

# HISTORY CURRENT

University of Toronto, Department of History Newsletter, Issue 8, Fall 2018

## The Outside the Academy Issue



Featured:

Queering Family Photography,  
p. 5

History's PhDs – Where are they  
now? p. 9

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History  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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HISTORY CURRENT  
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Mark McGowan  
Layout: Amy Ratelle  
Cover image: via Unsplash

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still home to many indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

# Chair's Message

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2018 has brought us many accomplishments to celebrate!

- Our new colleagues profiled in our spring issue, **Cindy Ewing**, **Max Mishler**, **Sauna Sweeney**, and **Anver Emon**, have all arrived and are already making their mark on the department with ideas for new courses, participation in the planning of new programs, and fresh excitement for strengthening the intellectual vitality of their respective fields.
- This summer we said goodbye to two retiring colleagues, both of long and distinguished service to the department and the university. **Derek Penslar**, the Samuel J. Zacks Chair of Jewish History, has moved to Harvard, but promises we haven't seen the last of him here in Toronto. **Ian Radforth**, a specialist in Canadian labour and social/cultural history, has retired, but he continues to be involved in mentoring his remaining grad students.
- In November we enjoyed a ten-day visit by **Daniel Sargent**, the Harold Strom Visiting Professor in contemporary history/international relations. We kept Daniel busy with a packed schedule of lectures, a conference, meeting with graduate students, and visiting grad and undergrad classes. For more information on Professor Sargent's visit, see p. 17.
- Department members continue to pile up an impressive record of awards and honours. **Bob Bothwell** was named to the Order of Canada in recognition of his "influential research of Canadian history, politics and foreign policy affairs." **Lynne Viola** received the prestigious Molson Prize from the Canada Council for the Arts, an award that recognizes "ongoing contributions to Canada's cultural and intellectual heritage." **Doris Bergen** was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, joining a distinguished list of her colleagues in Canada's national academy. **Sean Mills**, holder of a Canada Research Chair in Canadian and Transnational History, was named to the Royal Society's College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists. (For more of the Department's awards and achievements, see p. 18).



As my term as Acting Chair comes to an end, I am full of appreciation for all that past Chair Nick Terpstra did to bring the department to where we are today. All of these advances and accomplishments, however, would not have been possible without the sustained (and often unseen) contributions of our highly dedicated staff, faculty, and students.

- Carol Chin  
Associate Professor & Acting Chair  
Department of History

# Cooking with Culinaria: Recipes for Historians

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PhD student Jackson Guo (left) with Professor Daniel Bender (right)

The Tri-campus Department of History and the Culinaria Research Centre co-hosted an interactive food history event on November 9, 2017: "Recipes for Historians" at the UTSC kitchen lab, organized by Professor Jo Sharma.

The event began with a short presentation by a visiting historian, Michelle King (University of North Carolina) on her research into Chinese and Taiwanese food history, highlighting the historical importance of chef and TV personality Pei Mei and her 1984 book *Home Cooking*. Professor King was followed

by discussion and hands-on preparation of the foods and recipes under review. The common strand that connected those dishes was that they originated with Chinese and Jewish diasporic groups in Baghdad, Calcutta, New York, and Toronto who formed the subjects of an undergraduate history course taught by Professor Sharma, titled "Asian Foods and Global Cities." They ranged from Baghdadi Jewish recipes for fenugreek chutney (hilbeh) and cheese sambusak from a Calcutta cookbook, to kungpao pastrami, a recent 'fusion' dish created by a Chinese-American chef in homage to the Jewish delis of his New York childhood.

Event participants included five history professors, six history graduate students, and ten undergraduate students, as well as other members of the public. Funds came from the Intellectual Community Fund of the History Department and the Culinaria Research Centre.

Credit for the event photographs goes to Professor Rick Halpern, who has made them available for publication. All participants agreed to the event being recorded and photographed for public dissemination.

- by Jo Sharma, Associate Professor

# Photographing Holocaust Sites with Ed Burtynsky

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In October 2014, PhD candidates Ryan Masters and Tom Frydel joined photographer Ed Burtynsky and members of his Toronto studio on a trip across East Central Europe. Burtynsky was part of a team tasked with the design of the National Holocaust Monument in Ottawa, opened in September 2017. Assembled by Lord Cultural Resources, the team included Gail Lord, architect Daniel Liebeskind, landscape scholar Claude Cormier, and historian Doris Bergen. In Europe, Burtynsky and his studio team set out to photograph locations connected to the history of the Holocaust. Professor Doris Bergen shaped the thematic narrative of the trip by suggesting historical sites that captured the major motifs of the Holocaust for the Monument imagery.



Radegast train station in Łódź, Poland. From left: Ed Burtynsky, local historical consultant for Michał Trębacz, Tomasz Frydel, drone operator Mike Reid, photographer Jim Panou, documentary filmmaker Manfred Becker. © Tomasz Frydel 2014

For approximately two weeks, the Canadian team visited locations in Germany, the Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, Poland and Lithuania, photographing Theresienstadt, Mauthausen, Auschwitz, Warsaw, Treblinka, and other significant sites. Tom and Ryan worked with local contacts at museums, memorials and other locations, and supported the team as historical consultants and translators. The journey resulted in over 250 photographic images, many of them shot with the use of a drone. All of the photographs capture the sites as they appear in their 21st-century setting, even as they are being eradicated by human and natural processes. A number of the photographs taken on the October 2014 trip now feature prominently as large-scale images on the interior walls of the National Holocaust Monument.

In 2017, Ed Burtynsky published a book entitled *Chai* – the Hebrew word for “life – which featured a broader sampling of 53 photographs from that expedition. Department of History Professor Doris Bergen wrote the forward to the book; Ryan and Tom were asked to co-author the book's extended captions. The book was sold as part of a portfolio that also featured the Monument images. All proceeds from the sale of the book were donated to the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

- by Tom Frydel and Ryan Masters, PhD students



# Elspeth Brown Queers Family Photography

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Elspeth Brown (left) and Hon Lu (right)

On April 21st, 2018, Professor Elspeth Brown's new curated exhibition, *Queering Family Photography* opened at Stephen Bulger Gallery in Toronto. *Queering Family Photography* explored the critical work that queer, trans, and two-spirited family photos do in documenting and creating queer modes of belonging, and how our emotional attachments to queer family photographs have also sustained LGBTQ2+ lives. The show also featured a short, 18-minute video that Brown and co-curator Professor Thy Phu composed of oral histories with the subjects of photographs in the exhibition.

