SESSION THEME - Retirement Opportunities and Challenges
SESSION DATE AND TIME - Thursday, November 22 (10:30-12:00 noon)
ROOM LOCATION - TBC

Comprehensive Risk Management in the Third Age: Women’s Special Challenges
Brigitte Neumann, Retired; Leroy Stone, Université du Montreal

Comprehensive risk management involves a network of strategies designed to address an array of possible losses so as to achieve the best available, or the optimum, allocation of one’s limited coping resources. This is important for individuals and families in the Third Age, especially women due to their greater chances of reaching advanced age. Women’s special challenges occur in a variety of domains, including the following: (a) the risks of outliving one’s financial resources, particularly in light of the likelihood of becoming widowed; (b) women’s greater chances of experiencing years with serious disability in later life; (c) social risks including the loss of family, friends and social networks as one’s age cohort dies off; and (d) risks of experiencing years with caregiving responsibility in later life. Such issues faced particularly by women give rise to the question of whether they are better prepared than men to address retirement’s challenges. Our research, based on the 2007 General Social Survey, shows that generally they are not as well prepared as men, and that there are key population segments in which the lesser preparedness of women is marked. These population segments with relatively low retirement preparedness include married immigrant women; women who are single, widowed or divorced; and women at the highest and lowest level of education and income. The presentation concludes with some recommendations for specialists who work on behalf of senior women.

Aging and Mobility: International Migration as a Retirement Strategy
Liesl Gambold, Dalhousie University

There are 10.1 million baby boomers in Canada, which is a proportion of the population far greater than other countries. Thus, understanding the lifestyle choices of retirees and the government policies within which they make these choices has never been so crucial. These individuals’ decisions will have far-reaching implications culturally, politically and economically. Since larger numbers of seniors are living their retirement years in economically challenging situations, this paper examines the mobility of elderly men and women in the form of international retirement migration as an increasingly popular strategy to ameliorate levels of economic and general well-being. This paper examines retirement as a process reflecting individual histories and preferences as well as shifting global, cultural, and ideological values. Employing standpoint theory, used by many feminist scholars, this paper begins by taking “everyday life as problematic” and the understanding that the aged are socially and culturally marginalized. With a growing aging population, however, this marginalization will surely be altered. International retirement migrants face the same challenges as the aging population at large such as health changes and concerns, mobility issues, financial questions and their over-all sense of well-being. However, they face the complex aging process in a foreign country and have the added difficult task of maneuvering cross-culturally. Based on empirical, anthropological research done in Mexico, Spain, and southern France, this paper highlights the efforts of retirees to forge a new path, choose a new homeland and, perhaps, reinventing themselves a bit along the way.

An exploration of the relationship between retirement reasons and retirement congruency
Aine Humble, Mount Saint Vincent University; Jan Boswell, Mount Saint Vincent University

Research has typically regarded retirement as forced or chosen, but the retirement decision is not necessarily a dichotomous one. According to Schellenberg and Silver (2004), three types of
retirement congruency (RC) are possible: (a) low (forced), (b) moderate (part forced/part wanted), and (c) high (chosen); however to date, limited research has been carried out on the moderate category. The relationship between various retirement reasons (in particular, beyond job and health loss) and RC has also not been explored in multivariate analyses. Thus, using a modified version of Szinovacz and Davey’s (2005) perceptions of forced retirement model, we explored the relationship between retirement reasons and an individual’s assessment of their RC. Secondary data analysis of the 2007 General Social Survey was conducted on a subsample of 1166 individuals who retired between ages 50 to 78 years. Percentages in the RC categories were: high: 30% (n = 347), moderate: 53% (n = 615), and low: 17% (n = 204). Multinomial logistic regression showed that moderate RC is theoretically different from low and high RC. Eight variables were significant in the low/high RC comparison; nine variables in the low/moderate RC comparison (of which three were unique—life satisfaction, discrimination, and having worked at an early age); and five variables significant in the moderate/high comparison (of which three were unique—CPP/tax rules, work stressful/physical, and work part-time/change career). This study provides insight into how retirement reasons are related to RC. Policy implications for employers, unions, educators, and government officials are presented.