

THE SENIOR COLLEGE MESSENGER

Issue 16: February, 2023

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

UNIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY

In 2010 Peter Russell, then Principal of Senior College, established a partnership between Senior College and University in the Community (UitC), an adult education project arising out of the Workers' Educational Association (WEA). Senior College established an advisory committee chaired by Donald Gillies, who served until June 30, 2022 before being succeeded by Vice-Principal Janet Paterson. Joanne Mackay Bennett representing WEA has served as Course-Coordinator during these years, responsible for every aspect of UitC's operations. UitC offers university-level lectures, field trips, visits to cultural sites and social gatherings for adults who for a variety of reasons have been unable to have access to university education. The affiliation of the WEA with the University of Toronto began in 1918 when President Sir Robert Falconer established a local branch. It was modelled on the original WEA founded in the United Kingdom in 1903, where it still flourishes. (In 1959-1960, while an undergraduate at the University of Edinburgh, Donald Gillies took a WEA "Rapid Reading" course with a fee of ten shillings.)

During 2022, there were three courses, all delivered on Zoom. In the Winter Term (February 1 – April 13), course topics were Indigenous history, public affairs, Canadian immigration and refugee policy, journalism, with music and poetry as cultural commentary. The Spring Term (May 18 – June 8) focussed on well-being through four sessions on philosophy given jointly by Daniel Munro and Zachary Weinstein, PhD students in the University of Toronto Philosophy Department. The Fall Term (October 5 – November 30), was a hybrid with four in-person classes, five Zoom presentations, and guided tours of two museums.

Nine UitC students were guests of Senior College at the Spring Symposium and participated in the question-and-answer session. Twenty students celebrated the end-of-term at a party held in July at Innis College. In December, a public event was held in Innis Town Hall at which co-authors Andrew Stobo Sniderman, Douglas Sanderson – Amo Banashi – discussed their 2022 book *Valley of the Birdtail: an Indian reserve, a white town, and the road to reconciliation*.

HONOURS

Germaine Warkentin became a **Member of the Order Of Canada** on June 29, 2022.

IN MEMORIAM

Alexander (Sandy) Douglas Gregor (d. January 12, 2023)

Professor of Education, University of Manitoba (External Fellow of Senior College)

Fred Forster Wilson (December 27, 1937 - January 10, 2023)

Department of Philosophy; Former president of UTFA, CAUT

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, 2 pm

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

February 1: Sophia Moreau, *Tort law and social equality*

February 8: Peter Soly, *Reflections and projections on Canadian Policing*

February 15: Miriam Diamond, *Solutions to address the global threat of chemical pollution*

February 22: Michael Gervers, *Ethiopian Dark Ages (7th - 12th centuries)*

March 1: Bence Viola, *Neanderthals and Denisovans in Central Asia*

March 8: Mark Osbaldeston, *Unbuilt Queen's Park and the University of Toronto*

March 15: J. Gottfried Paasche, *The German aristocracy and their resistance, or lack of, to Hitler and the Nazis*

March 22: Konrad Eisenbichlet, *A different sort of Italians: Julian-Dalmatian immigrants*

Colloquia: Thursdays 2-4 pm F

February 16: How has colonization shaped Canada? (Chair: Martin Klein)

March 16: Can public and private healthcare systems work well together? If so, how? If not, why not? (Chair: William Logan)

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

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

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)

Aftermath

“She saw every relationship as a pair of intersecting circles. The more they overlapped, it would seem at first glance, the better the relationship; but this is not so. Beyond a certain point, the law of diminishing returns sets in, and there are not enough private resources left on either side to enrich the life that is shared. Probably perfection is reached when the area of the two outer crescents, added together, is exactly equal to that of the leaf shaped piece in the middle. On paper, there must be some neat mathematical formula for arriving at this; in life none.”

This is from *A country house visit*, one of a series of prewar columns by Jan Struther (Joyce Anstruther) in the *Times of London* on English village life. These formed the basis of a 1939 book, *Mrs. Miniver*, which in turn inspired the 1942 movie of the same name. This successful movie raised British morale and garnered six Academy Awards. It seemed to earn the respect of Joseph Goebbels, who noted the the movie “shows the destiny of a family during the current war, and its refined powerful propagandistic tendency has up to now only been dreamed of. There is not a single angry word spoken against Germany; nevertheless the anti-German tendency is perfectly accomplished”.

Inevitably, some mathematician would be inspired to create a problem. One appeared for example in the March, 1946 issue of the *American Mathematical Monthly*. The problem was to determine the configuration when the area of the region common to the circles (which could have different radii) is equal to the total area of the two regions belonging to exactly one of the circles. When the radii are the same, the distance between the centres of the two circles is a little more than half their common radius. (In this case, one needs to solve the equation $x - \sin x = 2\pi/3$ where x is the angle subtended at the centre of either circle by their common chord. “Transcendental” is an adjective that may apply to the relationship in the passage, but it certainly applies to the equation.)