Class Act Fall 2007 Recap
Socio-Economic Class and Appearance: How do you present yourself? By Chai Lee

On October 19, 2007, the TRIO Peer Leaders held the first Class Act discussion of the year. The discussion centered on people’s presentation of themselves and perceptions of others in relation to class.

The title of the discussion was: "Socio-Economic Class and Appearance: How Do You Present Yourself?" Students were encouraged to talk about how they carry and present themselves through what they wear. The topic was very popular, and close to fifty TRIO and non-TRIO students attended. There were enough people to fill the entire first floor and warm up the house! The Peer Leaders each took turns posing questions, which the larger group then discussed. Some of the questions addressed were, "Can you dress up at Carleton and be cool?" and "Should your image match your class?"

Students gave many insightful anecdotes about their own experiences growing up and what fashion means to them. There was talk of how much students judge each other by what they wear. Some people discussed the need to judge others based on their fashion because self expression has to do with individual taste and is not necessarily influenced by money. Others discussed how they were socialized and raised to present themselves a certain way through family norms or societal pressures in high school. Toward the end of the discussion, one student summed it up by saying that fashion transcended class, gender, and race.

It is important to remember that here at Carleton although sometimes class may be a factor in the way we have been socialized to dress, it is not always so. It was a very well attended event, and there were passionate arguments that helped us realize how much class can influence the way we present and view ourselves and each other.
Environmental Discussion at TRIO House

Susannah Shmurak

As part of the nationwide Focus the Nation teach-in on global warming on January 31, TRIO hosted a lunch hour discussion on socio-economic class and climate change.

Participants were asked to think about the effects global warming has on their lives, the effects their lives have on global warming, and how their socio-economic status may have affected their answers. In addition to talking about how class status affected attitudes toward environmental issues in general and climate change in particular, participants discussed food choices, conservation, and public energy policies.

More than 1600 schools nationwide participated in the teach-in, which was created to devote an entire day to focused discussion of climate change policy in this election year. Scientists believe that we need to act immediately to dramatically reduce our carbon emissions, and Focus the Nation organizers want to mobilize youth to pressure political candidates to put forward bold and comprehensive plans to change irresponsible policy for their first days in office.

No matter your class status, you have a voice you can use to affect the course the US takes concerning climate policy. Several websites, including MPR, the Sierra Club, and the League of Conservation Voters, have comparative information on candidates as well as links that let you send letters to your current representatives urging them to support environmental policy legislation.

How Your Choices Can Affect Climate Change

Susannah Shmurak

Americans at long last seem to be waking up to the fact that our resource-intensive lifestyle cannot be sustained forever, and people and institutions are slowly—many would say far too slowly—beginning to make substantive changes in the ways we conduct our daily lives. In the whirlwind of busy schedules, it is easy to forget that there is an environmental crisis looming in the not-too-distant future, one that today’s youth and the generations that follow will be required to address. Preventive measures now are vital to averting the worst effects of climate change and other environmental degradation, and if each individual takes small steps to reduce their personal impact, we have a chance of avoiding what many scientists believe will be a large-scale humanitarian disaster (in addition to mass species extinctions of other animals and plants).

Doing your part now doesn’t have to take a huge amount of effort; first and foremost, take steps to educate yourself about the consequences of the choices you make, and cultivate a habit of evaluating potential purchases. Whether you buy lots of bottled-water or tend to leave the lights on when you leave your dorm room, there are relatively painless steps you can take to reduce your “ecological footprint” (buy a reusable container to carry your drink in; make sure you turn out lights and put your computer to sleep when not in use). If you’re interested in finding out more about how your lifestyle affects the planet, check out the quiz at http://sustainability.publicradio.org/consumer_consequences/ and find out what other areas of your life might be easily altered to be more environmentally sustainable. If we all work to reduce the amount of energy and materials we consume in our lives, we have a chance to leave the next generations a world that is far more livable than we are now on course to do.

Don’t forget the power of your voice: share with your friends ways they can be more ecologically responsible, as well as those who make decisions in the places where you work and live that you want them to be making environmentally sound choices. As importantly, encourage your political representatives to promote and support legislation for environmental sustainability.

For more information on specific things you can do to “green” your lifestyle, see http://www.rprogress.org/ecological_footprint/reducing_your_footprint.htm#individuals

Note: The Gazette will begin going green by using the web to publish virtually (at the TRIO/SSS website) while decreasing the distribution of paper copies.
Dear Miss Steele,

It seems like everyone at Carleton knows everything I do as soon as I do it. How do I protect my privacy without offending people?

