debates. But often what is needed is a grounding or an understanding of the mechanics and the reasons for the mechanics of industrial relations.
2. We hear grumblings, whether justified or not, whether well articulated or not, that the union is not in touch with the grass roots, or there is some other complaint about its manner of functioning.
3. The worst possible consequence of such grumblings would be the undermining of confidence in the union. This would, in the end, be bad for all faculty. The ultimate goal of the office would in fact be to prevent this.
4. Sometimes all that is required is a clarification or an explanation of processes and procedures.
5. There is a considerable body of understanding and information among senior members who have been affiliated with the union for many years. My original thought was to assemble some of this knowledge so that it could be passed on—to familiarize new faculty with traditions, methods of handling specific types of issues, reasons for taking positions, as well as to offer answers to questions about matters which are understood through years of experience and practice.

(Though I have only been part of this union for 8 years, my background in labour relations enables me to see what the union has done and challenges which potentially lay ahead with a changing of the guard.)

My view is that this has been a very good union with a lot of highly knowledgeable members whose understanding needs to be used to fertilize the knowledge for a new generation and make possible a process of maintaining and passing on a good and proper tradition.

6. In General Assembly meetings, we often see that regardless of the currents of dissatisfaction, or in some cases misunderstanding, when a senior person respected by the assembly speaks up, other members tend to fall in and add their support.
7. This does not mean such an office should be used to stifle criticism or deeply felt positions. Nor should it attempt to sweep questions under the rug. Instead it can be used as a back channel to the union (executive) and a means of two-way communication.

8. In sum then, the purpose of the office would be to:
 - allow for open discussion;
 - articulate viewpoints and allow for reasoned discussion and replies over time;
 - provide information to all members, but perhaps most notably those who have joined most recently;
 - provide information on general policy and procedures;
 - create a sense, for those who consider themselves in the minority, that they have a voice, and thereby...
 - create a pressure valve which would allow for the expression of disaffection, for whatever reason, within a context whereby members would feel included and welcomed by their union.

None of this is to lay blame at the executive's feet, nor to create the impression that one needs to take sides. Rather the purpose of the office would be to create a neutral space within the union for the airing of issues. The liaison officer would not and should not be perceived as taking sides. However, and this to me is a fundamental proviso:

The overall purpose of the office would be to preserve the good faith reputation of the union (executive) and the faith that the members have in their union (and by extension its leadership). That is to say, the primary purpose of the office would be to further the goals of the union, strengthen its members' adherence and hence its overall strength, do so by being a source of information which would, in part at least, keep members informed by answering or addressing the types of issues which John raised in his article in the May issue of the *Newsletter*.

Industrial relations, like God, moves in mysterious ways. What we see is not always what we get, nor is it what it appears to be from the outside. Part of the job of a union is to continuously refresh the minds of its members and bring along new members with information which in some cases is age-old. Being age-old certainly should not be understood as too old, out of date or out of touch. Truths learnt in the 1930's and 1940's are as valid today as they were then. But they always have to be explained anew because their truth is far from obvious.

An effort should be made by members to familiarize themselves with these truths and processes and procedures. But that is not always so simple. The office of liaison, would, ideally, facilitate such a process of familiarization and would, in the end, strengthen adherence to the union. I have some ideas on how to go about doing this, and I begin with this column.

Dr. Stephen Block teaches Humanities courses in media, history of ideas and in business ethics. He has a background in labour relations and sits on the CRT as well as Association Council.



Marc Belanger

When I was growing up, no children in the neighbourhood went to camp. The streets, parks and even the schoolyards were our playgrounds. But society has changed, and for many reasons, many more children now go to day camps throughout the city. As much as my wife and I have an aversion to institutionalised “fun” for our children, we look outside at the deserted streets and realise that we must go with the flow. So we signed them up at the Vanier SuperCamp.

I had heard good things about the camp, and knew some of the people that were involved, so we were confident about leaving our children with them. That first week exceeded all our expectations. We were very impressed by the organization, care, and range of activities offered at the camp. The kids loved it, and slept very well at night!

