

TRENT SHOWCASE

SPRING 2015

UNIVERSITY

FIFTY YEARS OF LEADING-EDGE RESEARCH AND TEACHING

IN CONVERSATION ABOUT OUR COUNTRY

The
CANADA
Issue



LET'S TALK ABOUT CANADA.

With some pressing issues before us as a nation, how can the past inform the present? As Canada approaches its 150th anniversary, Trent University faculty members and students will embark on a journey to find out.

With the philanthropic leadership of Ontario-based executives William A. Macdonald and William R.K. Innes, the Canadian Studies Department will endeavour to engage Canadians in an unprecedented conversation about their country.

Macdonald and Innes have pledged to raise \$600,000 to support the project, the vision for which they shaped in consultation with Trent's founding president and Canadian Studies scholar, Thomas H.B. Symons, and chair of Canadian Studies, Dr. Christopher Dummitt.

A launch pad for discussion

An interactive website will be the launch pad for the conversation, but Prof. Dummitt says the project's outreach will be dynamic and move beyond technical and traditional borders. While the project's name is still under wraps, the conversation is set to begin in fall 2015.

"We want Canadians to have a conversation about their country," says Prof. Dummitt, adding the dialogue will be inspired by the concept of mutual accommodation. "We will explore the way mutual accommodation has been at the centre of Canada's history."

Prof. Dummitt points to the fundamental differences between French and English-speaking Canada and the way Canada has managed to successfully live through and celebrate these differences. But he also cites failings of accommodation – the federal government's approach to its Indigenous peoples, for example.

"To what extent can Canada's history of successful accommodation give us an example to build toward the future?"

Bilingual dialogue rooted in Canadian history

The completely bilingual conversation will take place mostly online through podcasts and discussion forums, moderated by Trent graduate students. The goal will be to engage interested Canadians from across the country in a dialogue around various important

"We want Canadians to have a conversation about their country,"



Dr. Christopher Dummitt engages in dialogue about Canada with Trent graduate students.

Canadian issues. Grad students will both moderate the forums and work behind the scenes to evaluate the discussion. Many Trent experts will be involved in the project which will also reach out to academics and experts across the country.

And while the dialogue will be rooted in Canadian history, contemporary issues – like climate change and issues facing Indigenous peoples – will also be explored.

"Trent University was so important to putting Canadian Studies on the map in this country. It's wonderful that Trent will help take this conversation in new digital directions in the 21st century," says Prof. Dummitt.

For updates on this exciting new project, or to make a contribution, visit the Canadian Studies Department website at trentu.ca/canadianstudies

TRENT UNIVERSITY 1964–2014



BROADENING THE REACH OF CANADIAN STUDIES

Trent's Canada Research Chair and Looking at Canada Differently

For more than 30 years, Dr. Bryan Palmer has been carving out a legacy as a leading expert in the field of Canadian Studies.

In the mid-1970s, with Trent University's founding president THB Symons conducting a Royal Commission on Canadian Studies and supporting the establishment of the University's Department of Canadian Studies, Professor Bryan Palmer was pursuing a PhD in the United States.

At the time, few Canadian universities offered supervision in the area Professor Palmer wanted to research – working-class history. But he was keen to develop an expertise, informed by international scholarship, that he might then help build in uniquely Canadian ways.

Over the next decades, he did just that.

From working class to Toronto's dispossessed

After teaching positions at McGill, Simon Fraser and Queen's University in the 1970s and 1980s, Prof. Palmer played a pivotal role in building, sustaining, and editing *Labour/Le Travail*, a journal of Canadian working-class history and labour studies with a global reputation.

Today, as a tier one Canada research chair of Canadian Studies at Trent University, Prof. Palmer is author of 13 books, many of which have been nominated for and won prestigious awards. He has also edited collections and pamphlets, as well as dozens of articles and review essays that have often been republished in translation, appearing in Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Korean, Greek, and other languages.

Currently Prof. Palmer is completing a co-authored study with a Toronto anti-poverty activist, Gaetan Heroux. *The Long History of the Toronto Dispossessed* covers almost two centuries of poor people's campaigns for work and wages, health care and housing, sustenance and schooling.

"It seems fitting in this time of widespread criminalization of the poor to try to reinsert them into understandings of the ways working people have always fought to push for their collective rights, extending our sense of social justice," says Prof. Palmer, whose scholarly writing on trade unions and labour-capital conflict was cited in a November 2014 Supreme Court decision establishing public sector workers' right to strike.

Today, Prof. Palmer's legacy of scholarship continues as European publisher,

Brill, is currently preparing a two-volume collection of Prof. Palmer's writings, reprinting a selection of his empirical studies and theoretical essays. These writings accomplish what Prof. Palmer set out to do all those years ago – broaden the reach of Canadian Studies, which has always been about knowing ourselves better and knowing ourselves differently.



Dr. Bryan Palmer

Fostering intellectual curiosity

Reflecting on his time at Trent, Prof. Palmer says, "I was delighted to come to Trent because the study of Canada was so central to the University's mission. Yet there was also considerable intellectual curiosity, a willingness to take Canadian Studies in new, often international, directions."

"... there was also considerable intellectual curiosity, a willingness to take Canadian Studies in new, often international, directions ..."

Over the next decade-and-a-half Prof. Palmer taught in the undergraduate Canadian Studies program and chaired the Department from 2007-2009. He contributed regularly to three graduate programs, the MA in History, and the Frost Centre's MA and PhD programs, supervising four PhDs and seven MAs.

One of the fruits of Prof. Palmer's research labours was a widely-praised University of Toronto Press study, *Canada in the 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era* (2009). For Prof. Palmer, the book is a direct result of the stimulation of teaching in Canadian Studies.

"The undergraduate students at Trent were a perfect sounding board for my research and ideas," Prof. Palmer states, "and my colleagues read and offered comment on the book before it went into print."



