

SENIOR COLLEGE BULLETIN

AUTUMN

2020



Toronto Botanical Gardens. Photograph by Vennese Croasdaile

A Word from the Editor



I am pretty sure for most of us that things did not turn out quite as we expected when we started our academic careers. We have lived through a period of astonishing challenges and changes, many unforeseen.

Recent research has resulted in not just an increase in knowledge, understanding and applications, but also changes in perspective, examination of the framework for our research, a critique of the values that inform it, its scope and its relationship to other stars in the academic universe. Other issues that have recently come to the fore is how our work can be shared with students and the

broader public, and whether our paradigms have by their nature disadvantaged certain categories of individuals. Thus exposition and teaching have themselves become objects of study and development.

Some time ago, I invited members of the College to reflect on how their fields evolved during their lifetime, and this issue contains the response from four of them. The invitation stands and I look forward to contributions for future issues of the Bulletin.

as well as our Administrator Vennese Croasdaile who has conscientiously looked after all the technical requirements of keeping the ship on course.

There are new officers at the helm of the College: Principal Michael Hutcheon, Vice Principal (Administration) Janet Paterson, and Registrar John Youson. I wish them well.

Ed Barbeau, Editor

A Message from the Principal



What a ride it's been! Those of us from a Health Care background, and I'm sure, many others, noted with concern the ominous reports of a novel coronavirus reluctantly revealed by China at the end of last year. Oh no, we thought! Not another SARS episode!

We had absolutely no idea what was about to happen: how disruptive, not to say deadly, a true pandemic can be. Our travel plans were trashed, our social relations interrupted, and the narrative of the spreading viral toll made us feel vulnerable. We were urged to remain confined to our homes. I've even heard that for some this was "enforced" by their concerned children.

Now as we slowly emerge from months of isolation into a world of physical distancing, facemasks and impeccable hand hygiene, it's time to reflect on these months and the challenges that lie ahead for Senior College.

Even before the lockdown, as Canada began to experience the onset of infections with CoVid-19, Senior College moved to cancel its remaining Wednesday meetings and postpone the April Symposium. With everyone essentially in Toronto and shut in with reduced social contact for the foreseeable future, a general desire arose to

With the invaluable tutorials of our administrator, Vennese Croasdaile, Senior Collegians adapted to the Zoom platform. Experiments in delivering Wednesday lectures were well attended and strongly endorsed. The book club, colloquia and "meet your colleagues" discussions followed. The initial success of these projects generated a full summer program of events tied together with "Coffee hours" began by Jim Gurd as a forum for Fellows to meet and talk.

While we all miss in-person live events I think most participants have been surprised by the ease and effectiveness of the move on-line. An added benefit has been that many of us have met (virtually) and chatted with people whom we hadn't previously encountered through the Faculty Club and Senior College Centre.

So, what lies ahead? Well, it seems likely that even in the most optimistic scenario we will continue with on-line events in some fashion into the Fall. The Program, Book and Colloquia committees have planned a full schedule with a flexible format. That is, Daphne Maurer, Vice Principal Academic, has been working closely with the Faculty Club to explore how we might return safely to this site while maintaining an on-screen presence. This might allow hybrid meetings to take place, part in-person, part on-line. Our Symposium, for example, on "Ethical Challenges of the 21st Century" postponed from April may go forward in November, perhaps as such a physically distanced, hybrid event. The nature of our gatherings will be determined by the prevalence of Covid in the community and the consequent concerns for safety. We need to experiment and adapt as we go.

Whatever form the contingencies of this pandemic bring, Senior College will continue to offer a vibrant space for the exchange of ideas, academic debate, education and social

virtually, or with luck, in person, during our season. The newly minted "Operations group" of Vice Principals Janet Paterson and Daphne Maurer and myself look forward to seeing you virtually, or with luck, in person, during our Fall season.

Michael Hutcheon, Principal

Membership as a Fellow in Senior College

Senior College was organized on May 14, 2009 and the first Council met on June 18, 2009 with Peter Russell as the Founding Principal. According to the detailed records of our Bursar, Charles Chaffey, the first fees were deposited in a bank account on June 19, 2009 and 66 individuals became Fellows between June 19 and December 26, 2009. Of these 66 Founding Fellows, there are 28 who have been able to keep participating into Senior College's second decade, paying their 2020 Fellow's fee by July 1, 2020. The continued support of the active Founding Fellows is greatly appreciated.

Like other organizations, including our usual venue the Faculty Club, Senior College has had to adapt to the challenging times created by the Covid-19 pandemic. While many other organizations and businesses have had to close doors or greatly reduce their activities, Senior College has actually broadened and extended activity offerings into the summer months. What we tend to forget is that we usually complete our program of talks, colloquia, book club, symposium, and excursions by the end of March or early April.

