

SFU Press Releases Collection

These archival copies have been generated from web press releases maintained and originally written by SFU Communications and Marketing. Where possible, an effort has been made to preserve the public comments left on the website as well as any included photos or other images. All textual content should be faithful to the original press releases; contact numbers have been removed but they have not otherwise been altered in any way. However, this collection of documents spans multiple generations of web authoring software and not all formatting will be exact.

Auto's effects spark social study

Contacts:

Arlene McLaren, [Phone removed]; arlene_mclaren@sfu.ca
Marianne Meadahl, PAMR, [Phone removed]

October 03, 2006

A Simon Fraser University-led project is focusing on traffic safety as a social problem - not just one left to engineers or the courts.

Participants of the Traffic Safety Project view road traffic injury as "a major but neglected public issue needing a critical, interdisciplinary analysis of its social implications," says SFU sociologist Arlene McLaren, who is leading the project.

"Several disciplines recognize the problem but take a fairly narrow approach that primarily focuses on engineering, enforcement and education.

"We hope to open up the lens to consider how the automobile has organized society - the streetscape and urban space - mobility, culture, politics, and economics, and how it has an impact on peoples' lives, including their health, and safety."

Made up of scholars, students, community organizations and policymakers, participants will share their insights at a symposium called autoConsequences, a forum on the automobile and its social implications, on Saturday, Oct. 7, 8:30 a.m.

- 5 p.m. at SFU Vancouver.

They'll look at everything from regulation, risk and everyday life on the street to the role of the automobile as a cultural and political artifact.

On Friday, Oct. 6 at 7:30 p.m., John Urry, a sociology professor from Lancaster University (U.K.) and author of *Mobilities for the 21st Century*, will deliver the Munro lecture (free and open to the public) on *Mobilities and Networks*. He will give the keynote address on Oct. 7 on *Beyond the Car*.

Research supported by the project includes the work of SFU sociology graduate students such as Catharine Hilton, who studied the early drag-racing scene in Vancouver, and Lucie Vallieres whose research focuses on "disciplining" pedestrians. McLaren's own critical analysis of B.C.

's drunk-driving legislation will appear later this fall in *Sociology in Canada*.

For more on autoConsequences and the Traffic Safety Project, check:
www.sfu.ca/traffic-safety/events.html.

Auto's effects spark social study