Meet Dr. Bryan Palmer and hear more about his legacy of research in Canadian Studies in a short video trentu.ca/showcase

SEARCHING FOR TRUTH, HOPING FOR RECONCILIATION

Trent Canadian Studies professor Dr. John Milloy acknowledges that he brings a decidedly "white perspective" to the study of the residential school system in Canada, but it's a perspective that he feels is necessary.

"As non-Aboriginal Canadians, it's important that we tell the story of residential schools, because it is our story," Professor Milloy says. "We built and operated the residential school system based on our ideology, and the horrors and the cruelty came from us and our culture."

Documenting the dead and missing children of residential schools

Prof. Milloy, who is also director of the Frost Centre for Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies at Trent, recently played a key role with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, initially as the director of research and later as a special advisor to the commissioners. The Commission was established in 2008 with a mandate to inform all Canadians about what happened in residential schools. It will release a report later in 2015 documenting the truth about anyone personally affected by the residential school experience.

An acknowledged expert on Canada's residential school system, Prof. Milloy literally wrote the book on the subject. As a member of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1991 – 1996), he researched and produced a detailed report which provided a complete history of the residential school system. In 1999 it was published as a book, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System 1879-1986*.

"...it's important that we tell the story of residential schools, because it is our story..."

During his tenure on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Prof. Milloy was responsible for all research, but became most associated with a project to document dead and missing children. "Although not part of the original mandate, I was asked to find the names and circumstances for every child who died or went missing in residential schools going back to 1879," Prof. Milloy says. "That proved to be a great challenge, particularly determining where children were buried and marking their graveyards."

Battling national hypocrisy

Prof. Milloy sees the work of the Commission as an important Canadian story. "It's the first stop sign that tells us the relationship between Aboriginals and Canada has not been good. It is



Dr. John Milloy

our responsibility as Canadians to recognize that and to start on some process of reconciliation."

He is hopeful that the Commission's report will also have positive impacts on other Aboriginal issues. "If ongoing problems like native incarceration and missing women can be traced back to the residential school system, and if governments are serious about reconciliation, there will have to be programs developed and monies spent in these areas," he says.

But his work on the Commission also demonstrated to Prof. Milloy the difficulty of gaining momentum to address the problem and gaining true reconciliation. "From the beginning, the Commission understood that we were only taking first steps and that reconciliation was going to take years. The hope is that this will lead to recognition that the relationship between Aboriginals and Canada needs help and that there are ways to move forward."

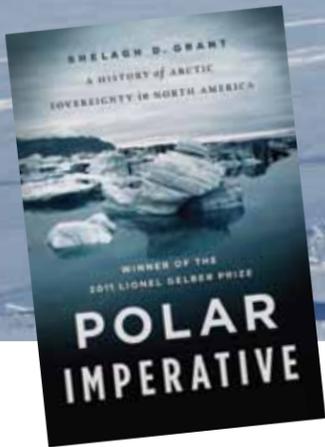
"It's a form of national hypocrisy for Canada to join the United Nations and go overseas to bring justice to the world, while communities like Kashechewan continue to exist in northern Ontario," Prof. Milloy added. ●



BRINGING THE ARCTIC TO THE WORLD



Professor Shelagh Grant



“This is my way of continuing to spark discussion on the North,” she says. “I believe we need to get more Arctic history into high schools to rekindle interest.”

Polar Imperative: A History of Arctic Sovereignty in North America, the winner of many prestigious book awards, including the Lela Common Award and the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing, examines the historical sovereignty claims of many countries over North America’s Polar Regions. Prof. Grant’s objective behind writing the book is to have as many Canadians as possible understand the underlying history of our Arctic sovereignty issues, thus facilitating support for some tough decisions any government in power will be required to make over the next few years.

Loving what you do is key to success

Currently an adjunct professor and a research associate of the Frost Centre at Trent University, Prof. Grant taught history and Canadian studies for 18 years on a part-time basis at Trent. Prof. Grant is also fellow of the Royal Canadian Geographic Society,

has received an honorary doctor of Letters from Trent University, the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, and, most recently, the newly minted Erubus Medal, which recognizes participants in the 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition and their contributions to the discovery of HMS Erebus.

She is quick to deflect praise, however.

“I never would have had the opportunities I did to study the North if it weren’t for the commitment of people at Trent University,” she notes. “We had a Northern Committee that was driven by Peter Adams that really pushed Northern Studies to the forefront. We had a champion in Tom Symons. And we had people like Bruce Hodgins (History), Sandy Lockhart (Sociology), and John Wadland (Canadian Studies) who were bringing that uniquely Trent interdisciplinary approach to studying the North.”

Further reflecting on her career to date, Prof. Grant says: “You have to love what you do. In order to do your best, you need to be happy with what you are doing and with the people you are working with.”

Judging by the awards and accolades she’s received, it’s a philosophy that works. ●

Some people thrive on awards. Others, accolades. Still others, prestige and pay. And then there is Arctic historian and Trent University alumna, Professor Shelagh Grant. The award-winning author, adjunct professor, and renowned sovereignty expert, is driven by equal measures of passion and curiosity.

“My father used to call me Curious George the Monkey,” she smiles. “And I think much of that curiosity is still alive and well.”

As is her love of what she does.

Sparking discussion on the North

Prof. Grant recently donated her landmark book *Polar Imperative: A History of Arctic Sovereignty in North America* to the Royal Canadian Geographical Society (RCGS) in order to help create a new educational program for secondary school students. *Arctic Imperative: Education Resources for Canadian Schools* will explore the Arctic through the lenses of identity, sovereignty, climate change and governance. Each lesson contains a passage from Prof. Grant’s *Polar Imperative* as well as maps and other primary and secondary source materials.

“I never would have had the opportunities I did to study the North if it weren’t for the commitment of people at Trent University.”

GRADUATE STUDIES

SPECULATING THE LIT FANTASTIC

“There was just something about being queer and disabled in a small town that fostered within me a sense of alienation, and also purpose to examine the way our society creates ideas of ‘normalcy,’” says Derek Newman-Stille, a PhD student at Trent University’s Frost Centre for Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies.

