



Thoughts from the Head

Welcome to our Fall 2014 issue! A lot has happened since the Spring. I invite you to visit our department's website (soci.ubc.ca) for updates and news. We are on Twitter as well (UBC Sociology).

One of the most exciting recent developments is our new joint undergraduate degree with Sciences Po (l'Institut d'études politiques de Paris) in France. Sciences Po is a distinguished research-intensive university focusing on the social sciences and humanities, and dedicated to developing international research and study affiliations. Students can now apply for a four year BA in Sociology, for which they will take courses at the Vancouver campus and at four campuses located in France. We have been strengthening our international connections on the graduate student front as well. Two of our students now have appointments at The Laboratory for Comparative Social Research in St. Petersburg and Moscow. We have also been exploring exchanges with East China University of Science and Technology in Shanghai, where two of our students are presenting their work this fall. In the meanwhile, our faculty continue to produce exciting research and appear in a wide variety of mainstream media... all of which is highlighted on our site and via Twitter!

This issue of our newsletter turns the spotlight on what one can do with a PhD in sociology. We hear from four UBC PhDs and one BA graduate who is underway with her PhD at Princeton. The five writers tell about their current work and career trajectories. The contributions highlight the *versatility* and *usefulness* of a Sociology PhD: the intellectual richness, range of options, and possibilities that come with becoming a professional sociologist. In brief, here is what you will find:

- Brandy Wiebe (PhD) talks about her role as a sexual health educator in the community while also teaching courses at UBC
- Mark CJ Stoddart (PhD) reflects on his environmental activism and research as a professor at Memorial University
- Sarah Brayne (BA; currently a PhD student at Princeton) describes her research interests on surveillance in the criminal justice system (and her recent article in the *American Sociological Review*)
- Bruce Arai (PhD) shares his thoughts, as Dean of the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences at Laurier Brantford, on the role that universities play for economic revitalization
- Jacqueline Schoemaker Holmes (PhD) describes the 'freedom' sociology has given her in her role as teacher and advocate, empowering individuals and communities to reach their potential.

Each piece is enlightening; taken together, they offer a window into the sort of students our Department is fortunate to have and the contributions they can make within and beyond the discipline itself.

I will close by announcing that the Martha Foschi Award for Excellence in Research and Teaching is now a reality: we have raised over \$30,000 and will give the award biannually to a faculty member for excellence in sociological research and teaching. My thanks to the many donors! ■

Francesco Duina
Department Head

Theoretical and Everyday Aspects of Sexuality and the Operation of Power: My Do-nothing Approach to Life Plans

By Brandy Wiebe, PhD



Everything fell apart the day I fell in love. Isn't that always the way? This city! It's so beautiful and it has everything. Hiking, skiing, water, mountains. Even when I was lonely and missing my family and friends back home walking through the UBC campus and

looking at the view made me think I could never truly be unhappy here. The plan had been to get my PhD here and go back home to teach. Plans rarely work out. Not wanting to leave the city you got your PhD in can, as you likely know, put quite a crimp in an academic's professional trajectory. What's a girl to do? I did nothing and just kept moving forward hoping that some solution would present itself. This do-nothing approach became particularly uncomfortable in the last year of my PhD. I was pretty much complete, teaching my first class here at UBC and had just bought a house. I had no other employment prospects. Shortly before I was to conclude my final dissertation defense I received a most welcome email from Saleema Noon, a local sexual health educator and everyone's favorite (hopefully) Kid Carson guest! She was asking if I would care to join her in providing sexuality education for children from kindergarten to

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grade seven and their parents. She also sweetened the deal by saying that in the summers we would be running personal empowerment camps for girls between the ages of nine and twelve. You can imagine how quickly I enthusiastically responded yes!

