Open Houses

It is that time of year where we ask our fabulous faculty, current students and alumni to talk about GLS to friends and family because word-of-mouth is still the best form of advertising we have. Please welcome people to attend one of our open houses to find out more about the program and application details.

Open Houses in GLS Library Harbour Centre Campus
Room 2403

Friday, January 26, 2018 7pm

Friday, February 23, 2018 7pm
As of January 1, 2018, Stephen Duguid is officially Professor Emeritus! He will continue in the program as the Simons Chair. In this role, he will continue working with alumni and mentoring current students. Steve has dedicated the last 27 years to the GLS program as a passionate instructor and dedicated director. He has pushed for the program to grow in new ways over the years and tirelessly fought to keep the very best aspects of it the same. We wish you well in your retirement, and are thankful you will continue to support the program in your new capacity as Simons Chair.

Gary McCarron will serve as Acting Director of GLS while Sasha Colby continues her sabbatical until fall 2018.

Upcoming Events—

**January 14 or 21**

There are Seminars on Islamic History for travellers to Spain May on 14 or 21 January based on a reading of the first part of Marshall Hodgson’s *The Venture of Islam* (room 2280 at 2:00).

**February 4 or 25**

Seminar on pp. 244-471 of Volume 3 of *In Search of Lost Time* Reading Group on 4 or 25 February. GLS Library

Contact Stephen Duguid at duguid@sfu.ca for more information about these upcoming events.
Bowen Island Retreat with Prof. Robin Barrow -
March 9-10th, 2018
Leadership, Social Science and Ethics

Seminar Topic:
"Leadership...is a fashionable subject at present. If you do a
search on the internet you will find literally millions of links to
leadership academies. Everyone it seems, from business
schools to Oprah Winfrey, is in on the business of teaching
people how to be successful leaders, and often they
promise to do so in only a few hours or days. It makes you
wonder whether there can be any followers left."
Thus writes Margaret MacMillan in "Persuasion and the Art
of Leadership", the first chapter in her book History’s
People: Personalities and the Past, based upon her Massey
Lectures. As her subtitle sufficiently hints, she sees
leadership quality as the outcome of certain kinds of
personality or character, whilst further recognizing that
circumstances also play a vital role in the display (or lack of)
leadership.

That old-fashioned view is sharply at a variance with most
contemporary thinking about leadership in, for example,
schools or faculties of business and education. It is, in
particular, at odds with the view implicitly or explicitly
expressed throughout its history by the Harvard Business
School, the subject of a recent study by Duff McDonald: The
Golden Passport: Harvard Business School, the Limits
of Capitalism, and the Moral Failure of the MBA elite,
which I should like to take as a text for the Bowen
Island Retreat.

The book, it should be stressed, is primarily a critical history
of this specific institution and not a critique of business
schools or MBAs in general, and, as such, focuses on
certain particular issues such as the tendency of HBS only
to employ its own alumni and for HBS alumni to tend to

(continued)
employ for the most part their fellow alumni, the changing attitude of the school towards the idea of a science of management, and the relationship of the school to the rest of the University. However, where the shoe fits… It seems reasonable, for example, taking the Harvard example as a starting point, to pursue the question of whether the idea of a science of management makes sense, or to discuss in general the so-called “revising door” issue in politics and business, or the place of professional schools and “vocational education” (a contradiction in terms?) in universities. More generally, the text provides food for thought on a wide-ranging number of issues of moral, political, philosophical and educational interest.

What is the difference between ‘management’ and ‘leadership’? What constitutes good leadership? Can one assess it scientifically or is it necessarily a matter of judgment? What counts as success in business? Behind many such questions lie further questions about the social sciences: for instance, can they in fact be scientific without distorting reality? One of the most serious claims in the book is that in general the HBS alumni act without due moral concern, partly because the school allegedly does not take ethical considerations seriously in its curriculum.

Does this matter? If so, what needs to be done? And that question obviously leads into the wider question of what the limits of capitalism, if any, should be. Finally, a central philosophical issue for me is what I term ‘the generic fallacy’, that is to say the widespread view, particularly in education and business, that what are in fact complex bundles of dispositions, various particular low-level skills, understanding and judgment, are simply generic skills applicable across the board. Thus, creativity, critical acumen, and giftedness no less than leadership are seen (erroneously in my view) as skills that can be taught and then utilized as and when desired.

The book, though long, is very readable and at times very funny; overall, it seems to me a book that is both interesting in itself and certain to give rise to many further questions of importance.

Dr. Robin Barrow is a professor with the faculty of Education, SFU. He is a member of the GLS Steering Committee, and has taught courses for GLS, most recently for our PhD cohorts. His research is primarily in the areas of epistemology and moral philosophy. Particular areas of interest include: educational theory, humanities, the problematic nature of empirical inquiry into human activity, and the role of higher education.
Alumni News

PhD Candidate Margaret Easton is involved in creating an End-of-Life Studies certificate with SFU Continuing Studies. The following course is a continuation of the course she offered in the fall.

Legal and Ethical Issues in End-of-Life Studies

Join us for three Saturdays (March 3, 10 and 17) as we explore the issues that connect law, ethics, death and dying. Students in Legal and Ethical Issues in End-of-Life Studies will engage with fundamental questions about how and why law is involved in end of life, and will examine in detail landmark Canadian judicial decisions including Carter v. Canada, R. v. Rodriguez, Cuthbertson v. Rasouli, Bentley v. Maplewood Seniors Care Society and A.C. v. Manitoba (Director of Child and Family Services). This is the second course in a new series on end-of-life matters at SFU Continuing Studies. The courses can be taken individually, and are of interest to health professionals, legal professionals, policy-makers, researchers, gerontologists, psychologists, social workers, and educators. Legal and Ethical Issues in End-of-Life Studies will be particularly valuable to anyone with an interest in the relationship between law and society, in the philosophical and practical issues underlying laws relating to death and dying, and also in broader end-of-life questions.

Your instructor: Margaret Hall, LLB, LLM, is a professor in the Faculty of Law at Thompson

Many thanks to Nikki Kahnamoui for the cover photograph.

You can view the current issue, as well as, past issues here:
http://journals.sfu.ca/ wt/index.php/westerntributaries/index

Western Tributaries
Journal Vol. 4

Volume 4 of Western Tributaries, an interdisciplinary journal, publishes papers presented at the annual West Coast Liberal Studies Symposium. This year includes SFU current students Cathy Collis and Andrea Terpenkas, and alumnus, Tony Westman.