Growing up in a small town in the Kawarthas, Mr. Newman-Stille sought comfort – and a sense of community – in books, as many self-proclaimed outliers are wont to do, but says he always found it difficult to relate to the stories found in traditional, ‘realist’ Canadian fiction.

It wasn’t until he was an undergraduate student at Trent University (not studying Canadian fiction, by the way), working at Chapters, that he got his first taste of speculative fiction (horror, science fiction and fantasy) when one of his colleagues suggested he give the work of Kelley Armstrong, a Canadian writer of what Mr. Newman-Stille calls “urban fantasy” known for her “Women of the Otherworld” series, a try.

He was hooked – and realized that the only way he was going to get the Canadian fiction he was interested in reading was through the imagination and exploration of otherworldly themes and figures found in speculative fiction.

Diversity and disability

Mr. Newman-Stille was also drawn to this genre of literature for its diversity – specifically its representation of physical, intellectual and psychological disabilities. This is a particularly poignant aspect of the genre for Mr. Newman-Stille, who is disabled. He has ADD and also uses a cane to walk because of a spinal injury.

Mr. Newman-Stille views his disabilities as something that has inspired his interest in the potential of



Derek Newman-Stille

... the only way he was going to get the Canadian fiction he was interested in reading was through the imagination and exploration of otherworldly themes and figures ...

speculative fiction to imagine new works and new ways of understanding diverse bodies.

Inspired by his academic research on Canadian speculative fiction, Mr. Newman-Stille runs a website and a blog called “Speculating Canada” and hosts a weekly show by the same name on Trent Radio, on air Wednesdays at 4 p.m. this term.

From radio shows to cover art

Both his website and his radio show feature interviews with writers and reviews of books and are designed to increase awareness of this particular brand of fiction and augment the connection between its readers and writers, academics and community. And, as if all of that weren’t enough to keep him busy, Mr. Newman-Stille also creates stunning, intricate illustrations (interior art and covers) for a number of different Canadian speculative magazines. Most recently,

he was invited to pen “Northern Chills” – the introduction to *Quill & Quire’s* March issue on Canadian horror – and is over the moon that he “finally has something you can pick up at the local bookstore!”

In 2013 he won an Aurora Award from the Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy Association for best fan publication for his blog. “I was so nervous I forgot my acceptance speech!” he recalls – and last year he was selected as a juror on the panel of the Sunburst Award Society for excellence in Canadian literature of the fantastic.

When asked how he is able to do all that he does, Mr. Newman-Stille credits the “amazingly supportive community” at Trent (the place he now calls home), his husband, his colleagues, faculty and the “most amazing advisor,” Dr. Sally Chivers, with his success.

Learn more about Derek Newman-Stille and his work at speculatingcanada.ca



Derek Newman-Stille discusses his PhD research and shows off some of the artwork he has created in a short video trentu.ca/showcase

COLLABORATION BETWEEN TRENT AND KAWARTHA LAND TRUST “A NATURAL”



To those familiar with the Kawartha Land Trust (KLT), it should come as no surprise that the organization was easily able to come together with Trent University to initiate a new speaker series on land uses in central Ontario.

“Part of the whole brand of Trent is ‘natural spaces’ and we’re about protecting that,” says Mike Hendren, KLT’s executive director. “In many ways our values are aligned.”

The connections between Trent and KLT don’t end there. Mr. Hendren is a graduate of Trent, and virtually the entire staff of KLT are alumni or have ties to the University.

Lands manager Ian Attridge teaches several courses for Trent University’s Environmental and Resource Studies program, and is a lawyer with ecological and agricultural training and expertise in stewardship, trails and conservation techniques. Other Trent faculty and staff have been past and present board and committee members.

“There is a long tradition of working together,” Mr. Hendren says.

Nature provides physical and mental health benefits

Dr. Lisa Nisbet, assistant professor at Trent University in the Psychology Department, is the latest to add her name

and it promises to explore ways in which people can connect to the local area. Experts from Trent and other environmentally-minded parties are using the speaker series as an opportunity to promote and explore the human relationship with the area and the importance of maintaining undeveloped natural spaces.

Professor Nisbet says the Peterborough region offers many opportunities for nature contact – both through nearby accessible parks and greenspace as well as more secluded wilderness.

“Increasingly, evidence points to the physical and mental health benefits of connecting

with nature,” she says. “Regular nature time can increase our well-being, reduce stress, and improve our immune health. To ensure we have access to the natural places that keep us healthy and happy, we need community organizations like the Kawartha Land Trust.”

At Trent, Prof. Nisbet focuses her research on the understanding of nature, including the importance of having access to natural spaces. Her research has examined the effects of access to nature on health, well being and environmentally-sustainable behaviour.

“Part of the whole brand of Trent is ‘natural spaces’ and we’re about protecting that ...”

The Kawartha Land Trust, formerly known as the Kawartha Heritage Conservancy, is a non-governmental organization and a registered charity dedicated to acquiring land and interests in land and maintaining it in a natural state. Since its inception more than a decade ago, more than 20 significant natural sites in the Kawartha region, along with the life they support, have been preserved under KLT stewardship.

To learn more about the “A Sense of Place” speaker series, including details of upcoming lectures, visit <http://kawarthalandtrust.org/> ●



CELEBRATING CHAMPLAIN’S LEGACY AT TRENT AND IN PETERBOROUGH

2015 marks the 400th anniversary of Samuel de Champlain’s visits to the Peterborough area and three Trent University professors emeriti have been charged with raising awareness of this important milestone.

Under direction from the board of the Trent Valley Archives, Drs. Elwood Jones, Al Brunger and Peter Adams are planning a number of events and initiatives to engage the community in local anniversary. The first event will be held on May 2 as part of Doors Open at Trent, and the group hopes to publish a collection of articles on Samuel de Champlain in the fall of 2015.

“We tend to forget that the first European contact with this region was French. It was 200 years before European settlers arrive and, during the lumbering era, they included many Quebecers. It is important that we try to remember our heritage as it really was,” says Professor Emeritus Adams.