Before this becomes a shameless promotional pitch for the SuperCamp, let me present a few details.

Until 1994, the Sports Complex swimming pool would be drained at the end of the Winter semester and left empty until classes resumed in August. A small group of people at Vanier had the idea that the Sports Complex could be used in a productive way during the summer. Thus was born the SuperCamp.

It was 1993 and the College was experiencing declining student enrolment, with a corresponding decline in revenues. The premise for a day camp at Vanier College was to make productive and profitable use of unused facilities during the summer hiatus. The newly-appointed Director-General, Michael Macchiagodena, backed the idea.

Whorn Roy, a Physical Education teacher, travelled to California where he visited some traditional sports camps. He also saw some supercamps, which featured the traditional adventure/challenge activities, but added an educational component as well. Whorn came back with a vision of a multi-dimensional educational day camp, and the following summer, under his directorship, the Vanier SuperCamp enrolled its first campers.

That first summer, the camp ran for 6 weeks, with 20 staff (including 6 Vanier faculty and staff members) and

500 campers. As the camp now celebrates its 12th anniversary, there are over 100 staff members and an average of over 500 campers per week!

All instructors hired at SuperCamp must be at least 17 years of age and must be presently studying at the college level or have been accepted at a college. The majority of instructors are Cégep and University students, with a few Vanier faculty and staff members also.

The camp runs a Leadership course, which serves as a training ground for future instructors. The camp is also a recruiting device, and many “SuperCampers” eventually become Vanier students.

The camp, originally an off-shoot of the college, became an autonomous, non-profit corporation, based at Vanier College in 2000. Revenues generated by the camp have always reverted back to the College, which uses these funds to cover the operating expenses of the camp. All profits accrue to the College’s operating budget, and may help to buy such things as music instruments, lab equipment, or new computers.

The camp is co-ed, bilingual, and runs for 8 weeks from the end of June until mid-August. The cost is \$175 per week (\$160 for a second child). Anyone who has looked into similar camps will know that this is one of the most affordable camps around. Furthermore, all Vanier employees receive a discount and pay only \$100 per week per child.

Campers are between 5 and 15 years old; they are divided into groups by age and sex, each group being assigned to one or two monitors. Each group is scheduled to participate in four of the many activities each day, but—something unique amongst day camps—each child is free to choose the final two activities. True to the mandate of being multi-dimensional, a child can choose from floor hockey, gymnastics, creative writing, math, laser quest, rock-climbing, swimming, freeze-frame (digital photography), music, art, ...

The SuperCamp office is located on the main floor of the Sports Complex, room G-103, and is open between 10 am and 4 pm, Monday to Friday. Beginning in February, the camp conducts orientation tours each Thursday evening. If you would like to know more about the camp, there is a website at: <http://www.vaniercollege.qc.ca/supercamp/>



In his short time at Vanier, **Marc Belanger** has taught Sociology courses, Research Methods, the Integrative Project, Explorations courses and Quantitative Methods. Always ready for a challenge, he is usually the first to raise his hand when volunteers are needed. He would like to thank Nita Cheong, Ian Macarthur, Whorn Roy, and Rick Yuen for their comments and information for this article.



Le survenant

Geneviève Guévremont

Known in English as *The Outlander*, this book review is for the Francophiles among us. It is the story of a stranger who wanders into a tiny Quebecois village near Sorel at the turn of the century. He will settle down with a family, and do work on their farm for his keep. But he is a mystery man, as no one knows his name. The people of the village take to calling him the Outlander, and he refers to himself using this nickname. His being there changes the dynamics of the relationships within the family and even the village. This wonderful bit of Quebecois literature gives us a glimpse of a period of our history that is disappearing.

A movie based on the film was showing a few months ago, but the novel, a classic, is a great occasion to skip the moving pictures and get into the text. The work is beautifully written, and takes us back to the time of our grandparents (or great-grandparents). The language reflects the era, and within this slightly older French language are woven English expressions: the beauty of the written words is the real appeal of this book.