-Ground Down by the Rumor Mill

Dear G.D. by the R.M.,

I will start by correcting you. At Carleton everyone knows what you do BEFORE you do it. Ok, well, close; you’ve brought me the juiciest question this term and I’m privileged to offer my thoughts. One thing to keep in mind is that if you want to have secrets, you have to NOT TALK PUBLICLY ABOUT YOUR SECRETS. I’m not saying trust no one… find two friends who you know won’t spill it all, even if they are friends outside the bubble or if your friend is your diary. I’ll level with you…I AM more concerned with your weekend sexploits than with the quality of today’s Sodexho soup so if I hear you going on and on about such and such, I assume you want me to inquire further. That being said, when you hold up your end of our social contract and do not blab over breakfast, we will be fine. Now, there is a breed of human called the Snoop—not to be confused with CCB Jr.—the person who likes to know. If you are reading this, and you know you’re a snoop, or you see someone near you who you know is a snoop, please publicize: It is ok to deny these people the liquid they love…do not deliver the juice. You can remain friendly and vague as a vapor. Be explicit. The question you asked me could easily be turned into a countering statement; I don’t want to offend you, but I’m going to protect my privacy on this one. I mean, is it worse to leave them thirsty or to read about your life in the CLAP? Be brave, be mysterious, dare to have a private life.

Dear Major Pain, my kindred spirit,

Inhale: this is a monumental and central decision that potentially defines your life. (Hold your breath till you start to panic a bit) Exhale: this decision is fully not so rough and will be water under the bridge very soon. We’ll get through it. Let’s go: what are your goals regarding the next two years? Do you want to pine for your classes? Do you want to secure a specific position after graduation? Do you want to exercise your juicy brain? Do you want a relaxing collegiate coast to the finish line? Do you want to be on the Dean’s List? If you can rank some of those questions in importance, then we can start to fit either a CHEM or ENGL major in with your goals. And really, I suggest you buy yourself a celebratory Ginger Steaz in the snack-bar to congratulate yourself on narrowing it down to two possible majors. You are ready for this, you are boldly going where you have never gone before… check a line, turn in the green form… see how it goes—if it turns out it is worst mistake of your young life, I am thankful that the worst mistake of your young life is fully reversible.

Trying hard to bring you the real deal,
I’m humbly yours,

Savannah Steele
TRIO Students Travel the World

Many TRIO students participated in Off Campus Study programs during fall term 2007. Here is one such student’s fascinating experience.

Raymonda Reese, ‘09
African/African American Studies

My experience here in South Africa was definitely the experience of a lifetime. I was challenged, inspired and catapulted into a whirlwind of inter-communication, unique and beautiful experiences and emerged a better and truer world citizen. It is my hope that other students, especially disadvantaged students and students of color, will be able to have such a life-changing experience.

-Raymonda Reese, ‘09

View of the campus

Raymonda on the coast with a fellow program participant

The coastline at sunset

Raymonda with fellow students at Cape Point, South Africa
TRIO Goes to Europe!
By Maija Sipola

It was an exciting fall term for many TRIO students, especially for those who were fortunate to spend the term abroad. I was lucky to participate in the Carleton Geology Department’s ‘Geology in Italy’ program. As a geology major, spending time in a foreign country discovering fascinating rock outcrops by day and gorging myself on amazing pasta by night was the perfect way to spend 10 weeks. I climbed mountains in the Alps, walked on a glacier, went swimming in the Adriatic Sea, visited the birthplaces of both Leonardo and Raphael, toured a vineyard, made ravioli and visited the ruins of Pompeii. Every day was a new experience, both academically and culturally. We had useful language lessons from our Italian professor’s daughter and drawing lessons from his wife, an accomplished American artist. Our program consisted mostly of field work and follow-up reports, so rather than sitting in a classroom everyday, we were outside doing hands-on work with the rocks we love. It was glorious!

The program began on August 1 and ended on October 12, so with all the free time we had afterwards, many of us decided to see more of Europe. All seventeen of us broke up for different destinations; a few went home right away, while others embarked for Scotland, Bulgaria, France, and other nations.

I decided to travel northwards with my friends Phil Varela (fellow TRIO student, ’09) and Katie Marks (’09) for the European adventure of my lifetime.