Champlain was brought to the local area in 1615, by 500 Huron and Algonquin warriors, en route from Huronia (the Lake Simcoe region) to an Iroquois village near present-day Syracuse NY. The expedition was a raid on the Iroquois, traditional enemies of the Huron. The party travelled through the Kawartha Lakes (via a route which is today roughly followed by the Trent Severn Waterway) and down the Otonabee and Trent rivers to Lake Ontario. This trip, in early September 1615, was Champlain’s first visit to our area.

Despite the advantage of firearms, the Huron and Champlain were defeated and retreated back through this region later that fall. As Champlain was wounded, he and some of the Huron spent time in this region while he recuperated. This more extended stay was his second visit to the Peterborough area.

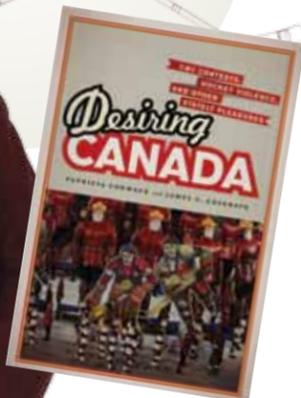
From these visits, we have the first European perceptions of Peterborough and the Kawarthas. Champlain’s maps and writings were the only source of such information for decades.

Champlain’s legacy is alive and well at Trent, in the form of Champlain College, one of only three Champlain Colleges in North America. It was founded, on the Otonabee River, in 1965, in the presence of Premier Lesage of Québec and Premier Robarts of Ontario. There are two bilingual cornerstones.

Today, Champlain College students at Trent still celebrate L’Ordre de Bon Temps as their winter carnival. Champlain founded this Order to keep his men’s spirits up during the long Canadian winters. In the College and elsewhere there are other Champlain memorabilia including a bronze bust and a portrait by Charles Comfort. The College coat of arms carries the motto, “Continuer Mes Découvertes,” in memory of the explorer. ●

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PROFILE

EXPOSING CANADIAN IDENTITY



“We are addressing the production of nationalist sentiments and desires, and the role the state plays in this production,” explains Professor Cosgrave. “The book addresses different kinds of pleasures, so part of our argument is that the state cannot only be an oppressor or regulator, it must also solicit desires in order to produce identification.”

From Rick Mercer to Hockey Night in Canada

In addition to the iconic phenomenon of Tim Hortons, the book examines the key role government played in developing the legal gambling market in Canada. It also studies how our national identity is reflected by the state-run CBC through its reality television programming, and style of comedy in programs including “The Rick Mercer Report.” *Desiring Canada* analyzed CBC’s relationship to hockey and points to “Hockey Night in Canada” broadcasts as being central in building hockey in Canada as “our game.”

“Nationalism is one method for producing identification – an example is the embrace of hockey as Canada’s game,” explained Prof. Cosgrave. “The book is certainly about Canadianness. We wanted to analyze how it becomes an object of desire manifested in actual practices.”

Desiring Canada received positive feedback both from academics and non-academic readers. It has garnered press coverage and was nominated for the John Porter Tradition of Excellence Book Award recognizing the advancement of sociological knowledge in Canada. Prof. Cosgrave is also grateful for funding and support received from the Symons Trust Fund for Canadian Studies for his research.

Inspiring students’ own research

Always interested in combining his research and teaching interests, Prof. Cosgrave incorporates his research into the variety of fourth-year sociology courses he develops and teaches at the Durham campus.

In regards to his latest book, Prof. Cosgrave says, “the students found the book stimulating in terms of thinking about their own Canadianness and for their research projects.” ●

“Nationalism is one method for producing identification – an example is the embrace of hockey as Canada’s game.”

What makes us Canadian? Why is the Timmy’s run a time-honoured tradition and where exactly did this

fanatical passion for hockey come from? How is Canadianness a learned identity – pervasively passed down from the commercial and government powers-that-be in this country?

Dr. Jim Cosgrave, assistant professor of Sociology at Trent University Durham uncovers the underlying factors contributing to Canadians’ reverence for their home-grown icons. His recently published book, *Desiring Canada: CBC Contests, Hockey Violence and Other Stately Pleasures*, serves as a revealing analysis of consumer-driven, mass-mediated society in Canada over the last 50 years.

Co-written with fellow sociologist Patricia Cormack, the book examines how processes of national identity and state-formation occur at the everyday life level whether buying a coffee, watching the CBC, or heading to the local casino.

NEW INSIGHT ON CANADIAN ICON LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY

Despite her fame and international following, Canadian Lucy Maud Montgomery was generally underestimated throughout the twentieth century by literary critics, says Dr. Rita Bode, associate professor of English Literature at Trent University Durham.

Best-known for the *Anne of Green Gables* series, but author of 20 novels, Montgomery was looked down upon for her popularity, and considered “old-fashioned” and sentimental, having written the majority of her work as the trend toward modernist literature took hold.

“This opinion lingers even today,” says Professor Bode. “But there is a rich and growing body of scholarship on Montgomery. The publication of her journals in 1985 initiated a significant shift in the critical assessment of her work.”

Undergraduate student contributes to Montgomery research

A volume of essays, co-edited by Prof. Bode and Dr. Lesley Clement of Lakehead University, builds upon this body of scholarship. *L. M. Montgomery’s Rainbow Valleys: the Ontario Years, 1911-1942*, forthcoming this fall, examines Montgomery’s work through an Ontario lens. The volume’s studies consider both her life-writing and her literature. A Symons Trust Fund award is supporting its publication.

Contributors to the volume include: Dr. Margaret Steffler, associate professor of English Literature at Trent University; Natalie Forest, who completed her

BA and MA at Trent, and is now completing her PhD at York; and Trent University Durham undergraduate student, Kristina Eldridge, who worked on the interview with executive members of the Lucy Maud Montgomery Society of Ontario. Ms. Eldridge, who is an English major and also studies History, embraced the project with enthusiasm and was delighted to discover that Montgomery’s restored home in Leaskdale is less than an hour’s drive from Trent’s Durham campus.