*Thanks to **Lyne Marie Larocque** for this submission. Lyne Marie teaches Sociology, Methodology and Explorations courses.*



“About Auschwitz”

Photographs: Judith Lerner Crawley

8th Annual Holocaust Education Series
Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre

“About Auschwitz” Judith Lerner Crawley

12 September to 2 October 2005
Monday to Friday: 10am to 5:30pm
Saturday: 1 to 4pm • Sunday: 12 to 4pm

Cathedrale Christ Church
635, rue Ste-Catherine O., Montréal

In 2002, Montreal photographer and daughter of survivors Judith Lerner Crawley visited the Holocaust's most infamous extermination camp. Thirty black and white photographs capture the complexity of her emotional and artistic experience

Photos, without text: www.vaniercollege.qc.ca/events/holocaust03/crawley_exhibition.html

WORMS *by Sandra Alcosser*

Some days he'd rub two pegs together
until they made a greasy hum
like rain, the sound of moles
gnawing the dirt's grain, the song
soils sing before a quake,
and the red bodies would hang
above the ground in a kind of confusion
or ecstasy. They would writhe.

The farmer showed me
the way worms made love
in concrete, coffin-shaped beds
on mattresses of moss and peat, slipping
under the rubber collars of each other,
joyous, shy, nervous, taking turns.
Androgynous worms, their pale larva
rising like dew on black earth.

He told me about the sweet spot
in the warm dirt where he found
the wild ones, night crawlers
a foot long. How he worked
day and night—plastic sky
dripping on his neck—preached
on Sundays, sixteen years old,
reeking of worm sweat.

We drove around his slow
Louisiana Baptist town, the square
garlanded with green metallic boughs,
red Noels, though it was October.
There was one movie house.
The Bijou of course. First floor—
expensive, gummy, for whites only.
Blacks sat in the rafters for a quarter.

Filmy bayous surrounded
blank brown cotton fields,
fluttered with white heron.
Once a black man walked
by a white girl and she ran.
He never said hello. The citizens
dragged him from prison,
burned the man alive.

But that's an old story.
This one's new—a black boy
sat in that same prison five years,
innocent too, and when the town freed him
he headed for the Victorian house
he'd watched each night like television—
the illuminated window
of an eighty-year-old couple—

he knifed them both, raped the woman,
what felons become legend to.
If you tend worms your whole life,
dig their beds, stir the eggs,
sort the dark segmented bodies,
you'll lose the pattern of your own
flesh. The whorls of your fingers
will vanish. A worm can eat anything—

two by four, dog, human.
I know this world, said the farmer,
I've listened to worms my whole life
stirring in slime. I know where
we come from, and despite all our slick
designs, I know where we return.
This town's passed more than once
through the slippery tunnels of worms.

Sandra Alcosser was born in Washington, DC, in 1944, and grew up in South Bend, Indiana. She received her B.A. from Purdue University in 1972 and an M.F.A. from the University of Montana in 1982, where she studied with Richard Hugo. She is the author of *Except By Nature* (Graywolf Press, 1998), which received the Academy's 1998 James Laughlin Award and was selected by Eamon Grennan for the 1997 National Poetry Series; *Sleeping Inside the Glacier*, a collaboration with artist Michele Burgess (1997); and *A Fish to Feed All Hunger* (1993), which was selected by James Tate to be the Associated Writing Programs Award Series winner in poetry. Her poems have appeared in *The American Poetry Review*, *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, *Ploughshares*, *Poetry*, and *The Yale Review*

Thanks to Mark Prentice for this submission.

VCTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY Thursday, September 29, 2005 • 6:00 p.m.

If you want a meal, confirm your presence at ext. 7053
or by e-mail: vcta@vaniercollege.qc.ca

N.B. Bring the September 21 FAC documents you received in your mailboxes

The 5th Annual Social Science Festival

The Tree of Knowledge

Miles DeNora

As the organizer of this year's Social Science Festival, I have the pleasure to inform the Vanier teaching community that from October 17th to the 21st a fantastic collection of speakers will be appearing at the College. There will be a number of presentations by Vanier teachers as well as outside speakers. The varied group of speakers should appeal to virtually all disciplines at Vanier, not just the Social Sciences. I would like to encourage all Vanier teachers to bring their classes to the various presentations. Due to overwhelming popular demand, there will also be balloons at this year's festival.

