

## A HAPPENING PLACE

Dear friends,

I am delighted to report on another highly eventful year at the Department. On March 9, 2012, we celebrated our 50th anniversary (see pages 6-7). It was a beautiful evening with reminiscences, music, spoken word and more.

Jian Ghomeshi, our alumnus and the host of the extremely popular CBC show *Q* spoke in passionate defense of the liberal arts and the kind of educational milieu we create.

A very touching moment of the evening was a message from Olivia Chow (MP, Trinity-Spadina) and wife of Jack Layton. Layton earned his PhD from this department in 1983. "My late husband Jack Layton's political thoughts were very much shaped by the experience he had as a doctoral student at York University's Department of Political Science. He occasionally returned to York University as a professor ... and found the interactions he had with students and faculty stimulating, inspirational and informative," Olivia's message said.

The event was attended by 300 people. Patrick Monahan, York's Provost (and now Deputy Attorney General of Ontario) spoke eloquently about how studying political science gave him a fantastic grounding for his law career. The Dean of our Faculty, Martin Singer, presented awards to nine of our students for academic excellence and for commitment to social justice. We also presented a token of thanks to Angela Swartz and Marlene Quesenberry – the two most senior members of our administrative team about to complete 25 years of service to the Department.

Last year saw the launch of many new initiatives. In October, we launched our High School Outreach program by collaborating with the York Debating Society to host the York-Osgoode High School Debating Tournament. It brought 124 debaters from Ontario and Quebec

to York. A stunning display of debating talent, this tournament was the qualifier round for the prestigious Oxford Cup (UK). Our Department presented two awards to the champion team (Richmond Hill High School, Amber Zhao and Daryna Kutsyna) and to the top speaker (Alana Bechamp, Northern Secondary School).

In May, Professor Susan Henders took our MA student Joshua Weiner on the Young Leaders Delegation program to Taiwan. York's International Internship program placed ten of our students abroad in 2011 and 2012. Indonesia, the Philippines, the UK and India were some of the countries they travelled to (see page 4). Our efforts to create more such opportunities for our students will continue this year.

In November, Professor Rodney Loeppky took ten students on a study tour to Washington DC (see page 11). It was an exciting opportunity to discuss the presidential election with academics, journalists, embassy officials, and others.

Our seminar series continued with the same fervour as last year. Professor Robert Cox one of the world's leading thinkers in the field of international studies, spoke on "Consciousness and Civilization: The Inside Story." He is Professor Emeritus with our department.

Two big achievements. The Undergraduate Political Science Council won the Outstanding Student Club Award in 2012. And, Professor David McNally's book *Monsters of the Market: Zombies, Vampires and Global Capitalism* won the Deutscher Memorial Prize for 2012.

There was of course much more, as our [website](#) and our [Facebook](#) page will tell you. Please visit us. As always, thanks to our excellent administrative staff on whom the Department is heavily dependent for all it does.

Warmly,

Ananya Mukherjee-Reed, Chair

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Ananya Mukherjee-Reed  
Department Chair  
Speaking at the  
Department's 50th  
anniversary celebration

## WHY POLITICAL SCIENCE @ YORK? THIS IS WHAT OUR ALUMNI SAY...

*Having worked as a news correspondent in more than fifty countries, studying political science has given me a generalized education, with specific tools. Most notably, understanding international political systems and the causes of conflict have proven critical in my professional life.*

**David Common, Journalist**

CBC World Report  
York Political Science alumnus (BA 1999)

*Political science inspired me to think deeply about the world - analyzing, reflecting and learning through theory and practice - and strive to make it a better place. After my BA in this department, I completed my M.Sc. at the London School of Economics and began my teaching career. I also established the Horizons Children's Centre - an organization that supports orphans and needy children in Ghana, for which I received the Humanitarian Award from the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario in 2008.*

**Heather Menezes, Teacher**

Toronto District School Board  
York Political Science alumna (BA 1999)

*Political science gave me the strong foundation necessary for a successful law career. It taught me to research, analyze and assess different ideas, theories and perspectives. It also provided a foundation for my advocacy work by enabling me to articulate and advance my own arguments with passion and conviction.*

**Thelson Desamour, Barrister**

Sigurdson, Courtlander, Burns & Silverstone  
York Political Science alumnus (BA 1998)