“We shift the focus from PEI to Ontario as the major point of reference in her life and work and explore the significance of this new perspective,” explains Prof. Bode, adding that Montgomery spent almost half her life and wrote much of her fiction in Ontario.

Professors Bode and Clement had met at a number of conferences but came together on this project following a 2011 conference, organized by Prof. Clement, which celebrated the 100th anniversary of Montgomery’s arrival in Ontario.

“We believe the various chapters complicate the interpretations of her work providing a firmer place in a Canadian literary tradition and beyond,” says Prof. Bode, who works mostly on American and British women writers of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries, but adds that her forays into Canadian studies with Montgomery are always gratifying. ●

“We shift the focus from PEI to Ontario as the major point of reference in her life and work...”



Dr. Rita Bode



Dr. Rita Bode discusses her new book and ties to her research and teaching at Trent in a short video trentu.ca/showcase



MATTER OF COURSE

INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES WITHIN CANADA’S BORDERS

Issues in Indigenous Environmental Studies 3631 & 3632

Professor James Wilkes

Colonization, land dispossession, resource extraction, industrial contamination and climate change are a sampling of the Indigenous environmental topics students contemplate in Issues in Indigenous Environmental Studies.

But according to instructor James Wilkes, the course takes students’ understanding far beyond current events associated with Indigenous environmental issues.

“We are all treaty people, and we have all experienced colonialism to some degree. Through understanding decolonization and re-Indigenization movements, Indigenous Environmental Studies (IES) students realize and understand their roles as real human beings, working for the continuation of all life,” says Professor Wilkes, who is a Trent alumnus and professor in the Ecosystem Management and Ecological Restoration programs at Fleming College.

Rooted in Indigenous worldviews

Issues in Indigenous Environmental Studies was developed in 1998 and first delivered in 2000 as one of the foundational courses in the IES program.

The course deals primarily with Indigenous environmental issues within the borders of Canada. Through lectures, seminars, guest speakers and discussions, it addresses the ongoing colonization of Indigenous territories and nations that has contributed to environmental problems throughout Canada.

“Rooted in Indigenous worldviews, teachings and scholarship, and entwining principles of Indigenous and Western knowledges and sciences, this approach provides students with necessary skills, as well as critical and integrative thinking abilities, to address complex environmental issues facing communities around the world today,” says Prof. Wilkes.

And as students come to better understand environmental issues and their solutions, they are quick to share their perspectives, and to take on personal and collective responsibilities for social and environmental justice.

“We are all treaty people, and we have all experienced colonialism to some degree.”



Professor James Wilkes

Current events and today’s issues

The course curriculum evolves in tandem with current events, and focuses on Indigenous responses to today’s environmental issues, including research, direct action, legal action, community education, restoration and revitalization.

It also offers an opportunity for students to engage in personal, meaningful and relevant research, on topics of their choice, ranging from autobiographical reflections to case-based studies and action-oriented projects.

“Through my own education and experience teaching university and college classes, I have been inspired by the response from Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to the IES discipline and its capacity to help them recognize their personal and collective responsibilities for social and environmental justice, and to strengthen their inherent and intrinsic relationships with Mother Earth,” says Prof. Wilkes. ●



Professor James Wilkes talks more about this fundamental course in Indigenous Environmental Studies in a short video trentu.ca/showcase

WELCOMING THE WORLD TO TALK ABOUT CANADA



Dr. Joan Sangster co-organized international conference on the study of Canada.

“We thought it was a great idea to showcase the study of Canada, not only because it has been a research strength at Trent, but also to provide scholars ... relating to Canada’s past, present, future.”

Canada’s Past, Present, and Future

Trent’s reputation has been built on its commitment to teaching and research in Canadian Studies. It’s fitting, then, that Contesting Canada’s Future is part of Trent’s 50th anniversary celebrations. The idea was originally proposed by the 50th anniversary committee, and an organizing committee, encompassing both Trent faculty and academics from across Canada, was established in 2014 by Professor Sangster.

Prof. Sangster, who was the director of the Frost Centre for six years, immediately saw the value of such a conference. “We thought it was a great idea to showcase the study of Canada, not only because it has been a research strength at Trent, but also to provide scholars, activists and artists with an opportunity to debate and discuss current issues of concern – integrating themes relating to Canada’s past, present, and future,” she says.

Prof. Sangster’s own research has focused on Canadian law, labour relations, women’s history, feminist theory, and Aboriginal history. Her forthcoming book explores images of the Indigenous North in the post-World War II period. The author of five monographs and seven edited volumes, she is a fellow of the Royal Society and incoming president (2015-17) of the Canadian Historical Association. Prof. Sangster has also taught Canadian history at Duke, Princeton and McGill Universities, experiences that reinforced for her the importance of situating Canadian research in both a national and international milieu.

Award-winning and notable speakers lead the discussion

Although managing such a large conference has its challenges, it also has its rewards. The conference covers themes ranging from environmental policy to artistic practice and will feature a roster of stimulating keynote speakers, including well-known water rights activist Maude Barlow, former Trent chancellor Mary Simon, and Idle No More activist Erica Lee. It will also host a meeting of the International Council for Canadian Studies, with academics from across the globe coming to Trent. Special panels will explore art and politics, the future of work, and Canada in the global context.

Prof. Sangster hopes that the event will provide an opportunity for intellectual dialogue and awareness about the continuing importance of research that focuses on Canada. As she notes, “People are keen to take this opportunity to engage in an interdisciplinary dialogue about historical and contemporary interpretations of Canada, about the important issues we face today.”