In the past, the primary summer activity has been informal, lunch get-togethers for discussion. Instead this year, our group of volunteer programmers have continued our talks, colloquia, and book club and virtual coffee gatherings throughout June and July, with plans for August, using Zoom. [Read more](#)

John H. Youson
Registrar
Senior College
July 22, 2020

Essays

Retrospective on my discipline: Philosophy

By Lynda Lange

In the nineteen seventies I came to Toronto to work on a doctorate in philosophy. By the time I graduated at the end of the decade, I had done the very first doctoral dissertation in feminist philosophy in Canada, and possibly in the United States as well. My dissertation was a feminist critique of the political philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. People studying literature were probably ahead of the philosophers in the early days of feminist critique. However, in academic philosophy it was a battle all the way at that time, even as women's movement grew in impact in wider society. Philosophical education required eventual acceptance of the uniqueness, however impossible to define, of what philosophy is. I remember the beginning of a course in ethics during my master's programme at the University of Manitoba, when the professor started with a few questions that he said were designed to see

Sport Studies: Evolving But Not Yet Evolved

By Helen Jefferson Lenskyj

Professor Emerita

OISEUT

The field of sport studies has changed dramatically since I first entered it as a graduate student in 1980. Some readers may not be aware of its existence, although others may recall my two Senior College presentations on the Olympic industry: the first in 2014 on Sexual Diversity and the Sochi 2014 Olympics: No More Rainbows (Palgrave Pivot, 2014) and the second, in March this year, on The Olympic Games: A Critical Approach (Emerald, 2020). I joke to people who know my history that the subtitle of this book is redundant: everything I've written about the topic for nearly three decades has been critical.

Olympic studies is an interdisciplinary area within the subfield of sport studies. By the 1970s, a few scholars from the social sciences and humanities

should be relevant?" Too bad for the students who said "yes". So I spent a number of years, a lot of it actually rather enjoyable, since I loved a good argument, defending a feminist approach against the charge that it was "not philosophy". [Read more](#)

The Expanding Universe of Astronomy

By John R. Percy

Professor Emeritus: Astronomy & Astrophysics, and Science Education
University of Toronto

What an interesting project -- to encourage our members to reflect on the evolution of their discipline! I'm not a professional historian -- far from it -- but I'm actively interested in heritage. I lead astronomical walking tours of our campus for Heritage Toronto, and give public presentations based on the walk. I prepared the "Astronomy at U of T" page in the Senior College Encyclopaedia. Toronto has a proud astronomical heritage, going back to -- and beyond -- the iconic 1855 Toronto Magnetic and Meteorological Observatory -- now called the Stewart Observatory, and home to the U of T Student Union.

In the 60 years since I was an undergraduate astronomy student at U of T, humans have flown in space and landed on the moon. Space probes have explored all the planets in the solar system (including the ex-planet Pluto) and many of their moons. Thousands of "exoplanets" have been discovered around other stars, including dozens of Earth-like ones. Astronomers now understand the life cycles of the sun and stars, including their bizarre end-products: white dwarfs, neutron stars, and black holes. They have shed new light on the origin and evolution of galaxies and the universe itself, and even recorded the after-glow of the universe's birth -- the so-called Big Bang. Science speculation and fiction has become science fact -- in living colour. [Read more](#)

sport and to the preeminent sport mega-event, the Olympic Games. Research in exercise sciences, on the other hand, had a much longer history, with sports medicine dating back more than 100 years. [Read more](#)

Teaching Human Evolution in Honolulu (Feb-March 2020)

By Becky A. Sigmon, Prof. Emeritus of Anthropology



My connection with Honolulu

Honolulu is a small city melding the features of the Orient and the West into a uniquely adaptive human blend of physical and cultural variation. It is this character that appeals to me. Honolulu's international University is placed in the Manoa Valley at the base of ancient volcanic hills, away from and yet a distal appendage of this Pacific Island city. On four occasions I was summer term Professor in the Anthropology Department, teaching courses on Human Evolution and Physical Anthropology to students coming from all over the South Pacific as well as from Asian and Euro-American cultures. This varied human mixture makes teaching challenging and yet very interesting for a Physical Anthropologist because human variation is a major focus of our research. The fact that we are a product of our genetic as well as our environmental backgrounds is a fascinating topic to teach, and it gives the student some answers about their own unique physical features. [Read more](#)

Announcement

Deanne Bogdan, Department of Social Justice Education, OISE/UT is featured in conversation with CBC producer Sean Foley in two one-hour episodes on the Northrop Frye's 1962 Massey Lectures, published in 1963 as *The Educated Imagination*. Both programs were presented on CBC's Radio 1 "IDEAS." The first episode, "Northrop Frye: Return to *The Educated Imagination*," aired on May 27, 2020. You can access the full episode

[2020-1.5586648](#)

What good is the study of literature? Northrop Frye's 1962 CBC Massey Lectures were his attempt to answer that age-old question. Frye scholar and friend Deanne Bogdan revisits the lectures and helps us map Northrop Frye's expansive vision of literature, life, and human nature.