Perhaps I should back up and explain what led to Saleema's email. My PhD application to the sociology department here proposed a dissertation exploring feminist political activism in the 21st century. That's not what I ended up doing, needless to say. I don't even remember what triggered my change in focus, but I do remember that when TAing for Becki Ross I met a student who drew me slowly into the sexual health community. Apparently I wasn't busy enough just working on my PhD, so in the summer of 2006 I took OPTions for Sexual Health's (B.C. Planned Parenthood) inaugural Sexual Health Educators' Certification course. The course was based on the premise that classroom learning can only begin once the instructor has established a meaningful connection with the audience. It was an amazing learning experience and I attribute much of my success in classrooms (pre or post-secondary) to what I learned over that summer. Ultimately, it helped me clarify my specific dissertation focus on issues surrounding young women's (hetero)sexual sexual subjectivity and the role of sexual health education in B.C. After completing the course I was just grateful that it had gotten my dissertation on track. By the time a couple of years went by I assumed that the clarification of my dissertation would be the primary outcome of that class and didn't see how it would contribute to my employment opportunities otherwise. Little did I know that Saleema's email, which was based on the recommendation of a woman I had met in the course, was just around the corner. Now we're caught up.

In case you're wondering what my day to day looks like...I now teach three sexuality-related classes in our sociology department, which accounts for about half of my workload, and the other half of my work time I spend talking with parents about consciously incorporating comprehensive sexual health education into their children's lives and then working with the kids in their schools to get these conversations started.

Of course as good sociologists we have to acknowledge the neoliberal context that makes stitching together sustainable employment much more likely today, but as Foucault alerts us power always produces unexpected outcomes. Neoliberal economic pressures force many to carve their own paths, but the great privilege of education in this context has offered me much potential for creativity and innovation.

I love the experience of mixing up my work and seeing how power operates in and around sexuality from two very different perspectives. With my university classes, particularly in my 400-level feminist theory class, I get to maintain and expand my critical theoretical understanding of sexuality. In parallel I also have the pleasure of challenging myself to take these very ideas (patriarchy, inequality, consent) and find ways to explain them that make sense to 9-12 year olds! This keeps my work interesting. And knowing that I'm introducing young folks to some really important ideas before they start to navigate romantic and sexual relationships is very fulfilling. I can contribute all those things I wish I had been introduced to before I arrived in a feminist sociological classroom. Right now I'm working on trying to use my theoretical insights to discuss consent in a fun way that also reframes it in a powerful, proactive direction. Basically, I emphasize that an 'Enthusiastic Yes!' where the mind, heart, and body are all in line is the ideal for

any sexual encounter, whether it's your first, last, or any in between!

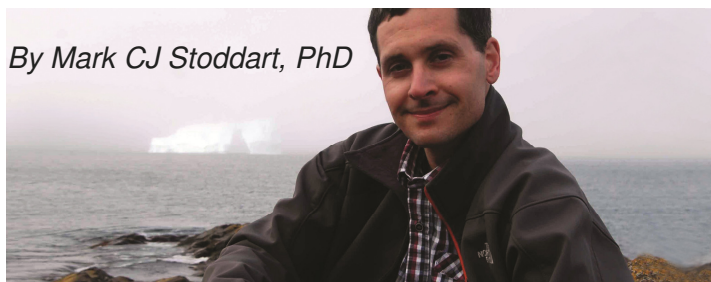
Interestingly enough, working with the younger folks also informs my university classes as well. Two examples come to mind. First, university students are often just starting to navigate their own romantic and sexual relationships and are always happy to reflect on the issues I discuss with younger folks. They love hearing about my experiences 'in the field', as it were. Secondly, spending so much time answering the anonymous sexuality-related questions of grade six and seven students made me wonder about how different those of second year university students would really be! And so started my tradition of including in the last class time for my university students to submit anonymous questions that we then maul over together. Overall, the questions aren't vastly different though they are often more detailed at the university level!

And if nothing else I think my diverse career is part of what motivated the producers of CBC's upcoming TV competition 'Canada's Smartest Person' to consider my application. In the end, after a number of Skype interviews and tests, I was only a finalist to compete and will sadly not be representing UBC and Vancouver for that glorious title, but still it was a fun experience. I think I lacked the 'Un-Canadian' killer instinct they kept saying they wanted because in the end I really would have just been honoured to participate, which is exactly what they were trying to avoid! Ultimately what keeps me inspired day to day is that I feel lucky to use my PhD in both traditional and non-traditional ways that I hope enrich the lives of those I encounter and at the same time create great potential for my own exploration and expanded understanding of both the theoretical and everyday aspects of sexuality and the operation of power in our society. Maybe in the end things never really fell apart. Maybe they were really falling together! ■

Dr. Brandy Wiebe is a community sexual health educator and a Sessional Instructor at UBC.