*Politics is too important to leave to politicians. That is where you come in. You, the Canadian citizen, or someone who is on the way to becoming one... Politics matters. Ideas matter. Democracy matters. Because everyone needs to be able to make a difference.*



**Jack Layton, Leader and Politician**

Former Leader of the Official Opposition of Canada  
York Political Science alumnus (PhD 1983)

## PROFESSOR ROBERT DRUMMOND RETIRES

By Professor Ross Rudolph

Robert Drummond retired at the end of June 2012, one year shy of the jubilee of his entering York University as a freshman on the Glendon campus in 1963. The institution he is leaving is radically and positively transformed from the one he entered, in part because of the difference he made.

In governance, he chaired Faculty of Arts Council and Senate. As a leader of the Faculty Association over many years, he demonstrated that the Administration has no monopoly of concern for the interests of the university; his actions as the Chair of the Political Science Department and the long serving Dean of the Faculty of Arts showed that the unions were not the only ones looking out for the welfare of their members. His many contributions were recognized with a University Professorship and with the Alumni Association's Bryden Local Hero Award.

In all his endeavours, Robert is partnered by his wife Vicky, whom he met when she was an MA candidate in our graduate program. Not only have both Drummonds served York unstintingly since their arrival; a

generous bequest in their wills assures that their support for York students continues into the future.

Robert's own speech models the civil discourse that he urges on others: he says what he thinks rather than what he thinks his auditors want to hear, and he treats everyone with equal respect and sensitivity.

With Robert's retirement, the Department lost not only its embodied historical memory, but also its poet laureate. He will be sorely missed. Lest he suffer separation anxiety, we hope

and trust that he will return regularly, not just for public celebrations, in the sure knowledge that he is always welcome.



## STUDENT PROFILE: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Hilary Gold returned to York University in the Winter of 2012 to upgrade her undergraduate degree in Political Science and Latin American and Caribbean Studies to an Honours Degree. This will enable her to apply to graduate school.

She faced many challenges when growing up: economic poverty, violence and constant uncertainty. However, what she calls a miracle occurred when as a teenager she was introduced to the powerful Brazilian Afro-Indigenous martial art of Capoeira. She's been learning Capoeira for 12 years and teaching it for 6 years.

For three years she lived in north east Brazil working with street involved and homeless youth, and created a grassroots initiative in Toronto – Coletivo Cultural – with the objective to build inclusive and equitable communities. Coletivo Cultural or cultural collective, is a grassroots cultural youth movement that focuses on youth agency and political activism.

The work is a form of community development in economically challenged areas of poverty in both Toronto and north east Brazil. Hilary works together with participants as equal members towards the goal of social justice for children and youth.

Her studies at York University have made an important contribution to her work with Coletivo Cultural. Through her courses she is learning qualitative and quantitative research skills for investigating how community organizing by young people can bring about change.

She seeks discover how the intersection of poverty, race and gender are impacting collective organizing within communities. And, what collective action means for political and social transformation, specifically for the redistribution of wealth, freedom from violence, and access to basic services for communities living in poverty.

In her life at school and beyond she notes that it is Capoeira – a 500 year old Afro-Indigenous Brazilian cultural art form that was developed by diverse peoples, African and Indigenous slaves and Portuguese indentured labourers – that inspires her. Capoeira provides an opportunity to engage in a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual form of resistance

that is positive, promotes community development and inclusion of all people as equal and valuable members.

Within Coletivo Cultural, vulnerable children learn Capoeira and then create peer networks that link multiple locations by designing interactive demonstrations in local community centres and public schools. Thereafter the children and youth become peer mentors and act to engage community children and youth in Capoeira and dialogue about community safety issues.

Once the children and youth feel safe within their own bodies, through an exploration of Capoeira and freedom to express their emotions in a secure and positive way, they are ready for Capoeira training and performances at a post-secondary institution, which is led by an Afro-Brazilian master teacher. This provides the youth with a positive connection to a post-secondary institution and forms the foundation to become further engaged in civic participation and educational opportunities.