The second episode, "Northrop Frye's, The Educated Imagination Reconsidered," aired on June 25th, 2020, and can be accessed at <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/the-case-of-the-disappearing-reader-a-northrop-frye-mystery-1.5626826>

SENIOR SCHOLARS ANNUAL



SENIOR SCHOLARS ANNUAL

2019

T
hi

This compilation presents a sample of the ongoing scholarly activities of Fellows, External Fellows, and members of Senior College, which is comprised mainly of retired faculty and librarians at the University of Toronto.

Information was collected in 2020 by the Senior College Centre under the guidance of Professor Mary Jane Ashley. Contributors are listed in alphabetical order by surname and items date from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019.

The variety of citation styles reflects standard practice for each discipline. This document and previous publications will remain available on the website of the Senior College. (<https://seniorcollege.utoronto.ca/publications/senior-scholars-annual/>)

The College gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Dr. Moyra Mackinnon to the preparation of this compendium.

A Call for Submissions for the 2020 *Senior Scholars Annual* will be issued early in 2021 for items dating from January 1 to December 31, 2020. [Website version and back issues](#)

In Memoriam, 2020

James Francis Sidney Bendell (March, 1926 - January, 2020) Professor of Forestry
<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thestar/obituary.aspx?n=james-francis-sidney-bendell-jim&pid=195284365&fhid=5751>

Donald "Digger" Gorman (1922-April, 2020) Earth sciences (then Geology) in the Faculty of Arts & Science. https://www.utoronto.ca/news/memorial-donald-digger-gorman-beloved-u-t-earth-sciences-professor?utm_source=U+of+T+News+-+Published+Today&utm_campaign=9a22cf0e3c-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01-10_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_075647550f-9a22cf0e3c-109882817

David MacLennan (July 3, 1937 - June 23, 2020) University Professor, Banting and Best Department of Medical Research

Keith Leon Moore (October 5, 1925 - November 25, 2019) Professor and Chair of Anatomy, Division of Surgery; Associate Dean, Basic Medical Sciences
<https://www.peacefultransition.ca/obituary/707282/>

William (Bill) H. Nelson (November 3, 1923 - January 3, 2020) Professor of History; UTFA
<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/theglobeandmail/obituary.aspx?n=william-henry-nelson&pid=194986499&fhid=41349>

Peter Nesselroth (March 1, 1935 - May 31, 2020) Professor of French and Comparative Literature
<https://complit.utoronto.ca/in-memoriam-professor-peter-w-nesselroth/>

Sylvia Ostry (June 1927-May, 2020) Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy
https://munkschool.utoronto.ca/feature/remembering-dr-sylvia-ostry-cc-om-frsc/?utm_source=The+Bulletin+Brief&utm_campaign=bfe281105a-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_06_13_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_b5083c0488-bfe281105a-110217171

Mario J. Valdez (January 28, 1934 - April 26, 2020) Professor of Spanish and Comparative Literature
<https://complit.utoronto.ca/in-memoriam-professor-mario-j-valdes/>

John Valleau (d May 17, 2020) 88 years old. Professor of Chemistry; a founding director of Science for Peace
<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/theglobeandmail/obituary.aspx?n=john-valleau&pid=196273513>

Mel Watkins (May 15, 1932 - April 2, 2020) Professor of Political Economy
<https://politics.utoronto.ca/2020/04/remembering-mel-watkins-1932-2020/>

Ronald Williams (1928-July 16, 2020) Chair (1970-1977), Biochemistry; Principal (1984-1989) UTSC
<https://www.utoronto.ca/news/remembering-former-u-t-scarborough-principal-ron-williams>

Retiring Registrar, Edna Hajnal

Edna was appointed Registrar of Senior College during Peter Russell's term as Principal and officially completed her service in June 2020. The Registrar is one of six senior officers named in our Constitution, and is responsible for maintaining records of who we are and who we have been.

Edna fulfilled her responsibilities conscientiously and her contributions are appreciated by the officers and fellows of Senior College. She took care to present up-to-date information on the number of active Fellows at every meeting of Council and Senate, and conferred with the Bursar to ensure that the financial data on Fellows fees were accurate. At the Senate meeting of

Weekly Programs

One of the College's most popular activities has been a series of weekly talks held at the Faculty Club during the academic year. The presenters are often Fellows reporting on their recent work, but outside speakers are also invited.

The program for fall 2020 is:
<https://seniorcollege.utoronto.ca/fall-2020-program/>

**Save the date for Senior College's
15th Annual Symposium.**

Rescheduled Date: Monday, November 30th

Topic: “Ethical Challenges of the 21st Century”.

Speakers include:

Michael Szego, The Brave New World of Genomics

Sheila McIlraith, Artificial Intelligence: Promise and Peril for Humanity

Lorraine Ferris, What Do I need to Know about Predatory/Deceptive Journals

Jamil Ammar, Deadly but not Offensive: Jihadist Groups and the New Face of Online Terrorism
Walter Dorn, Weapons for War and Peace: The Scientist’s Dilemma Representative of Provincial
Ministry, The Results of Freedom of Speech Legislation on Ontario Campuses

Location: Online via Zoom.

More information will be provided in the coming weeks.

[See the last symposium](#)

Copyright © 2020 Senior College, University of Toronto, All rights reserved.

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