*Queering Family Photography* traced how queer, trans, and two-spirited people have historically drawn on photography to redefine family to include queer kinships outside the heteronormative, nuclear family models. The exhibition was presented in three thematic sections: "Instant Intimacies," "Domesticities," and "Publics." The exhibition also included a selection of historical albums drawn from the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, as well as a video

projection that showcased participants and their stories. Through these thematic sections, the show considered the social, political, and technological factors that structure queer kinship, and the ways that LGBTQ2+ communities have creatively reimagined family time and again, linking public and private spheres together. The images on display captured fleeting moments of love and desire, as well as generational bonds, which are often fractured by a normalizing state and culture. In conjunction with *Queering Family Photography*, the Family Camera Network (for which Brown is co-PI) sponsored photographer Sunil Gupta's *Friends and Lovers*, a cognate show at the Stephen Bulger Gallery.

*Queering Family Photography* was hailed as a "must-see" exhibition of the Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival in Canadian Art and the *Toronto Star*. In conjunction with *Queering Family Photography*, organizers invited Indigenous activist Albert McLeod for a roundtable of family photography. Interviews with Elspeth Brown were also featured on CBC Toronto's Metro Morning, *Toronto Life*, Yohomo: Toronto Queer Culture Now, and CBC Canada's CBC Arts.

*Queering Family Photography* was supported by Jackman Humanities Institute via a faculty fellowship and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

- by Elspeth Brown, Associate Professor

# Ulster American Heritage Comes to Canada

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In June the Department of History, in collaboration with the Celtic Studies Program, hosted the Ulster American Heritage Symposium (UAHS) for a three-day conference at St. Michael's College (June 14-16, 2018).

In its 44-year history, the Symposium had never been held in Canada, although it was agreed by participants that Toronto's rich history of receiving immigrant groups made it a natural site for sharing research on migration, settlement, and immigrant adjustment to North America.

Panels included presenters from Ireland, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States, who spoke on topics as diverse as the nature of Ulster migration, immigrants and the American Civil War, Indigenous/settler encounter in Appalachia, and the settlement of Famine migrants in rural areas, not the cities, of British North America.

Keynotes included Dr. William Jenkins (York University) who spoke on sectarianism in Ontario; Dr. Christine Kinealy, Director of the Great Hunger Institute (Quinnipiac University) who examined Frederick Douglas and his work with the abolitionist movement in Ireland; and Professor William Smyth, President Emeritus (Maynooth University) who gave the closing address on global perspectives on the Loyal Orange Order.

Department of History Deputy Chair Mark McGowan coordinated a group of senior undergraduate students from History and Celtic Studies who presented their research on Irish migration to the Huron Tract Lands of the Canada Company in Western Ontario. They were very well received by the audience of international scholars. Sessions were hosted by several faculty members, alumni, and graduate students of the Department. Symposium co-ordinators would like to thank Department Manager Ken Onate and Executive Assistant to the Chair Amy Ratelle for their assistance during the preparation for the UAHS.

- by Mark McGowan, Professor



From back to front: Patrick Fitzgerald (Mellon Centre for Migration), William Smyth (President Emeritus, Maynooth University), Christine Kinealy (Quinnipiac University), and William Jenkins (York University)

# Estonia's Prime Minister Asks, Should We Digitalize Public Services?

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Jüri Ratas, Estonia's prime minister, gives a press conference while visiting NATO last year (photo © NATO via Flickr)

The Chair of Estonian Studies in the Department of History, Professor Andres Kasekamp, organized and hosted the visit of the Prime Minister of Estonia, Jüri Ratas, to UofT on May 25th. His visit celebrated the centenary of Estonian independence with the Canadian-Estonian community and he met with PM Trudeau in Ottawa.

The Prime Minister gave a sold-out public lecture at the Munk School of Global Affairs where he made the case for digitalizing public services. Estonia has become a world leader in e-governance and information technology,

being the first country to introduce secure online voting in national elections, e-residency for foreigners, and to declare internet access a basic human right.

Estonia is the birthplace of Skype and Estonia hosts NATO's Cyber Defence Centre. While holding the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2017, Ratas pushed for the creation of an EU digital single market.

The Prime Minister also met with U of T President Meric Gertler and Chancellor Michael Wilson to discuss further cooperation between U of T and universities in Estonia. The Elmar Tampõld Chair of Estonian Studies at U of T is unique (the only one of its kind) in North America. Professor Kasekamp gave a brief tour of the campus to the PM and his delegation.

- by *Andres Kasekamp, Professor and Elmar Tampõld Chair of Estonian Studies*

## FACULTY PUBLICATION

**Edward Shorter** and Max Fink  
*The Madness of Fear: A History of Catatonia.*  
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.





# The Société Rencesvals Gets “Epic” for their 21<sup>st</sup> International Congress

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The *Société Rencesvals pour l'étude des épopées romanes*, held its 21<sup>st</sup> triennial international congress in Toronto, bringing together scholars working in the field of medieval epic in Romance languages (Old French and Old Occitan *chansons de geste*, Old Castilian *cantares de gesta* or Italian *cantari*), as well as their adaptations and other derived texts.

Epic was one of the most important and most productive literary genres of European vernacular literatures from the appearance of the vernacular languages until the end of the Middle Ages, and it has exerted an enormous influence throughout Europe even beyond that period. Old French *chansons de geste* were adapted in Irish, Welsh, English, Norse, German, Dutch, Italian, Yiddish, and Latin. Through the prose versions of the 15th century, the *romanzi cavallereschi* of the Italian Renaissance, chapbooks, opera, theatre, film, children's literature, and other more or less popular art forms, its subject matter (in particular the “matter of France”) remained an important part of the cultural heritage of Europeans, spread into other parts of the world, and still is relevant in our own time.

Connected events were held at Trinity College and Victoria College, including “Narrative Performances” (an event



sponsored by the Jackman Humanities Institute within their Program for the Arts 2018/19 “Reading Faces, reading Minds”); the Pneuma Ensemble (Toronto) performed Marie de France's *Bisclavret*, and Professor Antoni Rossell (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona) presented extracts from his reconstructed performance of the *Cantar de mio Cid*. The two performances were followed by a panel discussion on the performance of vernacular narrative texts in the Middle Ages. Victoria College also hosted a performance by The Mexicans Folk Ballet (Toronto), including a “Moros y Cristianos” dance.

- by Dorothea Kullman, Associate Professor,  
Department of French Studies

# Special Series: Outside the Academy

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In our “Outside the Academy” series in this issue, we take a look at two PhD graduates who have pursued non-academic career paths in the non-profit and culture sectors. And, as Professors Heidi Bohaker and Ron Pruessen remind us, even tenured academics can both learn a lot and bring many things to the table when branching outside the academy.

