

December 6, 1992

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*Rec. Forward
& mailed
1/11/93*

George Gerbner
Professor of Communication and Dean Emeritus
The Annenberg School of Communication
University of Pennsylvania
3620 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, Pa 19104-6220

Dear Professor Gerbner,

Enclosed is a form from the ACLS asking you to evaluate me as an individual, as a scholar, and as a teacher. Of course, I can't tell you what kind of individual I am, but I would like to supply you with some supplemental data about myself, so that you will have a better idea of who I am and what I am doing.

I am 39 years old, and a mother of two children. My husband is an actuary and works for a minor insurance company.

I am currently an assistant professor of medical sociology at the Semmelweis Medical School, which is one of the four Hungarian medical universities. At our department, we teach medical sociology as well as do manifold research on various aspects of our discipline.

My life has been quite simple until now. I went to one of the best high schools in Budapest, after which the way to the university was easy. I studied history and sociology. After finishing the university, I was fortunate to get the opportunity of working for the same department at which I had studied. I spent two years at the Department of Sociology of the Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem. My specialty was the sociology of the family, and I successfully defended my thesis concerning the family portrayal represented in and socializing effects of tales published in children's magazines. After that I conducted research about first generation professionals - engineers - and found that the almost exclusive acting force behind their social mobility had been their mothers, whose own attempts of social mobility had been unsuccessful. I also created courses on these connections between family and social mobility.

After a few years I was nominated for tenure as an assistant professor but I did not get it for two reasons. First of all, the chairman of the department wanted to employ a methodology teacher instead of a family specialist. Second of all, I was advised to apply for membership of the Communist Party but I refused. This is not to say that I was fired solely for political reasons but that these two added served to make the decision of the chairman easier.

Luckily enough, I got a job at the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. I worked on a project that was the first major research in the field of medical sociology in Hungary. This was the first time I became involved in the field of medical sociology, but after some time it became very important for me. I left this project only because of the birth of my children. For some time I stayed at home with my children and then got a job at the Institute of Social Sciences as an editor. (This institute published a monthly journal and a numerous books in the field of social sciences.) I worked there until the very moment that there was a medical sociology department organized at the Semmelweis Medical School. Due to my previous experience in the field of medical sociology, I got a job there as an assistant professor. There I have taken part in a research team studying the world of medical students and the processes of medical education and socialization they undergo. I have got courses in medical sociology. I have also led postgraduate courses for paraprofessionals and non-medical professionals - mostly for nurses and teachers - about the sociology of deviant behavior.

At the moment I am teaching courses in medical sociology and also participating in two research projects. One is on the reasons of why the average lifetime and the life expectancy have been decreasing in the former communist countries. The other is on the alternative medicine in Hungary.

During a two year private stay in the US I had access to a university library where I studied literature of medical anthropology in general and of folk healing and alternative medicine in particular, although in those days these were not important phenomena in Hungary.

After returning to Hungary in 1990, I found that in the meantime folk healing and some other forms of alternative medicine had grown very popular here and thus it had become a major issue among physicians and medical students. Should these "new" methods be fought, tolerated, or applied? Naturally, this very problem has consequences both in the theory and teaching practice of medical sociology. I am involved in these questions both as a researcher in the field of medical sociology and as a teacher of medical students.

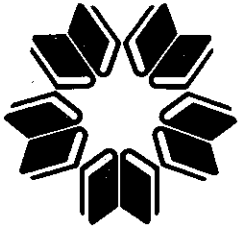
I have spent the past years collecting data about alternative medicine. The literature available in Hungarian libraries is mostly insignificant and lacks any systematic order, which is quite natural since until very recently, unorthodox medical services had been restricted in Hungary.

That is why I am applying for the scholarship from the ACLS.

Sincerely yours,

Susan Szántó

I also take the opportunity to send you the season's greetings.



ACLS

Dear Colleague:

The individual whose name appears on the attached sheet has applied to the American Council of Learned Societies for an American Studies Fellowship grant to undertake a project of advanced research in the United States on some aspect of United States history or civilization. The candidate has named you as one of several individuals who might be willing to provide the ACLS with a letter of reference.

We would be grateful if you would send directly to us your evaluation of the candidate as an individual, as a scholar, and as a present or potential teacher. Please write as fully and as frankly as you wish; your evaluation will of course be treated confidentially.

Your comments may be made on the attached sheet or on your own stationary. Because your reference must be photocopied for administrative purposes, please be sure that your print is clear. Kindly write on only one side of the page, and use additional sheets if necessary.

Please sign and date your comments and send them as soon as possible to the address provided below.

Sincerely yours,

Steven C. Wheatley
Director
American Studies Program

enclosure

June 10, 1993
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Fax 361 113 8090

George Gerbner
Professor of Communication
and Dean Emeritus
The Annenberg School of Communication
University of Pennsylvania
3620 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, Pa 19104-6220

Dear Professor Gerbner,

I'm writing to you to thank you for your letter of recommendation which must have had a good impact on the decision of the ACLS because I have been awarded a one year ACLS fellowship.

I will be affiliated with Princeton University therefore I may have pretty good chances to visit you in Philadelphia to discuss relevant issues if you don't mind such discussions.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Zsuzsa Szántó
Zsuzsa Szántó