More details about Coletivo Cultural are at [www.youtube.com/TixaOncaCapoeira](http://www.youtube.com/TixaOncaCapoeira)



Hilary Gold and Capoeira students in Brazil



## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS JOIN YORK INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS

*This past summer I had the privilege of being part of the York International Internship Program, **working in the Philippines as an Economic Development Officer**. Those three months have absolutely changed my life.*

*The people, the atmosphere and the internship itself helped me discover a new outlook towards how small acts can help change the lives of many. This internship has helped me accomplish unique goals and set higher objectives for myself to further accomplish.*

Senthan Thirugnanasampanthan  
4th year Political Science and  
Environmental Studies



*I was selected by York International Internship Program to work abroad for three months this summer past summer. **I worked as an intern at Oxfam, in Moscow, Russia**. Oxfam is an NGO that fights global poverty.*

*This experience allowed me to grow both personally and professionally and made me certain about my future career choices. This amazing opportunity that I was offered will be the highlight of my four year undergraduate experience.*

Ghizol M. Karim  
4th year Political Science

***My internship in St. Kitts** was a challenging but rewarding experience. It complemented my courses in political science and international development studies by exposing me to contemporary issues.*

*The York International Internship Program gave me a chance to work at the government and grassroots level. It was also a great networking opportunity and the international experience sounded so good on my resume that it helped me to land a paid position as a public affairs intern at a PR firm. I would recommend it to anyone who loves to travel and wants to develop both professionally and personally.*

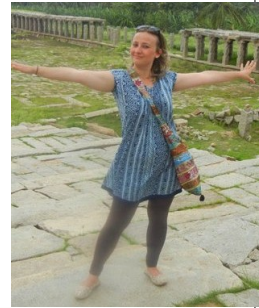
Michelle Smith  
4th year Political Science and International Development  
Studies

*It is hard to summon all of my thoughts about **my three months spent in India**, a rare and a truly exceptional opportunity provided by York International Internship Program. Studying political science as a student I desired to experience the world first hand, outside of the textbooks.*

*While traveling through India, I realized that nation's social complexities and its major influences. Studying development in that context was fascinating and inspired further inquiry for research, which I plan to undertake as a graduate student.*

*This experience truly took me away from the comforts of the theoretical and immersed me into real world issues. It challenged my personal and intellectual conceptions to the fullest.*

Anna Sotnykova  
4th year Political Science



*My international internship experience made possible by York International took me **on an incredible adventure to Jakarta, Indonesia**; a booming mega city and capital of South East Asia's largest country. My placement was with the Green Building Council of Indonesia.*

*With the help of many new friends I navigated my way across the hidden treasures of the awesome concrete jungle and with some caution even the beautiful banana tree filled jungles in mountain areas.*

*All of this while making lasting contributions to projects at an environmental organization leading the government and private sector into sustainable development.*

Virgil Haden-Pawlowski  
4th year Political Science and  
International Development  
Studies



## GRADUATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

During 2012, the following PhD students successfully defended their dissertations earning their doctorates:

Hironori Onuki - *The Everyday Spaces of Global Labour Migration: Migrant Workers as Political Agents in Japan*

Carlos Velasquez Carrillo - *The Persistence of Oligarchic Rule in El Salvador: Neoliberal Transformation, and the Retrenchment of Privilege and Inequality in the Post-Civil War Period*

Sandra Ignagni - *Is Leisure Working? The State and Gendered Regulation of Working Time and Leisure in Canada, 1950-2006*

Jonathan Martineau - *Time, Capitalism, and Alienation: Social time Relations, Clock-Time and the Making of World Standard Time*

Travis Fast - *The Profound Hegemony of Neoliberalism: Economic Theory, Public Policy, and Capitalist Accumulation*

John Grundy - *Administering Employability: Employment Service Delivery in the Era of Active Labour Market Policy*

Melanie Samson - *Wasting Value and Valuing Waste: Insights into the Global Crisis and the Production of Value Reclaimed from a Soweto Garbage Dump*

Sirvan Karimi - *Social Classes, National Settings, and the Welfare State: The Public Pension Systems in Canada and Australia*

reese simpkins - *making trans multiple: movement, materiality, becoming*

Sebastien Rioux - *Labouring Bodies: Living Standards and the Distribution of Food in Britain, 1850-1914*

Devin Penner - *Rethinking the Spectacle: Radical Political Agency in the Information Society*

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Professor Martin Breaugh, Undergraduate Program Director

Over the past three years, our Department has renewed its commitment to the Undergraduate program. More than ever before, students will encounter full-time faculty at every year level: from the large introductory courses to the small seminar classes at the 4000-level.