Environmentalism West & East: Canadian Ecological Politics from Clayoquot Sound to the Labrador Straits

By Mark CJ Stoddart, PhD



I was fortunate to win the 2014 Early Investigator Award from the Canadian Sociological Association (following in the formidable footsteps of Catherine Corrigan-Brown). This prompted me to reflect on my path from environmental activist, to graduate student, to Associate Professor. This path has taken me from the west coast (Victoria and Vancouver) to the east coast (Halifax, then St. John's). The process of studying social-environmental interaction in British Columbia, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador, has been an incredibly rich experience. Here, I wish to focus on a few of the lessons I've learned from this research trajectory.

I originally arrived in Vancouver in September 1993 during the latter

days of Clayoquot Summer, the largest episode of civil disobedience in B.C. history, with over 800 people arrested in protest against clear-cut logging on Vancouver Island. The first friends I made in Vancouver were involved in the environmental movement, and, as David Tindall's research might have predicted, I was soon a regular at environmental protests. The activist part of my trajectory culminated in 2000, with a civil disobedience arrest for a protest against watershed logging in the Slocan Valley, resulting in a 2-week tour of Corrections BC.

I started my MA in Sociology at the University of Victoria in 2002, with the intention to develop the skills to become a better environmental activist. My MA thesis focused on news media framing of BC forest policy debate from 1991-2003. The main findings included that forest policy news coverage was dominated by sources from government, mainstream environmental organizations, and the forest industry; and that the dominant media discourse created a binary between protected areas for old growth versus business-as-usual industrial forestry, with little space for other perspectives. While the project resulted in my first publications, the research process taught me two important lessons. First, I realized that I was much more interested in the academic work of studying environmentalism than I was in being a full-time activist in the NGO sector. Second, there were already several excellent researchers working on forestry conflict in British Columbia.

With these lessons in mind, I joined the PhD program in Sociology at UBC in 2004. While forestry politics felt like a pretty full intellectual field to try to break into, little had been written about the eco-political dimensions of outdoor recreation and nature tourism in the province, which were being uncritically lauded by politicians and many environmentalists as sustainable alternatives to a resource extraction economy. I spent the next few years studying skiing in B.C., resulting in my book *Making Meaning out of Mountains: The Political Ecology of Skiing* (UBC Press). The main argument is that there is an environmental ambiguity at the core of skiing. The ski industry routinely constructs a pro-environmental self-image, and skiers typically align themselves with pro-environmental values. At the same time, many skiers are self-reflexive and critical of the environmental impacts of their sport (i.e. wildlife habitat disruption, energy use, infrastructure and real estate development, and reliance on car and air travel, with their associated climate impacts). Also, environmentalists and First Nations groups were occasionally mobilizing against new ski development when it is viewed as socially or environmentally illegitimate. Interestingly - but not surprisingly, as Rima Wilkes' research might have predicted - different media framing is often used to depict environmentalist and First Nations conflict with the ski industry. Environmentalists are generally able to access the media to communicate their claims about skiing as an environmental problem. By contrast, news about First Nations opposition to ski development tends to focus on conflict with police, disruption of skiers and tourists, and threats of militarism, rather than conveying substantive claims about why skiing is seen as problematic.

I left B.C. for Halifax and a postdoc at Dalhousie University in 2009. My postdoc project extended my interest in the political ecology of outdoor recreation and nature tourism into a comparison of the conflict over ski development at Jumbo Pass, in B.C., and conflict over Off-Highway Vehicle use in the Tobeatic Wilderness area, in Nova Scotia. Comparing these cases was instructive for two reasons. First, it highlighted the importance of local

political cultures for shaping environmental movement mobilization. British Columbia and Nova Scotia have very different histories of environmentalism and very different cultures of social movement protest. As a result, environmental groups in Nova Scotia focused on "insider" political tactics, such as participating in public hearings or using petitions and e-mail campaigns. By contrast, groups in B.C. embraced a wider range of both "insider" and "outsider" tactics, including road blockades and public protests, as well as lobbying politicians and using petitions. Second, this comparative research highlighted the importance of forming networks of communication and support between rural and urban environmental organizations. This was done more successfully in the Nova Scotia case, where the concerns of local, rural environmental organizations were amplified by Halifax-based organizations closer to the centres of provincial media visibility and political power. By contrast, the Jumbo Pass controversy was largely limited to local, rural organizations, who obtained less provincial media coverage and were less political effective than environmentalists in Nova Scotia.