The conference has been designed with the goal of bringing the Peterborough, Durham, Trent and international communities together. It will take place at several different local venues, including popular downtown spaces like Artspace and Market Hall, and will end with an event at Trent sponsored by the ICCS. “We’ve tried to build connections that link the local, Trent, regional, national and international organizations dedicated to research and teaching about Canada.” ●



FORMER CHANCELLOR RETURNS TO SPEAK AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The topic of reconciliation between Aboriginal peoples and Canadians is one that is close to the heart of former Trent University chancellor Mary May Simon, OC, QC. As Canada’s first ambassador for circumpolar affairs, Ms. Simon is currently working to improve that relationship as co-chair of a recently-formed organization, *Canadians for a New Partnership*, which deals with reconciliation between Aboriginal people and Canadians.

As a spokesperson for Canadians for a New Partnership, Ms. Simon has been travelling across the country talking about the necessity and challenges of seeking reconciliation for Aboriginal people.

“There’s a lot of work to do and it’s not going to be an easy process,” she says. “Getting rid of this attitude that everyone should be assimilated will require an understanding and an acceptance of who we are as a people.”

Ms. Simon will deliver that message as a keynote speaker at “Contesting Canada’s Future,” an international conference hosted by Trent University May 21 – 23, 2015, where she will also discuss how life has changed for Aboriginal people in the North and the main issues they are confronting.

“We need to foster a discussion about why Aboriginal people are in the position they are in,” says Ms. Simon, who is a past president of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. “This initiative is about reconciling the past so we can be part of Canada on an equal footing, with a better educational system, with better healthcare, and economic opportunities.” ●

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PROFILE



MEET A TRENT STUDENT



Raheleh Saryazdi takes on major research project as an undergrad.

As a parent in a bilingual country, fourth-year Psychology student Raheleh Saryazdi knows the uncertainty endured by parents when contemplating immersion education for their children.

Her interests in this issue, combined with a natural affinity for statistics, have led Ms. Saryazdi down an interesting academic path during her time at Trent University Durham. Undertaking an expansive meta-analysis – a challenging task for experienced academics

EXPLORING IMMERSION EDUCATION QUESTIONS IN CANADA

rarely undertaken by undergraduates – her thesis project, “Learning a New Language: A Meta-Analysis of the Effectiveness of Immersion Education” picks up where the last forty years of scientific research in the field left off.

Although most research to date indicates that bilingualism is positive, Ms. Saryazdi’s study digs deeper to examine the specific effects of additive (elective) immersion education taught to fluent English-speaking students.

“It’s a big deal to do a meta-analysis as an undergraduate.”

Her thesis also poses two additional questions examining the magnitude of effect of immersion education on cognitive and academic performance; and whether impact is influenced by total or partial immersion and the grade level in which the program is implemented.

Knowledge to alleviate anxiety

Driving her research is the hope Ms. Saryazdi has to alleviate anxiety amongst parents when deciding to enrol their child in French immersion.

“People are still not sure and question if immersion is beneficial or not,” explains Ms. Saryazdi. “My goal is to give a conclusive summary of the research that has been done over the years and assist with this vital decision.”

Her extensive unbiased, statistical analysis of research

encompassed articles, dissertations and studies dating back to 1975. Informed that meta-analysis of this scale is rare for an undergraduate student, Ms. Saryazdi jump-started her research last summer. She has sorted through 12,000 documents and works eight to ten hours daily on her thesis.

Unique undergraduate research experience

Ms. Saryazdi credits her professors at Trent University Durham including her thesis supervisor Dr. Nancie Im-Bolter and Dr. Fergal O’Hagan for their guidance throughout the extensive process. She also relied on the in-house expertise of Trent’s librarians, particularly Ellen Olsen-Lynch, whose knowledge of systematic reviews proved invaluable. Additionally Ken Field and John Wales, fellow librarians at Trent University Durham, were instrumental in her success.

“The librarians have been amazing,” says Ms. Saryazdi. “At Trent you have this opportunity to work with supervisors every step of the way. It’s a big deal to do a meta-analysis as an undergraduate. I am only on track because I have had amazing guidance and help from faculty, librarians, as well as my fellow lab members.”

Ms. Saryazdi will present her thesis to faculty and students this spring and hopes to publish her work. She plans to complete a second study on immersion in the U.S. She will begin her master’s degree this fall and plans to pursue a PhD. Her ultimate goal is to become a professor and continue research in language and cognition. ●

DEFINING OUR BORDERS: FROM FENCES TO BRIDGES

Borders aren't just lines on maps – they are national and international policy made real, with all of the issues that such an idea implies. Should borders be a bridge to travel upon, or a way to keep people in (or out)? These questions and more are the basis of Dr. Heather Nicol's research at Trent.

Professor Nicol, a member of Trent's Geography Department, is a political geographer who studies the political, historic, and economic realities surrounding the Canada-U.S. border, as well as the relationship between Indigenous communities in the North and nation-states.

Contesting Canada and contesting borders

Borders are often used to enforce a sense of a singular national identity. However, national borders often don't reflect the true nature of demographic, economic, and cultural ties. Canada provides many examples of this, as Prof. Nicol notes: "Today, border scholars see the idea of the nation state as quite problematic – there are more connections across international boundary lines than within boundaries, and Canadian provinces may be less connected with each other in terms of flows of goods, information and money than are some provinces with US states."

Prof. Nicol explores this idea of borders being central to Canadian identity in her forthcoming book *The Fence and the Bridge*. In the book, she discusses how current identity politics and security policy regarding Canada's borders has been influenced as much by American interests as by anything else within Canada itself.

Nation-building and the North

However, her investigation of what nation-states really are looks not only across borders, but within them. In particular, she also researches how Canada has defended strict control over Arctic territory under the guise of national identity and nation-building. However, such top-down thinking negates the experience of many people in Canada, particularly Indigenous communities.

... "I support the idea that Indigenous groups have the legitimacy to define and determine who speaks for them and the right to contest state sovereignty where necessary."



