

A true friend and comrade

Monday 27 June 2022, by [FIDLER Richard](#) (Date first published: 15 March 2022).

Although I was long acquainted with his work I did not meet Pierre Beaudet until the World Social Forum in Caracas in 2006. We soon became good friends. Soon afterwards, Pierre found employment at the University of Ottawa, where he was instrumental in establishing the School of International Development and Global Studies. He invited me to participate in his efforts to establish an Ottawa section of the Collectif d'analyse politique (CAP), publishers of the Nouveaux Cahiers du socialisme, a semiannual review Pierre had cofounded in 2009. On three occasions he included me as a guest lecturer in his course on Latin American social movements and politics.

When teaching at UOttawa, and later the Université du Québec campus across the river in Gatineau, Pierre, who commuted from his home in Montréal, usually stayed overnight for a day or two per week at my home. He always brought with him books and magazines - Le Monde Diplomatique and the New York Review of Books were among his favourites - to leave with me and we often exchanged Marxist books we both found useful. Conversations with Pierre were a delight; he was knowledgeable and insightful on a vast range of subjects, and I enjoyed his ironic sense of humour.

My niece Nancy Burrows, who has known Pierre longer than I through her active leadership in the Quebec women's movement (she coauthored a chapter in one of his books on L'Altermondialisme), mentioned to Pierre in an email exchange that she had heard he knew her uncle. His response captured our friendship rather nicely, I think:

"I spend two nights a week with your uncle, with whom I very much enjoy discussing late into the night why the Indonesian Communist party screwed up in 1966, or if Lenin had listened to the mutineers at Kronstadt, and other similar stories that have remained in the head of the unrepentant Marxist oldtimers like us. It has helped me endure Ottawa more easily.... We also discuss intersectionality in the Dogon country in Mali, the place of LGBTQs in the present Chilean movement, peaceful insurrections that get things moving more than petitions. What would have happened if Rosa Luxemburg had not been assassinated, etc., etc., it never ends between us." [1]

Richard Fidler

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P.S.

Richard Fidler blog

Footnotes

[1] “Je passe deux soirées par semaine avec ton oncle avec qui j’ai bien du plaisir à discuter tard dans la nuit sur pourquoi le Parti communiste indonésien s’est planté en 1966, ou encore si Lénine avait écouté les mutins de Kronstad, et d’autres histoires du genre qui sont restés dans la tête des pépés marxistes non repentis dans notre genre. Cela me fait endurer plus facilement Ottawa... Nous discutons aussi de l’intersectionnalité dans le pays dogon du Mali, de la place des LBGTQ dans le mouvement chilien actuel, des insurrections pacifiques qui font bouger les choses plus que les pétitions. Sur ce qui serait arrivé si Rosa Luxemburg n’avait pas été assassinée, etc. etc. ça n’arrête jamais entre nous...”.