## History’s PhDs – Where Are They Now?

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The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) at the University of Toronto recently undertook the “10,000 PhDs Project,” a major initiative using open source and publicly-available information to track the employment status of the university’s PhD graduates from all disciplines, from 2000-2015. The study was able to successfully locate 88% of the university’s total PhD graduates. SGS published their results via Tableau, an interactive data visualization program. Here are some of their findings:

- Humanities PhD graduates overall were largely stable from 2000-2015, with an average of 100 or so graduates per year;
- History’s PhD graduates over the past 15 years accounted for approximately 10% of this total, or an average of 12 graduates per year;
- Most of History’s PhDs are found in the post-secondary education sector (83% of graduates), with 8% working in the public or non-profit sectors, and 4% in the private sector;
- Nearly 60% of our graduates since 2000 are now in tenure-stream faculty positions, although our most recent cohort (2012-2015) are presently starting their careers with sessional instructorships (35%) or as post-doctoral fellows (9%);
- Of those who have established careers in the private sector, 66% entered the Banking/Finance/Investment field;
- Many of our PhD graduates are also self-employed as researchers or freelance writers, or have become consultants within Canada;
- 63% of our graduates working in the public sector have found positions in the government, with 27% in the Education sector more broadly. 60% of graduates working in the non-profit sector are employed in the field of arts and culture.

For more on this project, visit the [SGS 10,000 PhDs page](#).

# Outside the Academy: Rebecca Carter-Chand Remembers

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This past summer I landed my dream job at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. My title is Program Officer in the Programs on Ethics, Religion, and the Holocaust, Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies. A large part of my job is fostering scholarship and teaching – I organize research workshops, symposia, and conference panels, and continue my own research and publishing. I also contribute to content creation on topics related to religion for the USHMM's many educational resources.

Although I don't teach in a university setting, my experience in the classroom is extremely helpful for giving talks and leading tours, not to mention developing practical and pedagogically-sound classroom resources. The most exciting part is that I get to help shape the future of the field in which I have been invested for so many years.

After finishing my PhD, I taught for three years: at U of T, at Lakehead University, Orillia, and at Clark University in Massachusetts. With a sober understanding of the academic job market, I was always open to an "alt-ac" career. I would advise all PhD students to think strategically about gaining professional skills and experience



Rebecca Carter-Chand, at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum

during grad school – organizing events, managing budgets, engaging the public, editing or translating, supervising work-study students, etc. My doctoral advisor went out of her way to give me professional opportunities while also championing my intellectual contributions. I cannot overstate how important that has been, and I hope that more professors come to see their role in fostering professional skills in their students as well as rigorous academic training.

- by Rebecca Carter-Chand, PhD History and the Collaborative Program in Jewish Studies, 2016

## FACULTY PUBLICATION

**Paul Rutherford**  
*The Adman's Dilemma:  
From Barnum to Trump.*  
Toronto, University of  
Toronto Press, 2018.



# Outside the Academy: Julia Rady-Shaw has *The Goods*

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Julia Rady-Shaw (second from left) with the cast of *The Goods*

Shortly after I defended my PhD, I had the great opportunity to work with the CBC on its program, “The Goods.” As a part of an effort to reach out to its audience with information about Canada, a producer brought me on to discuss issues related to Remembrance Day in Canada, Canadian trivia, and lesser known moments in our past. The experience was a unique one. So used to writing and communicating with an academic audience, I was forced to think about how we share important issues and ideas with the broader Canadian public.

*The Goods* was the daily afternoon lifestyle show on the CBC - its content aimed at a crowd tuning in for tips on DIY projects, healthcare, or relationship advice. But Canadians, it seems, want to know about their past. The director and the producer of the program helped to ensure that the content was accessible to the audience (as in, no jargon), and I made sure that there was substance that went beyond mere factoids. It was a great exercise.

The engagement of the audience in the segments and their positive response was even better than the process of generating content. After my first appearance, I had the pleasure to return several more times. The whole experience clued me into the great need for academically trained historians to find ways to impart their craft to an audience outside of the walls of a university. The subject matter might not be as in depth, at times, as we would want but all it takes is to spark interest in one person to have a more fulfilling discussion about our shared past in all of its complexities.

The experience has also illuminated another way (outside of a tenure-track career) in which I can pursue what attracted me to the study of history initially and my desire to teach it.

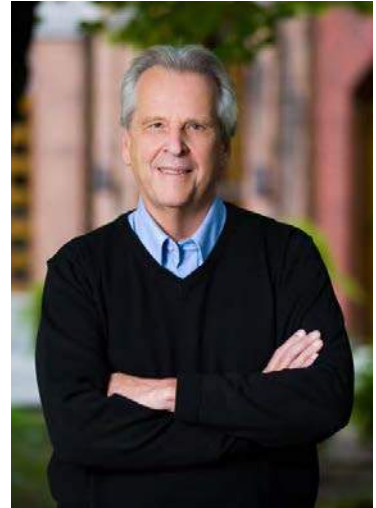
- by Julia Rady-Shaw, *PhD History*, 2017



# Outside the Academy: A Historian Leaves the Classroom and the Archives – Temporarily

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I'm coming to the end of a four-year experience that took me outside my academia cocoon. The experience involved my going from decades of studying government to working for one. There are things I still need to digest – sometimes because their complexities are opaque and challenging, sometimes because they are simply unpalatable – but I'm grateful for having had the opportunity to spend time away from the archives and the classroom to learn more about the terrain on the other side of the fence.



Professor Ron Pruessen

I should make it clear that my four years as Chair of the Ontario Developmental Services Housing Task Force had no direct grounding in my university career – and that I never saw it as some new career path. I would not have gone down this provincial government road if it hadn't been for the fact that one of my children (my daughter Caroline) is developmentally disabled. Caroline's an amazing person with a wonderful sense of humour and a capacity for enjoying life, but her social and intellectual limitations have meant that her Mom and I have always had to help her navigate health care, school, and disability program systems. We've come to understand the severe problems confronting people with developmental disabilities (or any disabilities, really) even in a wealthy and often generous place like Ontario. Advocacy for Caroline became advocacy more generally for us: we helped organize a grassroots family group (Opportunities Mississauga for 21+) that now speaks for 250 families, for instance, and I found myself representing families in a Provincial Developmental Services Partnership Table that advises the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

My research and writing experience as an academic led me to help author a Partnership Table study that zeroed in on one of the most challenging problems confronting Ontarians with developmental disabilities: housing. That 2013 study recommended multiple ways of solving what had come to be called a "wicked" social problem, including the creation of a task force to develop an "action plan" – and I was then asked to chair that task force in 2014. (It's a common experience in the academic world and elsewhere, isn't it? Say that some issue needs attention and you get "volunteered" to figure out how.)

*(continued on p. 28)*



# Outside the Academy: Touring the Mohawk Institute Residential School

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A tour guide shows the “two-row wampum,” which documents the 16<sup>th</sup> century treaty between the British and the Five Nations Iroquois Confederacy.  
photo © Woodland Cultural Centre

On November 1<sup>st</sup>, Professor Heidi Bohaker took her graduate students and fourth-year undergraduate students (along with interested faculty and staff members) outside the classroom to the Woodland Cultural Centre and Mohawk Institute Residential School in Brantford, Ontario.