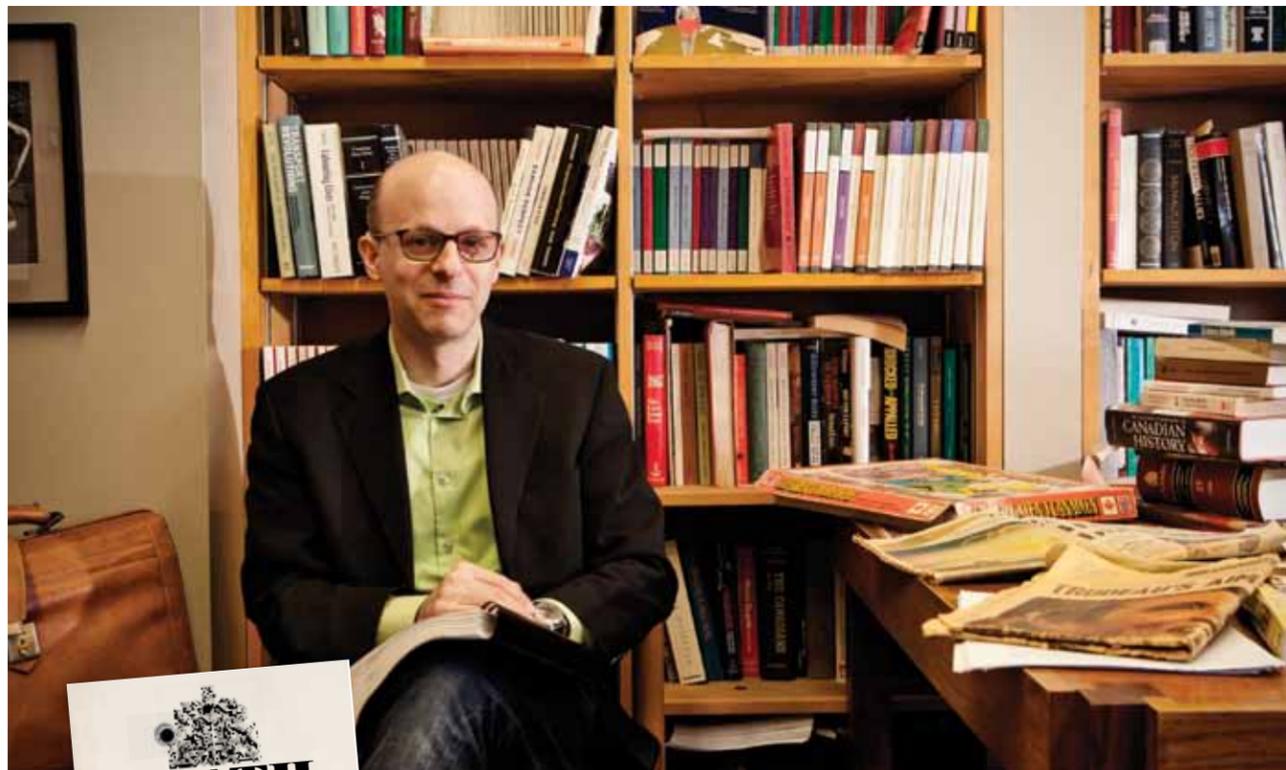
Dr. Heather Nicol explores the idea of borders being central to Canadian identity.

"We live in what has been called a "post-Westphalian state," where power is diffuse and people connect globally, which means that we should question who has the agency to speak for the state. This is what some of my work focuses on – the idea that state sovereignty can be contested because it is increasingly indefensible," she explains. "In arguing this, I support the idea that Indigenous groups have the legitimacy to define and determine who speaks for them and the right to contest state sovereignty where necessary."

This idea of contesting current power structures is one that Prof. Nicol considers important in undergraduate research too. She recommends that students "take time to read critically about the issues, especially as they are presented in news broadcasts and social media." ●

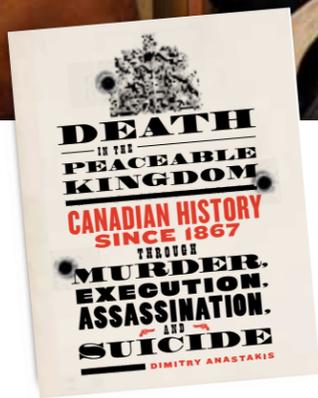


Watch a short video at trentu.ca/showcase to hear more from Dr. Heather Nichol about her research on borders.



MURDER, EXECUTION, ASSASSINATION AND SUICIDE: A NEW LOOK AT CANADIAN HISTORY

Dr. Dimitry Anastakis's new book influenced and inspired by Trent course.



It's often been said that life imitates art, but in the case of History professor Dr. Dimitry Anastakis and his new book, it's the other way around.

Professor Anastakis' book, *Death in the Peaceable Kingdom: Canadian History Since 1867 Through Murder, Execution, Assassination, and Suicide*, has been entirely influenced and inspired by a course of the same name he teaches at Trent.

"One of the great things about doing this book

was that it illustrates just how collaborative teaching is at Trent, and how it is a two-way street between instructors and students," Professor Anastakis says.

To be published this spring, *Death in the Peaceable Kingdom*, is as much a reflection of Prof. Anastakis' distinct approach to his own research of Canadian history, which offers examinations of history through a wide range of interests, from the impact of cars and the invention of rubber to the meaning of federalism and the 1960s, as it is a reflection of the course itself. It examines political, social, economic and cultural changes in post-Confederation Canada through the lens of the deaths of famous (and some not-so-famous) Canadians like Louis Riel and Tom Thomson.

Another special (some might even venture to say "fun") feature of the book is that it is peppered with short, "teachable-moment-like" vignettes Prof. Anastakis calls "Murderous Moments" and "Tragic Tales" – both of which are designed to help keep readers engaged and entertained while they learn.

Trent students were so involved in the process they even earned a "shout out" in the book's acknowledgements.

From the classroom to the page and back again

Reflecting on the development of the book, Prof. Anastakis says the book mirrors the teaching and learning culture at Trent where undergrads have not only served as Prof. Anastakis' focus group, but also have reviewed and shared their comments on sample chapters and even voted on its cover. Trent students were so involved in the process they even earned a "shout out" in the book's acknowledgements.

"The book has been helped immeasurably by the feedback I have received from students in the course – and this has really helped the process of both researching and writing the book, not to mention teaching about these events in the course," says Prof. Anastakis.