The integration of research and teaching has always been at the core of our mission and we strongly believe that the undergraduate experience is enhanced through the combination of our two most important tasks at York, scholarship and the transmission of knowledge.

This is my final year as Undergraduate Program Director and I thank my colleagues and administrative staff for their help over the past four years.

To our undergraduate students in Political Science: it is your enthusiasm, passion, and dedication that make the Department such a great place to teach and learn.







## CELEBRATING THE 50th



Cassandra Thomas, Samanthalee Bernardi, Suzanne Hawkins and Professor Shannon Bell



Marlene Quesenberry and Angie Swartz



Karina Francisco and Professor Leo Panitch



Jian Ghomeshi



Professor Emeritus Harvey Simmons and Professor Emeritus George Szablowski



# RSARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE



Dean Martin Singer, Professor Ananya Mukherjee-Reed and Gilary Massa



Professor David Leyton-Brown and colleagues



Professor Sergei Plekhanov



Professor Elizabeth Dauphinee



Paulo Ravecca and Antonio Torres-Ruiz



Professor Nicky Short, Professor Sabine Dreher (Glendon campus) and Karl Dahlquist

## FACULTY MEMBER PROFILES



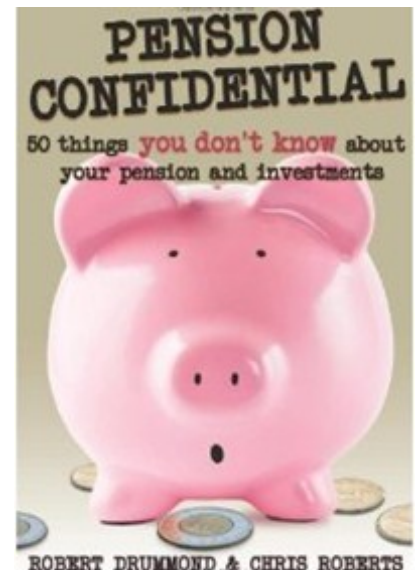
Greg Albo

**Greg Albo** co-edited with Jerome Klassen, a MA and PhD graduate of the Department, *Empire's Ally: Canada and the War in Afghanistan* (University of Toronto Press, 2012). Professor Albo is also the co-editor (along with **Professor Leo Panitch** and Vivek Chibber) of *The Question of Strategy: Socialist Register 2013* (Merlin Press, 2012). Professor Albo has recently given talks on contemporary capitalism and the left in Beijing, Berlin, Paris and New York.

and at the National Library of Québec. In addition, scholars of Latin America applied the perspective developed in his book on the *Plebeian Experience* (2007) to contemporary political problems in Latin America and published an edited volume, *L'interpellation plébéienne en Amérique latine* (Paris, Karthala, 2012).

**Robert W. Cox**, Professor Emeritus, one of the world's leading thinkers in the fields of political economy and international studies, gave a lecture in the Department of Political Science in October 2012. In his wide-ranging and thought-provoking talk, Robert Cox reflected on the future. Professor Cox addressed questions of civilization, consciousness and the future of world order. A podcast of his lecture, with an introduction by Professor **Stephen Gill**, followed by a question and answer session, is posted at [Cox video](#) and at [www.stephengill.com](http://www.stephengill.com).

**Robert Drummond**, Professor Emeritus, is co-author with Chris Roberts (a PhD graduate of the Department) of *Pension Confidential: 50 Things You Don't Know About Your Pension and Investments* (Lorimer, 2012). The book provides impartial advice to Canadians about financial security during retirement.

