

Hi Samantha,

November 4, 2019 (June letter)

Thank you for the lovely letter—the one written on your typewriter. I enjoyed the chatty style and the details on your many activities. I remain impressed that you are able to keep them all in some kind of order. I hope this continues.

Fran and I have been absorbed by preparations for our move to Vancouver. It keeps getting interrupted by other demands—like a conference in St. John's, a 2-day loss of electrical power, visits from friends, home schooling, and (most important) preparation for our family Christmas. The process is wonderful, though—especially on Monday mornings when the recycling comes to pick up the blue-bin full of old files and papers.

We also appreciate the fact that we are both here to do the job. There are many occasions when our work involves turning up surprises from our past—like trinkets, letters, drawings, or other items—that we both had forgotten. They frequently inspire questions, discussions, and laughter that remind us of events and issues in our past that are lovely to recollect. Having someone around who shares the stories makes them even more enjoyable. Of course, many of them involve stories of your mother and JP.

We are looking forward to setting up in Vancouver. It will be nice to get in a position where we can do some serious thinking about the clean-up and renovations for the upper floors. Fran has already begun thinking about remodelling the kitchen. It looks like we might have to revise our plan for the renovation period if Thomas is there. Originally, we thought it would be easy since we would hang out in the suite while the clean-up and renovations take place. This would be easiest since we would be away from the noise and pandemonium of renovations—yet close enough to monitor that changes and decisions that would have to be made along the way. If Thomas is there, however, we may have to make use of one of the rooms (and a bathroom) upstairs while the work is being done. It might be easiest for Thomas to make use of such a room but he would not be able to use the upstairs kitchen. In any case, we have time to figure that all out.

I expect you will be happy when we finally are finished the upstairs and you can have the suite to yourself!

My time has also been involved preparing and working with Charlie on his home schooling. I don't like the idea of home schooling, but once Lies and JP decided they would try it out, I figured that I could help—and it would give me an opportunity to engage with Charlie on a regular basis. I chose to prepare material and work with him on five main themes: Critical Thinking; Governance of Societies; our Earth, Solar System and Universe; Systems of Living Things; and Climate and Environment. I love the topics, but the work is taking much more time than I anticipated. I'm not sure how I will arrange things for next "semester" if they continue with this plan. Fran also gets annoyed at the time I spend on the course since it means I am not available for other things. She also reminds me that when I was teaching at Concordia, my course work involved many more students and would remain relevant for multiple sections and years.

As we get closer to our move I expect some of these other demands will become less important.

Love,