The day-long field trip started with a guided tour of the Centre’s museum, which houses archaeological material, historical material culture, arts, crafts, documents and archival photographs from the Six Nations, including documents, furniture, paintings dating

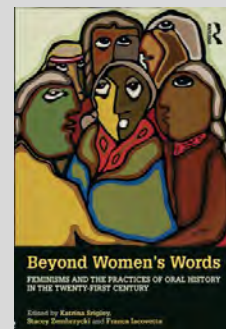
back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, drawings, graphics, sculptures, photographs, fine crafts, and contemporary art installations in the gallery space. Due to the residential school building’s closure for restoration, the afternoon featured a documentary film which toured the school and discussed some of the experiences of the residents, dating back to its opening in 1828. There was also a live interview and Q&A session with a local residential school survivor, who detailed his own experiences as a resident in the 1940s.

The residential school operated from 1828 to 1970 as a boarding school for First Nations children in Ontario and parts of Quebec. After its closure, it reopened as the Woodland Cultural Centre, dedicated to preserving First Nations heritage, and to provide historical insight into the residential school system in Canada, which was a key tool in a program of forced assimilation for First Nations peoples into European society.

## FACULTY PUBLICATION

Katrina Srigley, Stacey Zembrzycki, and **Franca Iacovetta**, eds.

*Beyond Women’s Words: Feminisms and the Practices of Oral History in the Twenty-first Century.* NY: Routledge, 2018.



# Researching Research Methods with the IHPST

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The research methods workshop was held at Victoria University at the University of Toronto on July 14, 2018. The workshop aimed to discuss the skills necessary for doing research in the history of sociology and to help young scholars develop their research projects. The workshop was set up by the outbound board members of "RC08," a sub-group of the International Sociological Association, particularly external researchers Stephen Turner and João Maia, the local organizer was UofT Assistant Professor Mark Solovey (Institute of the History & Philosophy of Science & Technology).

## **Session One: Designing research projects**

Papers by Jennifer Platt (University of Sussex, UK), Neil McLaughlin (McMaster University, CAN), and Stephen Turner (University of South Florida, USA) were presented. As the title of her paper, "Topics for conversation" suggests, Jennifer Platt drew on her own experience to bring our attention to a number of factors which should be accounted for when setting up a research project. Stephen Turner's paper discussed the problem of turning archival material into a narrative. Neil McLaughlin drew from his work on the sociology of intellectuals to explain different paths into the topic in particular with reference to Canadian sociology. He discussed how the political and institutional contexts may weigh on the possibilities of expression and on the way in which the history of sociology is told.

## **Session Two: Archival research**

William Buxton (Concordia University, CAN), Christian Fleck (University of Graz, AUT) and Mark Solovey (University of Toronto, CAN) presented their work. Buxton discussed the



diversity of the provenance of archival material and considered the archives in which sociologists carry out their sociological research. Christian Fleck discussed what historians of sociology and other social sciences disciplines did in the past. Mark Solovey discussed the writing of the history of sociology as the history of science, with consideration of five broad questions around the changing meaning of 'science' across history, funding for sociology in the context of the sciences, and the relationship of historians to contemporary science.

## **Session Three: Masterclass**

The third session took the form of a master class with four scholars: Mohammad Khamsya Bin Khidzer (University of San Diego, USA), Matteo Bortonlini (University of Padova, ITA), Jakob Motrenko (Warsaw university, POL) and Matheus Ribero (University of Brasilia, BRA), who presented various types of personal research projects. Participants agreed that the workshop format should be pursued at future congresses and open to researchers at any career stage who wish to present a project they are working on for criticism and in-depth discussion.

- by Cherry Schrecker, Professor, University Grenoble Alpes

# Sexual Violence in the Classroom:

## In Conversation with Melanie Newton & Luis Van Isschot

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In our last Newsletter, we featured a story on the week-long graduate student workshop for Teaching Sexual Violence in History. The workshop considered how instructors and teaching assistants should responsibly teach materials dealing with sexual violence. Amy Ratelle, co-editor of the *History Current*, sat down with Professors Melanie Newton and Luis Van Isschot to gain the perspective of faculty members who teach this material regularly. Interview questions were generated by Kari North, Lindsay Sidders, and Spirit-Rose

Waite, who were among the co-organizers of the original workshop.

**One of the participants in the workshop proposed a switch in terminology from “sexual violence” to “sexualized violence,” a distinction that challenges the idea that the violence itself is “sexual” and committed out of desire. How might everyday teaching language be problematic and reinforce existing assumptions about the causes of such violence? How can we, as educators, challenge these assumptions by adjusting the terms we use and explaining to our students why we have chosen to do so?**

**MELANIE:** Thinking about ‘sexualized violence’ as a term is really useful – it may be a better one than sexual violence. Part of the issue is that we are looking for one term for what is in fact a range of violent behaviour. I think a conversation about where the distinction might be is really useful for pedagogical purposes more broadly. It’s hard for me to say, in the absence of this conversation, which term is better. We should, as scholars and teachers, be having this conversation more often.

Too often, and in my experience, discussions of gender-based violence remain too much in our scholarship or at the level of institutional administration. Faculty who are often the people who bring that sort of research on gender and violence together with lived experiences of students and colleagues whom we teach and whom we work with and who have these experiences, or we ourselves have had these experiences. Thinking about the relationship between our scholarship and the histories that I teach, for example [the histories of slavery], work themselves out in the lives of the students I teach. We don’t have those conversations enough.

**LUCHO:** That’s a fantastic question. I had not heard anyone discuss the distinction between sexual violence and sexualized violence, and it highlights the need for all of us as educators to get informed on the latest, cutting-edge debates are with respect to this issue and teaching about violence in general. With respect to the terminology here, I completely understand why ‘sexualized

violence' makes sense instinctively, in the same way that we would use the language of 'survivors' and not 'victims' in many contexts. It's interesting because in the context I'm most familiar with – Colombia – the language of advocates for those people who have been the targets of violence, the term victim is widely used, and by victims themselves. There has been an attempt in that context to appropriate the terminology of victimhood, and there are specific reasons why that is the case.

As educators, we need to constantly challenge ourselves and present definitions as historically contingent. If I introduce the concept of "sexualized violence" it suggests that there are current debates and reflections on our past that this is coming out of, rather than "this is the end of the discussion." All these terms have to be historicized.

**AMY:** Something for me that wasn't necessarily in the question is that there are two sets of concurrent ways of thinking about sexualized violence – there's weaponized sexual violence on the state level, as an act of war, and then there's more intimate and individualized sexualized violence – they sit uneasily next to one another, they're the same thing, and yet they're not.

**MELANIE:** It's precisely that ambiguity that's difficult. There's a grad student whom I know, who works on a country in the Caribbean that has very high rates of rapes and domestic violence, and one of the concepts he uses to talk about that society is the idea of a "frontier," in that sexual violence is part of a range of forms of extra-legal and violent and state-unregulated behaviour that in many ways reflects the dysfunctionality of the state. But it also reflects and is part of a whole area of basic everyday insecurity, that speaks both to the limits of what the state is able to do to protect its citizens, but also the reach of the law.