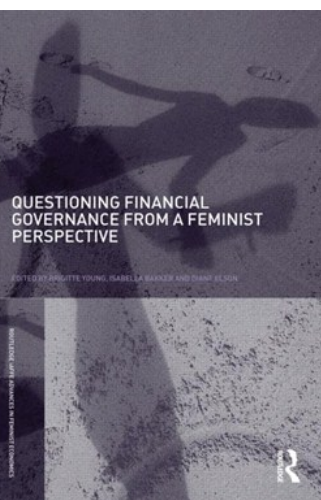


Rob Albritton

**Rob Albritton**, Professor Emeritus, is currently working on a book tentatively titled "Thoughts and Actions for a World in Multiple Crises." The title suggests the ambition of the project which will focus on sustainability, caring, equality, democracy, and cooperation. His book *Let Them Eat Junk: How Capitalism Causes Hunger and Obesity* (Pluto Press, 2009) is currently being translated into Chinese, Korean, and Turkish. Another book, *Economics Transformed: Discovering the Brilliance of Marx* (Pluto Press, 2007) is being translated into Chinese, while his *Dialectics and Deconstruction in Political Economy* has been translated into Farsi.

**Isabella Bakker** is co-editor of *Questioning Financial Governance from a Feminist Perspective* (Routledge, 2011). The book brings together feminist economists and feminist political economists from different countries located in North America and Europe to analyze the 'strategic silence' about gender in fiscal and monetary policy, and financial regulation. This silence reflects a set of assumptions that the key instruments of financial governance are gender-neutral. The central findings are that the key instruments of financial governance are not gender neutral.

**Martin Breugh**'s work on radical democracy was the subject of four international scholarly conferences in 2012: at the New University of Lisbon in Portugal, at the meetings of the Francophone Learned societies in Montreal, at the Free University of Brussels in Belgium,





## FACULTY MEMBER PROFILES

**Bernard Frolic**, Professor Emeritus, reports that in 2012, the York Asian Business/Management Program, of which he is founder and executive director, trained its 5,000th person at York in short-term non-degree programs for Chinese and Vietnamese mid-and upper level executives, officials and educators. The program has offices in Beijing and Shanghai in partnership with the Schulich School of Business, with a combined staff of ten persons.

Professor Frolic is also a Visiting Professor at the Canadian Studies Graduate Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University (Beiwai), where he supervises graduate students, and lectures on Canada-China relations, Canadian politics, and introduction to Western political science.

**Stephen Gill** is editor of, and contributor to, *Global Crises and the Crisis of Global Leadership* (Cambridge University Press, 2011). The book's novel theorization of global leadership is situated historically within the classics of modern political theory and sociology, relating it to the crisis of global capitalism today. Contributors reflect on the multiple political, economic, social, ecological and ethical crises that constitute our current global predicament. The book suggests that there is an overarching condition of global organic crisis, which shapes the political and organizational responses of the dominant global leadership and of various subaltern forces.

**Laam Hae's** new book is *The Gentrification of Nightlife and the Right to the City: Regulating Spaces of Social Dancing in New York* (Routledge, 2012). In this book, Professor Hae explores how nightlife in New York City, a scene particularly associated with subcultures of social dancing, has been transformed, recently, as the city has undergone gentrification and post-industrialization. The book shows how this

transformation has dampened people's rights to the uses of urban space and access to diverse expressive cultures and social life.

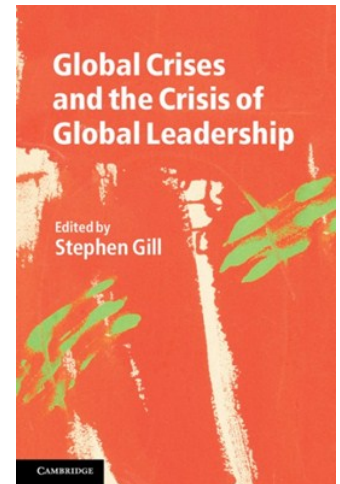
**Susan Henders** co-organized with Mary Young, a recent doctoral graduate of the Department, an international interdisciplinary workshop on societal "diplomacies" and the making of Canada-Asia. Their related article is in press with the *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*. In 2012, Professor Henders lead a group of 12 students from York, and other Ontario universities to Taiwan as part of the Taiwan government's Young Leaders Delegation program. The students spent a week learning about political, economic, and socio-cultural issues in Taiwan.

**Andrew Jackson** has been appointed the Packer Visiting Professor of Social Justice in the Department of Political Science. He joins York after retiring from his position as Director of Social and Economic Policy with the Canadian Labour Congress where he worked since 1989. Professor Jackson is the author of *Work and Labour in Canada*, now in its second edition, and is teaching a course on Social Justice and Political Activism.