The schedule for the Festival will be distributed in mailboxes in the coming weeks; it will also be available online through the Social Science Web site. If you would like to reserve a spot for your class or you have an idea to share with me, please contact me at denoram@vaniercollege.qc.ca or by phone, extension 7521. I hope to see you all there!

Sneak Preview of Some Festival Events

Native Cultural Issues

Jambalaya: The Global Journey of a Southern U.S. Melody

Beyond Klezmer: The Changing Face of Yiddish Music

The Underground Economy

Educational Journeys from Pole to Pole: Climate Change, Leadership and Passion

Fair Trade Issues

Egyptian Magic

Islamic Law in Canada

Still You-A New Improved Version: All About Self-Esteem and How to Raise it!

The Ron Charbonneau Memorial Lecture

Student Panel : The Street or School

From the 'Pit' to the 'Pogey': Notions of Identity and Community in a Former Coalmining Town

RCMP Assistance with Training for the U.N. Investigators Responsible for Investigating the Genocide in Rawanda

Canada World Youth: Cultural Exchanges with Africa

The Stephen Lewis Foundation—HIV/AIDS in Africa: Witnessing the Pandemic

Montreal and Black History

The Archaeological Dig

And much, much more !

Social Science Festival • October 17th to the 21st

TRIP FOR TOLERANCE

Once again this year, Vanier College and Jewish Studies will be sponsoring the Trip for Tolerance to New York and Washington DC. The objective of this trip is to foster tolerance among the multi-ethnic and multi-religious student populations that make up the varied Vanier community. The trip helps us learn about the common aspirations and tribulations faced by all communities, the importance of promoting understanding, mutual good will, and mutual cooperation, and promotes awareness of Vanier's uniqueness as a College that serves a vibrant and diverse student body dedicated to promoting these goals.

On behalf of the students, faculty and support staff involved in making the Trip for Tolerance a true success story, I would like to thank everyone for their support for this fascinating and invigorating experience.

I remind you:
Recycling Paper =
Helping the Trip for Tolerance!

Matthieu Sossoyan, Anthropology

Trip for Tolerance receives the 2005 FAC Award for Contribution to Student Life.



From L to R: Eric Durling (VCTA), Ganesh Harilal (Trip leader 2004), Karen Tennenhouse (2004-05), (hidden) Pam Berlow (2005), Matthieu Sossoyan (main organizer and trip leader, 2004-05), Roger Guetta (2005), Jack Hirschberg (creator and trip leader 2000, 2004), (partly hidden) Jacqui Paull (2004-05), Marcia Goldberg (creator and trip leader 2000, 2004), Jean-Marie Bergeron (FAC Awards Committee), Marie-Andree Bousquet (FAC Information Officer)

Someone must teach the teachers: professor

SARAH SCHMIDT
CANWEST NEWS SERVICE

Universities tend to approach undergraduate teaching in an “amateur fashion” and often assess students using “trivial and inauthentic” methods, a leading Canadian authority on teaching and learning said last week.

In a frank keynote address to the Canadian Summit on the Integration of Teaching and Research, hosted by the University of Alberta, Christopher Knapper issued a challenge to university administrators and professors, saying the “need for change is urgent.”

“University teaching is one of the very few professions where practitioners receive almost no formal preparation for their work, where there is no process for the accreditation of minimum competence, and where involvement in continuing professional education is uncommon,”

said the professor emeritus of psychology at Queen’s University and past president of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

Knapper’s scathing assessment comes as Canadian universities are revamping undergraduate programs in response to less than stellar student reviews of the quality of the learning experience. Also, teaching resource offices — which provide support for professors and conduct research on instructional practices — are becoming more common on campuses, as are teaching workshops for newly hired professors.

