

THE SENIOR COLLEGE MESSENGER

Issue 13: November, 2022

This is an organ for members of Senior College to submit short articles that share news, letters to the editor, reactions to the program and anything that they feel will be of general interest. Its regular appearance will allow for an exchange of opinion of topics of interest to the members. In particular, it would be interesting to record reactions to the talks, colloquium topics and books discussed.

Please submit contributions to the editor, Ed Barbeau at barbeau@math.utoronto.ca

ON CENSORSHIP

A report on the colloquium of October 20 chaired by Phil Sullivan.

This was a relaxed, lively, wide-ranging, and informative discussion on a very timely subject, in which every attendee participated. Many points were made in the course of a very animated discussion. We all agreed on the difficulty of censoring social media and the way narcissistic, psychopath, and machiavellian people make use of the media to spread misinformation and hate speech. However it was pointed out that there is legislation that defines hate speech and enforces punishment for it. Examples of hate speech and action led us to remember the nazi party attempted demonstration in Skokie (Chicago) which was prevented by the city, and the more recent one in Charlottesville where the police force could not prevent the murderous actions of a nazi demonstrator against the counter demonstrators.

The discussion then moved towards the use of censorship in school, universities and libraries, in particular the inappropriate banning or withdrawing from public libraries of books with LGBTQ content, or using swear words, or portraying black people in a manner considered demeaning. Comments were made on the unjustified cancelling of the name of Ryerson from Ryerson University, on the grounds that he was responsible for what happened in residential schools. At the end of the discussion we all agreed that in order to defend ourselves from personal attacks of hate speech, we should certainly resort to lawyers. (*Giuliana Katz.*)

Afterword. *The Messenger* is open to further views on this topic, particularly with reference to the renaming of Ryerson University. One issue that could be explored is how we treat historical figures who executed policies, that in hindsight are seen as misguided or even pernicious, but in their time accorded with accepted views and indeed were seen to be beneficial.

MORE ON THE 17th SYMPOSIUM

The *Messenger* of May carried a brief report on the recent symposium. Recordings of the talks are now available on *YouTube* under the title “Playlist: 17th Annual Senior College Symposium”: SC Symposium talks. About 60 people attended the Symposium in person and another 49 online. About 20% of the participants

were not U of T retirees, with eight students from University in the Community and three representatives from Delmanor and Living Assistance, organizations that made financial donations.

Thanks to generous discounts from the Faculty Club for site rental, food and technical support, nearly all expenses of mounting this event were met from these donations and the registration fees from in-person and Zoom participants. A reserve fund of accumulated donations covered the modest shortfall of \$471.

Participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction. A survey gave an average rating of 4.3 out of 5, with special praise for the relevance of the topic and the quality of the speakers. However, in their written comments, nearly all Zoom participants cited audio quality as a problem for at least part of the time.

In the survey, many respondents suggested possible topics for the next Symposium: *Housing as a human right; Growing income inequality; Arts and sustainability; Representation of flawed historical figures; The joys (?) of aging; Indigenous Canadians – relations and issues; Political reform in Canada; Immigrants/Migrants/refugees; Comparative analysis and review of global crises; Post-pandemic emergency preparedness; Canadian health care: what is wrong and how to fix it; What can we do about climate change?*

Please let the co-chairs for 2023 know which topics interest you and send any further suggests to: margaret.procter@utoronto.ca and williamlogan@rogers.com.

IN MEMORIAM

Chandler Davis (August 12, 1926 - September 24, 2022)

Professor of Mathematics

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Events marked with **F** are for fellows and external fellows. Registration a few days ahead is necessary for each event. This can be done in response to a weekly email from Senior College to its members that describes the events or by going on line at www.seniorcollege.utoronto.ca .

Talks: Wednesdays, 10 am

Talks will take place at the Faculty Club **and** on Zoom.

November 2: Ian Williams (poet, novelist), *Disappointment*

November 9: Peter Victor, *Herman Daly's Full World Economics*

November 16: Charlie Maurer, *Illusion, reality, canvas and camera*

November 23: Charlie Kiel, *How do films work?*

November 30: Ramin Jahanbegloo, *Gandhi, our contemporary*

December 2: Larry LeDuc, *After the mid-terms – the next cycle of American politics*

Colloquia: Thursdays, 2-4 pm (In person only) (F)

November 17: Is democracy the best form of governance? If so, how can we strengthen its positive features and minimize its weaknesses?

December 8: How can we better protect our environment? (Chair: Guiliana Katz *et al*)

Book Club: Monday: 2-4 pm (Zoom only) (F)

November 7: Suzanne Simard, *Finding the mother tree: discovering the wisdom of the forest* (Leader: Daphne Maurer)

December 5: Yascha Mounk, *The great experiment: why diverse democracies fall apart and how they can endure* (Leader: Max Nemni)

Please note: The author will be discussing this book at a free event at the Toronto Reference Library (Bram and Bluma Appel Salon) on **Thursday, November 10** from 7:00 to 8:30 pm; the doors open at 6:00 pm. You can book your tickets online. Visit TPL Mounk discussion or search “Toronto Reference Library Yascha Mounk”.

January 9: Maggie O’Farrell, *Hamnet* (Leader: Molly Wills)

February 6: Erna Paris, *Long shadows: Truth, lies and history* (Leader: Monique Nemni)

March 6: Scott Weidensaul, *A world on the wing: the global odyssey of migratory birds* (Leader: Sara Shettleworth)

April 3: Thomas Savage, *The power of the dog (1967)* (Leaders: Mary Jane Ashley, Linda Hutcheon)

May 1: Kyle Harper, *From shame to sin: the Christian transformation of sexual morality in late Antiquity* (Leader: David Milne)

June 5: Steven Johnson, *The ghost map: the story of London’s most terrifying epidemic – and how it changed science, cities and the modern world* (Leader: William Logan)

July 3: Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince (1532)* (Leader: David Milne)

Inaugural Peter Russell Discussion

Thursday, November 10, 2-4 pm in person at the Faculty Club

Topic: What is the role of the monarchy in 21st-century Canada? (Moderator: Rob Vipond)

Lunch available at 12 noon.

Virtual Coffee Club: Tuesdays at 2pm

November 8; November 22; December 6

Aftermath

Take any ten whole numbers between 1 and 100. It is always possible to partition them into two or three nonoverlapping sets for which the sums of the numbers in two of the sets are equal.