**Ramin Jahanbegloo**, York-Noor Visiting Chair in Islamic Studies in the Department of Political Science, has a new book *The Gandhian Moment* (Harvard University Press, 2013) that presents Gandhi the political theorist. The book analyzes the founder of a system of ideas predicated on the power of nonviolence to challenge state sovereignty and domination. Professor Jahanbegloo guides the reader through Gandhi's ideas, shows how they shaped political protest from 1960s America to the fall of the Berlin Wall and beyond, and calls for their use today by Muslims demanding change.



Bernard Frolic



The Gandhian Moment

FOREWORD BY THE DALAI LAMA

## FACULTY MEMBER PROFILES



David McNally

**Thomas Klassen** is part of small group of York professors beginning a five-year multi-million dollar international development project in Dhaka (Bangladesh), Hyderabad (India) and Katmandu (Nepal). Funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, the project will improve employment opportunities and rights for people with disabilities.

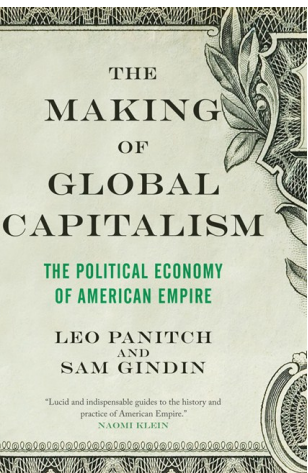
**Ananya Mukherjee-Reed** published a co-edited volume *Business Regulation and Non-state actors: Whose Standards? Whose Development?* (Routledge 2012). She also delivered lectures at Princeton University, and at the universities of Winnipeg and Calgary.



Esteve Morera

**David McNally's** book *Global Slump* (PM Press, 2011) won the 2012 Paul Sweezy Award from the American Sociological Association. The award recognizes a book that best demonstrates the most thoughtful, competent, or innovative analysis of a theoretical, empirical, or activist issue(s) germane to Marxism.

His book, *Monsters of the Market: Zombies, Vampires and Global Capitalism* (Brill, 2011), was awarded the 2012 Deutscher Memorial Prize. The prize has been presented annually since 1969 for the book that that exemplifies the best and most innovative new writing in or about the Marxist tradition.



**Esteve Morera's** book *Gramsci's Historicism: A Realist Interpretation* has been re-issued (Routledge, 2012 - originally published in 1990). The book is a comprehensive study of Gramsci's Quaderni, providing an account of the structure of Gramsci's basic philosophical and methodological principles. Professor Morera draws on many materials and sources, making accessible to the English-speaking reader texts otherwise only available in Italian, French, Spanish, and Catalan. Currently, Professor Morera is completing a manuscript titled "Gramsci, Materialism, and Philosophy".

**Leo Panitch**, Canada Research Chair in Comparative Political Economy and Distinguished Research Professor, and **Sam Gindin**, Visiting Professor, published *The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire* (Verso, 2012), a ground breaking account of America's role in global capitalism.

Professors Panitch and Gindin demonstrate the intimate relationship between modern capitalism and the American state, including its role as an "informal empire" promoting free trade and capital movements. Through a historical survey, they show how the United States has superintended the restructuring of other states in favour of competitive markets and coordinated the management of financial crises.

**Dennis Pilon's** new book, *Wrestling with Democracy: Voting Systems as Politics in the Twentieth Century West* (University of Toronto Press, 2013), examines every case of voting system reform across western nations throughout the twentieth century. He concludes that struggles over the substantive content of what democracy might do in class terms have sometimes fueled institutional reforms.

Professor Pilon continues to have an active public speaking calendar with a number of his public talks, on various aspects of voting and democratic reform, available on [VIMEO](https://vimeo.com/dennispilon).

**John S. Saul**, Professor Emeritus, writes... Rest assured that, post-retirement, the struggle continues. Four trips to South Africa (a long way!) and two to England, all research-related, in the past eighteen months, a couple of books completed, (including *South Africa's Present as History*), and two in the hopper: on the global anti-apartheid movement and on "the thirty years war for southern African liberation." Do I miss the Department? No time!



## FACULTY MEMBER PROFILES

**Gabrielle Slowley** presented a paper on fracking, a technique to extract natural gas below the surface, at the second Northern Governance and Economic Policy Research Conference held in Yellowknife in October 2012. She reports that knowledge and findings about fracking are of great interest to indigenous peoples in the Northwest Territories.