Over about three weeks we were in 11 different countries, and at one point, I had been in four countries in about six hours. We started in Rome and via trains and Baltic sea ferries, visited the following cities: Munich, Berlin (where we met up with DIS program students Dorjee Norbu, Nakita Natala and Casey Yang, all TRIO students ’09) and Rostock (Germany), Tallinn (Estonia), Helsinki and Turku (Finland), Stockholm (Sweden), Copenhagen (Denmark), Cologne (Germany), Brussels (Belgium), and London (England). After spending three days in London with some family friends, I took a cheap Ryanair flight back to Italy to pick up some of my luggage and fly out of Rome on Halloween. Phil and Katie didn’t follow me to London; they went to Paris and Graz (Austria), respectively, but we all reunited in Rome for our flights home. It was a cheap trip; we slept in hostels and the floors of ferries and trains. We ate pizza in Finland and pasta in Germany. We experienced Hesburger, the Scandinavian version of McDonald’s. We witnessed Finnish karaoke and danced to ‘My Humps’ and ‘Hips Don’t Lie’ with Finnish teenagers. It was unlike anything I’ve ever done before; prior to this trip, I had only been on a plane once in my life and had barely set foot in Canada.

I could never have done this OCS program or the following trip without generous financial support through Carleton. As a freshman I applied for and was awarded the Andrea Grove Iseminger ‘59 Off Campus Studies Scholarship, which provides Carleton students $1200 to use for any fees incurred while participating in a Carleton study abroad program. Only freshmen can apply for this scholarship; however, if you are an upperclassman, there are other financial aid opportunities available, which can be found at the Dean of the College website, Off-Campus Studies website and Student Financial Services website. For more information about the Andrea Grove Iseminger OCS Scholarship, please visit:

http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/fellowships/carleton_fellowships/Iseminger_Scholarship/.

The application deadline for the Andrea Grove Iseminger ’59 OCS scholarship is Friday, April 11, 2008.
Money Saving Tips for your Travels

By Maija Sipola

Aside from the scholarships, fellowships and grants you can acquire for off campus study, there are numerous ways to save money while you travel. Here are a list of ideas I’ve compiled based on my experiences in Western Europe; keep in mind these tips may not be applicable in all parts of the world.

- Weigh the price differences between flights and trains. I flew from London to Ancona, Italy via Ryanair for $70 (American). This was far less than what I paid for the 11-hour train ride from Rome to Munich ($118).
- If you will be using trains to get around, consider purchasing a Eurail pass, available at raileurope.com. It may be cost-beneficial for you, and it’s best if you order passes when you are still in the US (they are only sold to people in the Americas).
- Stay in hostels rather than hotels. Try to book hostels that are close to your train station or airport to avoid taxi/metro/bus fares. Also look for hostels that provide a free breakfast; it saves you money and gives you a healthier start to your day.
- Get an International Student ID Card from the OCS Office! In Europe, student discounts for museums and the like are amazing; usually about 50% of the usual ticket price. Your ID card will soon pay for itself.
- Don’t make shopping your form of entertainment. My companions and I had a “parks, fountains and churches” trip; meaning we took great joy in free entertainment. Museums are a great way to experience the local culture, as is simply walking the streets.
- Travel as lightly as possible; backpacks or duffel bags are more manageable than rolling luggage when jumping on and off trains, as well as for walking.
- Be careful with your documents. Never keep your cash, passport, check card, ATM card, and credit card all in the same place! If something happens, you need to have a backup way of getting around (example: use a credit card if your check card is lost or stolen). Keep a copy of your passport in your luggage and give a copy to a friend for safekeeping. Also have phone numbers for your credit card company and bank available if you have to call them about problems or to freeze your account.
- Be aware of pickpockets. They are generally more prevalent in large cities but can be found anywhere. Don’t be a target; a dazed American that is on cloud nine after seeing some great monument and isn’t paying attention can be an easy mark for pickpockets. Avoid speaking English loudly; it makes Americans easy to spot. Be aware, don’t store valuables in outside pockets of your backpack or clothes, and use the lockers available in many hostels.
- Take night trains and night ferries. Whether you have a bed or a reclining seat, you can be on the move while you rest so you can sight-see during the day and be on the move while you are sleeping.
- Get a water bottle and refill it every day; it’s cheaper than buying new bottles every day.
- Research your money options before leaving home. You must contact your debit card and/or credit card companies to let them know how long you will be abroad. Also, get information on the fees you will be charged for withdrawing money from ATM machines, currency conversion on your debit card, etc. You may get better rates with a credit rather than a debit card; find out before you begin your trip.
- When you’re walking around, spot places where you can buy cheap food. Supermarkets are usually best, and hostels often have a cooking area available to you. Most European restaurants post their menus outside, so you can compare prices that way as well.
- Rather than buying expensive gifts for everyone you know, invest in the lighter, cheaper gift: postcards. They are meaningful for your friends at home and won’t break your back by carrying them or break your bank paying for them.
- Stick to your original schedule; altering trans-Atlantic flights costs lots of money.
- Try to learn (at least) numbers 1-10 in the local language; this helps if you are wrongly charged or given the wrong change in a store or ticket booth. The other necessary words are ‘please’ and ‘thank you,’ these will help you in any situation.
Is Being Green Affordable?