Despite these steps, Knapper told delegates, “there is a great deal about university teaching that remains problematic, and which stubbornly resists the precepts about good practice that developers have been preaching for several decades.”

He singled out “overwhelmingly didactic” teaching; over-re-

liance on traditional lectures; “trivial and inauthentic” assessment methods; curriculum development that “relies far too much on disciplinary tradition and faculty interests rather than student and societal needs,” and often superficial “evaluation of teaching effectiveness and learning outcomes.”

Canadian universities know they have much work to do on the teaching file.

Last year, the University of Calgary launched a new faculty certificate program. The University of British Columbia has opened a new research institute devoted to university teaching; it also spends \$3.5 million annually to fund pilot projects designed enhance teaching and learning.

As part of a new initiative to elevate the status of undergraduate teaching alongside research accomplishments, the University of Ottawa produced a white paper last year on best practices in teaching.

*The Gazette, Montreal, August 13, 2005
Education Supplement, p. 12*

THE MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM

Come and find out more about it!

November 2 • Universal Break • Room B221

Odds 'n' Ends

Teacher to Teacher Etiquette:

It's always a good idea to erase the boards and put the desks back into rows when you leave a classroom, even if it is the last class of the day. A Cont. Ed. teacher may be using that classroom after you.

Social Justice Committee at Vanier:

All members of the Vanier Community are welcome to join this Committee, composed of students, staff, professionals and faculty.

Next meeting is October 14, 2:30 pm.

Contact persons: eric.lamoureux@mail.mcgill.ca and millerd@vaniercollege.qc.ca

8th Annual Holocaust Education Series:

Numerous events in Montreal until October 2. Information pamphlet available in C101. At Vanier, Mon. Sept. 26, 10:00 am, Neil Caplan hosts film director, Gary Beitel and a showing of his film *My Dear Clara*. caplann@vaniercollege.qc.ca for more info.

Concordia University Seminar Series:

Wednesdays, 16:30-18:00 Room LB677

October 26:

Youth and Social Change: From Islam to Hip-Hop (Marie Nathalie LeBlanc)

November 9:

The Culturo-Political Activism of Islamist Women in Pakistan (Amina Jamal)

November 16:

Aesthetics: Detached Appreciation or Responsiveness to Connections? (Katja Neves-Graca)

November 30:

"I may be an English bastard but I'm never lazy": The Fetish for Classification among Hospital Porters (Nigel Rapport)

The Hubert Guindon Memorial Lecture

Fri. Oct. 7, 5:00 pm.

The lecture will be given by retired sociology professor Kurt Kohassohn. A wine and cheese reception will follow. Admission is free. J. A. DeSève Cinema, 1400 de Maisonneuve W. This is one of the events celebrating the 40th Anniversary of Concordia's Sociology & Anthropology Dept.

Simone de Beauvoir Institute

Fri. Sept. 30, 1:30 pm in MU-101

From Greeks to Geeks: Feminist Mythologies in the Comics

Presentation by Dr. Lilliane S. Robinson

Université de Montréal,

Dept. de Sociologie Celebrates 50th Anniversary : Thurs. Sept. 29, 16 :15 h, Pavillon Roger Gaudry, Salle M-415. J. Rogers Hollingsworth, Professor of History and Sociology at the University of Wisconsin presents: *The Performance of the US System of Science*.

Washington Post Neologisms and Style Invitational:

Abdicatate (V): to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach;

Oyster (N): a person who sprinkles his conversation with Yiddishisms;

Osteopornosis (N): a degenerate disease.

Buddhist Wisdom:

View all problems as challenges. Look upon negativities that arise as opportunities to learn and to grow. Don't run from them, condemn yourself, or bury your burden in saintly silence. You have a problem? Great. More grist for the mill. Rejoice, dive in, and investigate. *Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, "Mindfulness in Plain English"*

Dilbert



By Scott Adams

DON'T FORGET

**OCTOBER 14 = DEADLINE
FOR NEXT ISSUE**

**All contributions
welcome!**