Professor Slowley will be presenting another paper on fracking titled, “Fractured Politics: Comparing Shale Gas Development in Canada and the United States,” as well as a paper on Arctic sovereignty, in April 2013 at the International Studies Association annual convention.

**Sandra Whitworth** was named the Eminent Feminist Scholar for 2012 by the Feminist Theory and Gender Studies Section of the International Studies Association. Professor Whitworth visited Memorial University in Newfoundland for a week in the Fall of 2012 as the Henrietta Harvey Distinguished Lecturer. She gave two public talks and led a graduate class for the Department of Gender Studies.

Professor Whitworth finished a large non-academic project in 2012, releasing her first CD of original music entitled *Water on the Moon*. Information about which is on her music website:

[www.sandrawhitworth.com](http://www.sandrawhitworth.com)



Sandra Whitworth

## STUDENTS TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON, DC

Immediately following the presidential election in November 2012, ten students from the Department of Political Science travelled with Professor Roddy Loeppky to Washington, DC. In two short days, the students had briefings at the Canadian Embassy, joined a seminar at George Washington University, took in a full Congressional hearing and finished out the working part of their field trip at the Brookings Institute.

After having fully participated in discussions ranging in nature from the ‘fiscal cliff’ to immigration, students were then able to take in a full day of Washington sightseeing, which never disappoints! This was a fantastic experience for students and fun was had by all. Indeed, it was so successful that a repeat performance in Fall 2013 is planned.



On Capitol Hill



Outside the Canadian Embassy





# DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, YORK UNIVERSITY, CANADA

## PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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[www.facebook.com/YORKUPOLS](https://www.facebook.com/YORKUPOLS)

Fall/Winter Office Hours  
Monday to Friday: 8:30am - 5:00pm

Undergraduate Evening Service Hours  
Monday to Thurs: 4:30pm - 7:00pm

The Department of Political Science in the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies has a reputation for research excellence and is noted for its commitment to teaching. Our objective is to expand critical awareness of political problems and to help overcome the barriers that separate politics from social life.

In today's challenging times, it often seems as if the institutions developed to improve our lives have escaped from our control. Problems such as poverty, war, inequality, oppression and a deteriorating environment press on us from all sides.

We cannot understand how these problems arose, nor how to deal with them, without discussing their political implications. The study of politics is concerned with how power and authority permeate almost every aspect of our lives from the state to the courtroom, boardroom, workplace and the family.

Politics is concerned not only with how power and authority are exercised but with how these relationships get transformed. We are interested in the forces that sustain consensus as well as in the forces that bring about change.

## THE EDITOR WRITES

Students are often asked by parents and friends: "What do you do at school?" and "You have 15 hours of classes a week, so what are you doing with the rest of the time?"

Describing spending time at university – as a student or as an employee – is difficult to someone who has never attended a postsecondary institution. Or even to those, like parents, who might have attended some decades ago.

Partly what mystifies about universities is the degree of freedom and autonomy. High schools are regimented and structured environments, as are most workplaces. On the other hand, universities offer choice. The Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies at York University offers more than 1,500 courses. No individual, even if studying every day of her life, could complete more than a small fraction of these.

Universities also offer choices as to when, where and how to study: day time, evening, week-end, part-time and full-time, on-line, at the Keele and Glendon campuses, or even in other parts of the world as part of international exchanges.

The choices outside of the classroom are as great. At York there are more than 400 clubs and organizations.

A university is what sociologists refer to as a "total institution" sharing features with prisons, nursing homes, military training camps, and cruise ships. They are self-enclosed spaces that meet all the wants of their members. For example, students living on-campus have little need to travel away from the university.

However, the fundamental feature of a university is that it fosters individual transformation. No other institution or place does this to the same extent. No one leaves university the same as she or he entered.



Next time you are asked, "What do you do at school?" answer: "I'm changing".

Comments about this newsletter can be directed to me at [tklassen@yorku.ca](mailto:tklassen@yorku.ca) or 416-736-2100 ext. 88828.

P.S. A note of thanks to Carolyn Cross and Marlene Quesenberry for their generous assistance in the production of this newsletter.

*Thomas R. Klassen*

Thomas R. Klassen