We might draw some stark distinctions between sexualized violence in states where the state structure seems to be functioning, versus war situations or failed state situations, but I actually think that the experience of sexualized violence and the ability to carry out sexualized violence with impunity, even in a place like Canada where the reports are low, is not clear. It's very difficult for our legal frameworks to investigate these cases.

Even though all members of society are potentially victims, it's clear that people gendered as female, transgender people, and children are particularly at risk of sexualized violence. That reveals certain continuities between the limits of citizenship, insofar as citizenship means any kind of guarantee of physical safety. In that regard, it operates in a way that is not dissimilar to a war context, where sexualized violence is used to distinguish between communities that are safe and are guaranteed the protection of the state (or to feel like they have the protection of the state), from those who are the target of state violence. Some people don't get to move through the world with the same security as others. If you're a person of colour, women, elderly, or a child, you face this higher risk constantly.

*(continued on page 23)*

## Daniel Sargent, 2018 Strom Visiting Professor

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Professor Daniel Sargent, UC Berkeley

The Department of History welcomed Daniel Sargent as our second annual Strom Visiting Professor. Currently an Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of California, Berkeley, Professor Sargent is as a highly respected emerging scholar working in the area of contemporary International Relations and US Foreign Policy.

His talk on November 15<sup>th</sup>, “Pax Americana: Report from a Work-in-Progress,” argued that a deep historical perspective can help us to understand both the structural dynamics that have brought the Pax Americana to the brink of unraveling and the variety of policy choices that might help to prolong

a liberal international settlement consistent with American values and US national interests.

During his visit, Professor Sargent held a masterclass for graduate students working in the field of International Relations, and also participated in the Munk School of Global Affairs’ State of the Field Conference, which brought together prominent international scholars, political scientists, and younger academics undertaking new directions, to provide a better understanding of the importance of Contemporary International History in the academy and in wider public discourse.

## From the Vault: Is Nick Terpstra *Weird or What?*

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The Department of History’s own Nick Terpstra appeared on season one of *Weird or What?* to explain the 15<sup>th</sup>-century Voynich Manuscript, a mysterious medieval codex handwritten and illustrated in an

undecipherable code. Professor Terpstra speculated that the document might actually be a practice document, as monks of the period were known to design their own languages.

*Weird or What?* was hosted by William Shatner and aired for three seasons on the Discovery Channel from 2011-2012.



# Awards & Honours

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## Faculty Awards & News

- **Doris Bergen** was named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.
- **Bob Bothwell** was named to the Order of Canada.
- **Heidi Bohaker** has been awarded a SSHRC Connections grant in support of her Great Lakes Research Alliance for the Study of Aboriginal Arts and Culture (GRASAC)
- **Donna Gabaccia** received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Immigration and Ethnic History Society.
- **Anup Grewal** has been awarded a SSHRC Connections grant for an interdisciplinary workshop on "The Tibetan Cultural Renaissance in the People's Republic of China."
- **Julie MacArthur's** book, *Cartography and the Political Imagination: Mapping Community in Colonial Kenya* (Ohio University Press, 2016), was awarded the Joel Gregory Book Prize 2018 by the Canadian Association of African Studies. The monograph was also a finalist for the 2017 Bethwell A. Ogot Prize from the African Studies Association.
- **Sean Mills** was named to the Royal Society of Canada's College for Emerging Scholars.
- **Tamara Walker's** *Exquisite Slaves: Race, Clothing, and Status in Colonial Lima* (Cambridge University Press, 2017) won the prestigious Harriet Tubman Prize, awarded by the Lapidus Center for the Historical Analysis of Transatlantic Slavery for the best nonfiction book published in the US on the slave trade, slavery, and anti-slavery in the Atlantic World.



- **Lynne Viola** received the Canada Council for the Arts' Canada Council for the Arts' prestigious Thomas Henry Pentland Molson Prize for her research on the Soviet Union. The Molson Prize recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the cultural and intellectual heritage of Canada.

Viola (centre) is pictured at the Molson Award ceremony with Tara Lapointe, Director of Outreach and Business Development for the Canada Council for the Arts (left) and Dr. Dominique Bérubé, Vice-President of Research Programs from the

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (right).

Viola also received the Best Book in Ukrainian Studies Award from the American Association of Ukrainian Studies for her 2017 monograph *Stalinist Perpetrators on Trial: Scenes from the Great Terror in Soviet Ukraine* (Oxford University Press). The book also received the Reginald Zelnik Book Prize from the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) for an outstanding monograph published on Russia, Eastern Europe or Eurasia.

### Graduate Student Fellowships

- **Jennifer Levin Bonder** received a Fulbright residency in Washington to the 2018-19 academic year.
- **Kassandra Luciuk** was awarded the Corsini Fellowship in Canadian History at McMaster University for the 2018-19 academic year.
- **Shane Lynn** was awarded the SSHRC Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement to spend 3 months in Australia and New Zealand for dissertation research from March-May.
- **Alison MacAulay** has been selected to hold a Jackman Humanities Institute-Mellon Graduate Fellowship in 2018-2019.
- **Chandra Murdoch** was named a Junior Fellow at UofT's Centre for Criminology and Sociolegal Studies and was also awarded the prestigious McMurtry fellowship from the Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History.
- **Hana Suckstorff** received a Fulbright grant for graduate students to study in Italy for the 2018-19 academic year.

## **Graduate Student Funding Awards**

### **Social Sciences and Humanities Research**

#### **Council (SSHRC)**

Ryan Buchanan  
Matthieu Caron  
Cathleen Clark  
Marc De Leon  
Laurie Drake  
Edward Dunsworth  
Konstantin Fuks  
Catherine Koonar

### **Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS)**

Christopher Baldwin  
Marilyn Campeau  
Joseph Chan  
Chris Chung  
Susie Colbourn  
Joel Dickau  
Oksana Dudko  
Abdullah Saleen Farooqi  
Sheragim Jenabzadeh  
Kelsey Kilgore  
Alison Macaulay  
Chandra Murdoch  
Julia Rombough  
Maris Rowe-Mcculloch  
Connor Sebestyen  
Simon Vickers

### **SSHRC cont'd**

Kassandra Luciuk  
Shane Lynn  
Nicholas McGee  
Bradley Melle  
Jonathan Neufeld  
Michael Roellinghoff  
Zachary Smith  
Erica Toffoli  
Spirit-Rose Waite  
Siew Han Yeo

### **Connaught International Student Scholarship**

Kathleen Burke  
Katie Davis  
Anwesha Ghosh  
Aleksandra Pomiecko  
Hana Suckstorff