By Maija Sipola

With the “green” revolution sweeping the nation following “Inconvenient Truth” and Al Gore’s corresponding Nobel Prize, I’ve started thinking about the economic feasibility of living a green lifestyle. This environmentally conscious way of living has been branded by some as elitist, or something that only either hippies or young urban professionals do. But why is living green supposedly living more expensive? Certainly living green should cost less, shouldn’t it? You’re buying less, products are often made from recycled (ie, old) materials, and suddenly you’re consciously lowering your energy bill by turning off the lights and faucet. Still, there are some, if small, costs to beginning this eco-friendly lifestyle.

Take food, for example. Many say it is more environmentally friendly to be vegetarian than to eat meat, but if you choose the organic meat route, expect to pay much more for a free range chicken that is half the size of its farm raised, hormone injected counterparts. Of course, organic prices aren’t so bad if you buy in bulk, but it can be difficult for a college student to transport and consume a 25-lb of organic brown rice. The important thing to remember is that while buying organic is generally more expensive, it isn’t all the time.

Sometimes organic items may be on sale for less than conventional products. You should always compare prices and not write off organic permanently, especially as living green is growing in popularity, making organic foods more available and increasingly more affordable.

While consistently buying organic food might not be feasible, there are other ways to shop green at the grocery store. Avoid products with lots of packaging; many small packages of chips in the sake of portion size is much less earth friendly than one big bag. Forget about the debate between paper and plastic; just bring your backpack or a tote bag to carry items home (it’s more ecological and easier to carry). More companies are producing goods made of recycled and/or biodegradable products, and try to buy products that have similarly ‘green’ packaging.

Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFL) are slightly more expensive than their usual incandescent brethren but last longer and save $30 on energy bills and 2000 times their weight in greenhouse gasses in their lifetime.

Carleton has already gone through lengths to become more green. Sodexo has been building more organic food menus in addition to the Organic Free Trade Coffee available. Most recently, biodegradable napkins, bowls, salad containers and eating utensils have come to use in the Snack Bar. In recent years, facilities has provided CFL bulbs to students at no charge for energy-efficient use in dorm rooms. Regardless of the initial inconvenience and costs involved, each and every one of us has to make an effort in whatever way we can to reduce, reuse and recycle. Living green cannot only be an option for those who can afford every package of organic tofu; for the sake of the planet, everyone must be conscious of what we consume and discard. We all live on the same planet, after all, and therefore we TRIO students are just as responsible for it as the next person. Here’s to living greener in the future!

Chai Lee ‘09 wins success in photo contest

TRIO peer leader Chai Lee had a welcome surprise recently. After casually submitting a photo (“The Golfer,” right) to the International Library of Photography a few months ago, he received word that his photo (at right, of a high school golf coach on Phalen Golf Course, St. Paul, MN) taken in the spring of 2005 will be featured in the Library’s annual book of amateur photography, coming to print in Spring 2008!

In addition to a place in the photography book, Chai’s photo will advance to the People category in the International Open Amateur Photography Contest, with a chance to win either one of 114 cash prizes and gifts, including the $1,000 grand prize and the $10,000 annual grand prize! The judges will award these prizes in the next few months. Congratulations to Chai for a wonderful picture and for its success in an international photo contest.
# February 2008

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- Spring Term; Classes Resume
- Jr. Fellowship Deadline
- Class Act 4:30-6 @ TRIO House, 216 College St.
- Pennies for Change Fundraiser begins!