Death in the Peaceable Kingdom is Prof. Anastakis' seventh book. His first book, *Auto Pact: Creating a Borderless North American Auto Industry, 1960-71*, published in 2005 won the 2008 J.J. Talman Award as the best book on Ontario's history published in the previous three years. In 2014, Prof. Anastakis, who is considered the leading scholar on the history of the Canadian automobile industry, was awarded the Hagley Prize, an international award given annually to the best book in business history by the Business History Conference and the Hagley Museum and Library of Wilmington, Delaware, for his 2013 book, *Autonomous State: The Struggle for a Canadian Car Industry from OPEC to Free Trade*. In addition to his writing and teaching accolades, Prof. Anastakis has also served as an historical consultant for the CBC and appears regularly in the news media as a commentator on political and economic events. ●

GO ONLINE FOR THE LATEST NEWS AT TRENT

Want to know more about what's going on at Ontario's #1 undergraduate university? Go online to get all of the breaking news. Great stories from this month include:

ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2015 HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENTS

In June, Degrassi producer Stephen Stohn '66, filmmaker Peter Raymont, renowned naturalist Drew Monkman, Indigenous teacher and elder Michael Thrasher, and leading child care advocate Martha Friendly, will be honoured as Trent University's 2015 honorary degree recipients. Visit trentu.ca/convocation for more information and to see a full list of past honourees.

HONOURING TRENT'S OUTSTANDING TEACHERS

Just announced, Trent's 2014/15 Teaching Award winners are:



Dr. Asaf Zohar, associate professor, Business Administration, founding director Sustainability Studies MA **Award for Educational Leadership and Innovation**



Dr. Marg Hobbs, associate professor, Gender & Women's Studies **Symons Award for Excellence in Teaching**



Joshua Noiseux, graduate student teaching assistant, Political Studies **Award for Excellence in Teaching Assistance**



Robyne Hanley-Dafoe, instructor, Psychology **CUPE 3908-1 Award for Excellence in Teaching**



Dr. Marco Pollanen, associate professor, Mathematics **Desire2Learn Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning, awarded by the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education**

Find out more at trentu.ca/teaching

More news: trentu.ca/news

A GLIMPSE INTO THE LATEST FINDINGS AT TRENT



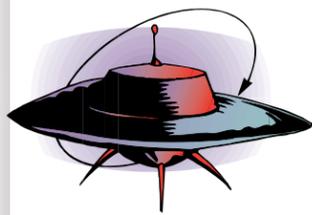
ROBERTSON DAVIES' CURTAIN CALL

Close to a decade after his death, Robertson Davies' *Theatre Diaries* are getting a curtain call. His writing offers us a new understanding of Ontario's cultural history; and the Davies Diaries Project will make his personal account more accessible to all.

Dr. Joel Baetz, working alongside Trent professors emeriti Dr. James Neufeld and Dr. Zailig Pollock and graduate students on the project, says Davies' diaries detail his impressions about the development of Ontario theatre, specifically, and Canadian cultural production, generally. Davies was a critic, journalist, playwright and professor and he kept meticulous and voluminous records of his incisive commentary on an array of topics. His *Theatre Diaries* will be the first of nearly three million of his words to be digitized.

Davies himself said his diaries are "the stuff of which social history is made ..." and according to Prof. Baetz, preliminary transcriptions prove it to be true.

MORK CALLING CANADA. COME IN CANADA.



UFO sightings in Canada? Who knew? The federal government, that's who. In fact, there's 9,500 previously classified documents, compiled between 1947 and the early 1980s, to prove it.

Over the last decade, the contents of the archive entitled "Canada's UFOs: The Search for the Unknown," have been released. And Matthew Hayes, a graduate student in the Trent-Carleton Canadian Studies PhD program, has been called upon to examine its existence. While other countries have simply reported UFO sightings, Canada's archive contains a wealth of correspondence from four major departments and agencies – National Defence, National Research Council, Transport and the RCMP. The additional content includes, for example, policies and procedures to follow in case of a UFO landing.

If they weren't afraid of an alien abduction, why did government officials keep these records? Mr. Hayes's research – at the intersection of science and the supernatural – suggests in part, that Canada considered UFOs a legitimate scientific phenomena.

CARIBOU MORE THAN JUST CURRENCY



Much more than a fixture on our country's twenty-five-cent piece, Canada's caribou are also the world's most mobile land mammal, says Dr. James Schaefer, professor of Biology, who has been studying the iconic species for more than 30 years.

Caribou are legendary for their migration, their yearly return to traditional calving grounds, and their dramatic rise and fall in numbers. Now, a study has uncovered a link among these features – the way caribou move across the landscape provides a telltale sign of their abundance.

The study was conducted by Prof. Schaefer and Shane Mahoney, executive director, Newfoundland & Labrador Department of Environment & Conservation. They tracked more than 600 female caribou on the island of Newfoundland over three decades, coinciding with spectacular growth and decline of the population – from 23,330 animals (1975) to 95,810 animals (1997), then down to 32,170 animals (2008). Caribou showed a dramatic shift in the timing of migration.

"This change in behaviour," said Prof. Schaefer, "is elegant in its simplicity. Tracking caribou migration means tracking the population size."

FINDING CLUES TO CONSERVATION – ON THE FLY



It's working on fruit flies, but will it work on wildlife?

Trent researchers and their colleagues at Princeton are looking to find out. Their testing of a new genome-wide sequencing method has been successful – on the fly. And now it's time to take the testing outside of the lab – and up the food chain.

Multiplexed shotgun genotyping (MSG) has the potential to change the face of genomics research, making it more accessible in the natural resources sector. For Trent alumna and post-doctoral fellow Dr. Linda Rutledge and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry research scientist and adjunct professor Dr. Brent Patterson, it will provide clues critical to wildlife conservation. With funding from the Ontario Genomics Institute, their focus will be the conservation of the eastern wolf – a species at risk in Canada.



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