### **Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships**

Monica Espaillat Lizardo  
Danijel Matijevec

### **Ontario Trillium Scholarship**

Zixian Liu

### **Faculty of Arts & Science Top (FAST) Fellowship**

Michelle Fu

## Graduate Student Thesis and Dissertation Defenses

- **Dale Barbour**  
"Undressed Toronto: The transformation of bathing, 1850-1935" in March (supervisor Steve Penfold).
- **Elizabeth Bryer**  
"Scramble for Photographs of Empire: Complicating Colonial Visions of the Philippine American War (1899 – 1913)," supervisor Elspeth Brown
- **Sandy Carpenter**  
"Aiming for Peace and Responding to Crisis: Movement and the Saints in Eleventh-Century Southern French Miracle Collections," supervisors Isabelle Cochelin, Joe Goering, and Nicholas Terpstra.
- **Karen Cousins**  
"Miracles and Memory: The Virgin of Chiquinquirá and her People in the Seventeenth-Century New Kingdom of Granada," supervisor Ken Mills.
- **Dustin Harris**  
"Muslims in Marseille: North African Immigration and French Social Welfare in the Late Colonial and Postcolonial Eras," supervisor Eric Jennings.
- **Jacob Hogan**  
"Global Economic Management in 'Embryo': The IMF, the US, China, and the Indebted World, 1963-1976," supervisor Ron Pruessen
- **Alexandra Logue**  
"The Metes and Bounds of Manhood: Gender, Property, and Violence in Early Modern England," supervisor Jennifer Mori.
- **Ben McVicker**  
"Afgantsy: The Social, Political, and Cultural Legacy of a Forgotten Generation," supervisor Lynne Viola.
- **Tina Park**  
"Canadian-Korean Relations from the 1880s to the 1980s," supervisor Bob Bothwell.
- **Alexandra Pomiecko,**  
"Belarusian Transnational Networks and Armed Conflict, 1921-1956," supervisor Piotr Wrobel.
- **Will Riddell**  
"To the Water's Edge of Empire: Domestic Class Struggle, White Merchant Sailors, and the Emerging U.S. Imperial System, 1872-1924," supervisors Rick Halpern and Daniel Bender
- **Michael Webb**  
"Interwoven Texts: The Cartularies of Angoumois," supervisor Isabel Cochelin.
- **Mary Ann Yoshinari**  
"Economic Sovereignty in Iran vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, 1921-46," supervisor Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi.

# In Memoriam: Jill Ker Conway

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Many of you have already heard the sad news of the recent death of our former colleague Jill Ker Conway (1934-2018).

Conway taught American history in our Department from 1964-1975. More than that, together with Natalie Zemon Davis, she pioneered the teaching of women's history both here and across North America. She shared her path breaking syllabi in the field, wrote and edited numerous monographs and collections that provided the intellectual resources for further research and teaching, and mentored a group of graduate students who went on to become some of the field's leaders in universities around the world. Conway herself moved on to become the first woman president of Smith College (1975-85). In recognition of her many intellectual achievements and broader contributions, Barack Obama awarded her the National Humanities Medal in 2013.



Jill Ker Conway in 1977; © University of Toronto

Alongside her academic publications, Conway wrote three volumes of a memoir that took her from a youth on an outback sheep farm in Australia, to her time in Toronto, to her work in the US. Read *True North* (1995) to get a better idea of the kind of place she arrived at, and the much-transformed place she left – beyond her teaching, she rose to become the first female Vice President of U of Toronto in 1973, and was an advocate of securing equal pay for female faculty, expanding day care, and promoting women's studies among much else. It has to be admitted that Conway's drive for gender equality in the academy was triggered in part by the discrimination that she experienced in our Department.

We were privileged to have a colleague of her depth, convictions, energy, and drive.

- by Nicholas Terpstra, Professor

## An Alumna Remembers: Linda Macrae on Professor Conway

*I had Professor Conway for my American History tutorial when I was in Honours History (Vic 6T7). I remember her for introducing me to the whole idea of social history. I also had Professor [Natalie Zemon] Davis as lecturer in Economic History. They were remarkable women that I admired and who had an influence on how and what I learned while at U of T.*



***(Sexual Violence in the Classroom,  
continued from page 16)***

**LUCHO:** The state has a responsibility to protect survivors of sexualized violence, and therefore it is a fundamental question of human rights that the state is responsible for protecting. If there is violence between partners where a male partner (for instance) commits an act of violence against his female partner, the state has a responsibility to protect the woman from those acts. Oftentimes, we see both because the legal process itself does not easily resolve cases in women's favour – and I speak of women specifically here – and also because the state fails to protect women from violent offenders, which is something we're increasingly hearing about.

There have been many cases in the past few years of people who have records of committing sexualized violence yet retain positions of power where they can continue to potentially commit those kinds of acts. It is absolutely the state's responsibility morally, politically and also legally, to protect a woman or the victim of sexualized violence, or survivor if you prefer.

In terms of how the terminology is used, this kind of precision is extremely useful. It's remarkable for anyone who has been discussing these issues through the second wave of feminism in North America, in our context, in the academic context, that this notion of sexual violence not fundamentally being about desire is still being debated. It shows us how much we need to discuss it. That's a very, very important reminder here.

**Are the sexualised/sexual, gendered, racialized, ableist, etc. dynamics of violence a priority for you in the classroom? What**

**about outside courses explicitly focused on violence?**

**MELANIE:** Yes, absolutely. I work on the history of slavery, emancipation, the colonization in the Caribbean, indigenous survival in the period of colonization, slave law, and sexualized violence is at the heart of colonial violence and systems of slavery. The fundamental legal mechanism for making slavery in the Atlantic world and Caribbean a perpetually-inheritable system was what I call the "maternal inheritance principle" – that is, the idea that legal status passes through women. If a woman is free, her child is free; if she is enslaved, her child is enslaved.

What you see in the early period of colonization is that all the powers fighting for territory, they all agree on this principle. Roman law had this principle, but it was not universal, not in the same way as colonial slavery. At the same time, is a simplification of laws of inheritance that limit the ways women can pass property on to their children. Property becomes something that passes through men, on to their (male) heirs. But legal status is something that women pass on, even if they can't pass anything else on with it. This is a fundamental guarantee of vulnerability of all women, and it's central to understanding how slavery is consolidated, and how white patriarchal privilege is consolidated, and it's crucial.

Additionally, in terms of thinking of ability, slavery was an incredibly disabling system. We think a lot about slavery in terms of the sheer number of people who didn't survive the crossing, or who die as a result of violence of all kinds in slave societies. In slave communities, the number of people who would have been physically or emotionally impaired by capture, or malnutrition, and that

vulnerability to violence is constant. And every slave narrative includes at least one story of various public sexual violence against women. This was the ultimate marker of slave owner power, was to do whatever they wished with the bodies of enslaved people with impunity so as to exploit them. The ultimate expression of that was to sexually violate women and own their children as property, and sell those children and accrue wealth. There's probably no greater expression of the monetary value of sexualized violence for perpetuating a system of patriarchal privilege than that.

**LUCHO:** Studying sexualized violence is a major priority for me in the classroom; we talk about it extensively in third- and fourth-year courses, but it's never been the central theme of a whole course. I integrate this mainly through students' own research projects and the way they share their work with the class. The case of Peruvian forced sterilization in the 1990s comes up regularly, as do other forms of state violence, so absolutely.

With regard to racialized violence, again when we're talking about Latin America and especially the context I study in Central America and the Andes, or war in those regions, has been mainly focused on the countryside and most of the victims have been people of peasant backgrounds or indigenous backgrounds, so it's a major issue. Also providing the context to Latin America colonialism, which is a backdrop for all of this.

**In our workshop a participant proposed that an instructive way of thinking about and categorising sexualised/sexual violence is as a contextual "social phenomenon," in order to combat stereotypes of 'monstrous perpetrators' and 'perfect victims.' What**

**uses or benefits can you see in such a categorisation?**

**MELANIE:** We have to be careful – it matters what terms we use for things. What matters more is how we speak about them, and the standards that we set for research and getting at truth and meaning. As scholars, we need to have more systematic conversations about how to research sexualized violence, how to do that ethically, how to speak about it ethically as a social phenomenon.

An article I wrote many years ago involved an enslaved man accused of raping a poor free white woman in Barbados at the end of the period of slavery. He was sentenced to death but due to the incompetence of the white authorities he was convicted; it was a capital offense, and the accusation was enough. The most powerful planter-legislator in the country looked at the case and possibly because the woman was *poor* white, he stayed the execution and commuted the sentence to life imprisonment. Although he had done that for various complicated legal reasons, it meant that the man was no longer enslaved, belonging to the state instead. He was acquitted due to lack of evidence, and the acquittal freed him from enslavement – he no longer had an owner because the state had paid his owner for the purposes of execution.

This created a huge crisis and it shows that categories of monsters and perfect victims is deeply problematic. He was ultimately exiled from the country, but looking at the case, it is clearly racist, and she was discriminated against because she was poor, but none of that means that a crime was not committed. It only went to trial because she was a white woman. Getting away from these dichotomies requires thinking about

sexualized violence in intersectional ways. It's never not about race, or class – it exists in a wider field of power that needs to be thought through more carefully.

**LUCHO:** I think in the case of sexualized violence, as in all other forms of violence that I study or teach in my courses, I try to provide the social historical background to these crimes so that we understand the rationale of the perpetrators, in the sense that they are operating with broader social and political goals (not so much to get inside their minds but to understand their purpose to this violence) – they're communicating certain types of messages to the population, so this kind of distinction is useful.

The notion of the monstrous perpetrator and perfect victim is really important in terms of the way in which we think about human rights in Latin America because it gets to also whose stories are heard. In the context of Colombia, many people who live in the countryside are stigmatized racially or because they live in poor areas or because they live in areas where there has been a historic presence of leftist guerilla movements, and so oftentimes the way in which we tell the history of Colombia is such that we don't immediately recognize these people as worthy victims because there's some stigma associated with it. Whoever you are, you deserve protection, particularly people who speak out against violence. Oftentimes those people are the ones who are also stigmatized and they need sometimes additional protection for the fact of having taken the step of becoming spokespeople or activists. Not only do they face sexualized violence, and they also face the violence associated with trying to silence critics of the state. So I think it's very important.

**Is the primary importance of teaching histories of sexualised/sexual violence constructing more "accurate" and "truthful" histories (inclusive of the lived experiences of those excluded), or in the service of present-day politics? How do you view the intersection of historical writing and living and writing in the present?**

**(AMY: Certainly in the sense of present-day politics, we've seen this with the recent Kavanaugh hearings in the US and the broader #MeToo movement, this notion of monster and perfect victim. This moment in history is very interesting in that respect.)**

**MELANIE:** For me, this is a complicated question and I don't think I'll be able to answer it fully. There's no one reason that it's important; the pursuit of more accurate and truthful and *just* (which is a little more complicated) history is important for the present and our understanding of the past. The questions we ask of the past are conditioned by what plagues us in the present, and our ongoing inability as a society to deal with rape and sexualized violence culture is a deeper historical issue that is important in the present. Every time a victim of sexualized violence comes forward, that we understand that there's a longer history. There's a way that the law has evolved in the Western context that individualizes crime – there's a perpetrator and there's a victim, and that's what matters.

It can be quite difficult to bring in wider social and historical questions in understanding this individual situation. If the law is going to deal with the question of sexualized violence, it needs a way to do that. At the same time, I don't research the past in order to understand myself better. It's important that we not be that narcissistic. But that's a

broader principle and that we treat the subjects of our analysis with the same respect we treat anyone else. If there were a victim of sexualized violence who came to me and was relating her story, I wouldn't be hearing it insofar as it had meaning for me, and we should accord the same respect to stories that come to us from the past, even if the victims are not still with us – people don't stop being people just because they died. It's the same attitude that the stories matter because they are their stories.

**LUCHO:** Most of the history that I study and much of the history that I teach about is contemporary and so the subjects of that history are often histories of people who are still alive and are engaged with memory projects, whether they're officially-sanctioned ones like a TRC process or more popular unsanctioned kinds of exercises in the arts or in activism. For me, there's very little separation between what I would call the historical narratives and the current concerns.

The thing that interests me most is the ways in which we tell history, we tell our personal histories, in order to get at an understanding of the contemporary context. Let me try to be more explicit here – there is an interaction between the researcher, the research subject, the sources we're studying, and the events of the past that absolutely have to be unpacked and understood as dynamic. It's fundamental to the way I study history, including conducting oral histories, which I think are very important as a part of this process. Recording oral histories is of particular relevance to me because I think that it is a way of hearing the stories of the survivors of sexualized violence, or violence in general, in a context that is wider than the incidents themselves. We don't just want to hear about what happened on a particular day at a

particular event or at a particular meeting, or whatever the case may be. But we want to know, who was this person that survived that attack? What was their trajectory in life more broadly? How do they define themselves? How did they see themselves at this time in their life? They can help us find and define not just the event but the world in which they lived. It's about recognizing the survivor than more than just a survivor of sexualized violence, recognize them as a complete person and a protagonist in a broader history.

**Does engendering empathy play a role in your teaching practice? Does it play a role in your scholarship? What is lost when teachers do not or cannot empathize with their subjects? What do you think is the role of empathy in teaching histories of sexualised/sexual violence? What is the overall role of affect in post-secondary classrooms?**

**MELANIE:** Yes, it does. I'll give you a story – as an undergraduate student I did British Imperial History, and more than once I would hear instructors say, "we're not studying the British Empire to pass judgement or to determine right and wrong," but we are people before we're anything else. If you can study slavery and colonial genocide and *not* think you shouldn't have an ethical position on that, then there's something probably wrong with you. Either that or you are ultimately empathizing with the perpetrator – you've definitely picked a side. There's a difference between empathy and an ethical position and passing judgement. When we move to passing judgement, we've skipped over self-reflection, we've not thought through the ways in which we have benefitted from or are privileged by, or still perpetuate many of the same kinds of forces evident in

the scholarship that we're teaching or reading. So there's a lack of self-reflection.

Thinking deeply, all human interactions must involve empathy, and to be empathetic does not mean you have impaired judgement or an impaired analytical capacity or that you've been somehow compromised if you are kind. I think that's really a way of privileging in our discipline especially – there's a reason why historically most historians have been white men. That's an approach that preserves a certain kind of power, when it doesn't have to be self-reflective, when it doesn't feel itself challenged in any kind of way, when the purveyors of knowledge get to see themselves as transparent vehicles for 'truth' and don't have to think about their relationship to that past, so it's useful for all those things. There is a difference between that and self-righteousness.

**LUCHO:** This is a really hard one. I would never claim in the classroom context or meeting with a student to understand what they're going through, for instance, or assume what peoples' experiences are when they hear stories of sexualized violence. One of the things that I do is to try and express my point of view, that I do this work on human rights and social justice in Latin America because for many years I have worked on these issues as both as an activist and an advocate, trying to raise awareness or trying to influence the way the Canadian or other governments treat questions of violence in Latin America or devise foreign policy. I've written a little bit about my journey as from activism to historian and this is something I take very seriously. It plays a role in my scholarship because I have at times publicly identified myself as someone who has gained

insight into questions of rights in Latin America by doing human rights work, and listening to peoples' stories. I strongly emphasize that in the classroom when it's important to do so.

I make the general assumption that anybody in the class could themselves have had a personal experience that would make this kind of learning, this kind of reflection on sexualized violence difficult or indeed any other form of violence. This comes in large measure from reflections I've had on the memorialization of warfare and war in general in the Canadian context. For instance, I've had the occasion to speak to veterans of the Second World War and hear how they didn't always feel represented by the official ways in which the story of the Second World War has been told in the news, media and at Remembrance Day events and such. I don't assume that the version of history we're telling is going to reflect everyone's experience directly but it might trigger them into thinking about their own experience. I'm aware that Canada and Toronto in particular is a city of immigrants, we've come from many different countries and when we speak in our Remembrance Day context about the Canadian military experience we have to bear in mind that the room could be full of people who were refugees from violence in other contexts and that diversity of experience, of experiencing violence is a real, living reality in our classroom for instance. I always make the assumption that someone in the room has real life experience that resonates with what we're reading about and proceed on the basis that this is an open conversation.

*Interviews have been edited for length and clarity.*



***(A Historian Leaves the Archives and the Classroom - Temporarily  
continued from page 12)***

The housing needs of Ontarians with developmental disabilities were at a crisis stage by 2014. There were at least 12,000 people waiting for opportunities that would allow them to move into more independent lives (compared to approximately 15,000 who were receiving government housing supports of some kind) – and many had been on the “wait list” for more than 15 or 20 years. Flipside of that coin: parental caregivers in their 70s and 80s were still shouldering 24/7 responsibilities – and having nightmares about what would happen to their dependent adult “child” when Mom and Dad became incapacitated or passed away. The wait for housing supports had reached that critical pass because this sector of the population had continually found itself competing with the health care and education needs (for instance) of larger groups of citizens who had proportionately greater political clout.

The Housing Task Force brought together 20 individual volunteers from across the province: self-advocates, family, and local organization representatives; leaders of agencies delivering front line services in varied communities; voices from other levels of government (Toronto and London, for instance). The group has been amazing to work with, combining lived experience with dedication and imagination. We were mandated to propose “innovative” ways of dealing with the housing crisis – on the assumption that current programs and approaches were clearly not taming the wicked problem. With creativity as the focus of our work, a key example of our efforts involved the launch of 18 “demonstration projects” designed to show how “out of the box” concepts might make both quantitative and qualitative differences if resources were made available. The results have been impressive and wide-ranging. A few examples: a single individual with complex medical needs as well as developmental disabilities is now supported by a network of family members, friends, and multiple community agencies; six “dual diagnosis” young men (dealing with mental health challenges as well as developmental disabilities) are now living more independently in the Peterborough area; and dozens of homeless people in Toronto have been diagnosed as developmentally disabled and are receiving counselling and support in locating appropriate housing. (An on-line Housing Task Force brochure describing all of the projects is available at [www.planningnetwork.ca](http://www.planningnetwork.ca)). Wide-ranging research, community consultations, and inter-ministerial explorations also figured in the Housing Task Force’s work – and we are drafting a final report for delivery this fall.

There has been no shortage of satisfactions in this work – although frustrations have been a steady counterpoint, as well.

On the positive side of the ledger: The government demonstrated real sensitivity to long-neglected needs – creating the Housing Task Force in the first place, for example, and then steadily increasing budget commitments to developmental services. (Those 18 demonstration projects were made possible by \$3million of ongoing funding.) As they took shape, as well, the demonstration projects themselves have provided significant learning experiences: we’ve shown, for example, that there are ways to expand the number and variety of person-centered and person-directed housing opportunities available to Ontarians with developmental disabilities, often at

lower cost because of innovative utilization of community and inter-ministerial/multi-government partnerships and technology.

The grassroots advocates and leaders who put forward proposals and then energetically helped to breathe life into them have also proven that there are transformative creative energies beyond government: these self-advocates, family members, and grassroots allies have become pathfinders in urging attention to “quality of life” steps that emphasize maximum independence, ongoing learning, and community connections.

The frustrations? All too many, unfortunately. It has been difficult all along to persuade the provincial government to more fully align its rhetoric with its actions. Sometimes this has been evident in the nuts and bolts of policy design and implementation, where there is a clear tendency (evident in almost any bureaucratic structure) to be more comfortable with existing approaches than with trying new ones.

Also important – perhaps more important – has been a perpetual problem of funding. The housing crisis affecting Ontarians with developmental disabilities took years to reach its terrible proportions and a plan with a comparable time line will be needed to solve it. Faced with limited budget resources, the provincial government has yet to develop something like a 10-year vision and commitment. Like many other observers, the Housing Task Force knows that the province has other serious needs: there are troubling health care wait lists too, of course (though these do not stretch to 15 or 20 years), and many of us shudder at the tragic neglect of aboriginal communities. The Housing Task Force has developed a wide range of recommendations designed to tap community partnerships and family resources as well as inter-ministerial, city and regional, and federal government resources for the specific crisis we are addressing – but there will simply be no effective movement forward without more dramatic provincial government commitments. It is profoundly disturbing that the wait list for housing supports for Ontarians with developmental disabilities is now *longer* than it was then the Housing Task Force began its work. We can only move inches until the government makes the significantly more expansive commitment that is needed – and moving inches is simply not sufficient when it is miles that must be traveled.

- by Ron Pruessen, Professor, Department of History



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