My final move East came with a tenure-track position at Memorial University. Since 2010, much of my research has focused on the Newfoundland tourism industry and how it is transforming cultural understandings of nature. This project, titled *Puffins, Kayaks and Oil Rigs: Shifting Modes of Society-Environment Interaction on the Newfoundland Coast*, explores how iconic images of Newfoundland nature (whales, icebergs, puffins, coastal vistas) are linked to a discourse of the historicity and authenticity of outport communities as a way of connecting the province to networks of tourism mobility. The tourism industry has grown significantly over the 20 years since the cod fishing moratorium, when tourism was identified by the provincial government as a key means of economic diversification. Parallel to the project of tourism development has been the project of offshore oil development, which is responsible for the economic renewal of the province. A large part of my recent work has oriented around the "purification" (to use Bruno Latour's term) between tourism and oil as divergent visions for living with and making a living from coastal environments. With a few exceptions, there is little attention to connections and tensions between nature-oriented tourism and oil development. The exceptions emerge when oil extraction poses a direct threat to established tourism attractors, such as the recent controversies over fracking and offshore oil exploration near Gros Morne National Park.

In researching and teaching environmental sociology and social movements in Newfoundland and Labrador, I have been struck by the poor reputation of environmentalism in the province due to the anti-sealing campaigns of Greenpeace, PETA, and others over the past few decades. Talking with otherwise environmentally-minded students and with local environmentalists, one of the lessons I have learned from working in Newfoundland is that being the object of international environmental campaigns can create significant cultural barriers to people who are trying to do local environmental work. The tension between the nature-orientation of Newfoundland tourism and a general suspicion of environmentalism was brought home forcefully during a recent project on the social and cultural benefits of the Battle Harbour National Historic District. This is a historic site on a small island in the Labrador Straits, and is the epitome of a remote, boutique tourism experience, requiring 16-17 hours of driving and two ferries to reach from St. John's, and having room for about 50 overnight guests. The dominant tourism narrative at the site emphasizes the wild beauty of the local environment, the tragedy of the cod fishery collapse, and the ecological changes being observed due to cli-

mate change. At the same time, the island's status as a former hub for sealing is celebrated in the site's museum.

My research trajectory over the past 12 years has taken me through a series of place-based studies of how people live, work and play in relationship with forest, mountain and coastal environments. In contrast to the seemingly straightforward view of human-environment interaction I had as an environmental activist, my research has led me to appreciate and attempt to analyse the messiness of our entanglements with environments, animals, and technologies, involving global flows of people, capital, oil and carbon emissions. Environmentalists place a high value on ecological diversity and uniqueness. Similarly, my work highlights the importance of engaging in ecological politics with a deep understanding of local cultural and political contexts. This is because the environmental movement interventions that will be politically effective in British Columbia are likely to be quite different than what will be effective in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, or elsewhere. ■

Dr. Mark CJ Stoddart is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Memorial University. This article is adapted from a talk given in Toronto as part of Neil McLaughlin's salon series.

Surveillance and System Avoidance

By Sarah Brayne,
PhD Candidate



The degree and scope of surveillance in the United States has increased dramatically over the past four decades. Since 1973, the incarceration rate has been rising at approximately six percent per year. One in every 100 American adults is now behind bars. As a point of comparison, whereas Canada's incarceration rate is approximately 100 per 100,000 individuals, the U.S. incarceration rate is 750 per 100,000. Beyond the growth of American prisons and jails, there has been a growth of criminal justice surveillance in broader society as well. The number of police officers per capita is at an all-time high and formerly discrete institutions have become integrated into what some scholars refer to as a "surveillant assemblage" (Haggerty and Ericson 2000). Emblematic of this assemblage is the construction of 78 "fusion centers," surveillance organizations that consolidate data from public and private agencies, including criminal, medical, financial, and motor vehicle records.

One factor facilitating the growth in surveillance is the rise of so-called "big data." Although its precise meaning varies across contexts, common definitions of big data usually include the "three Vs": volume (the large amount of data), velocity (the speed of data in and out), and variety (the wide range of data types and sources). The digitization of records and data sharing capacities that come with the age of big data have facilitated the spread of criminal justice surveillance into institutions typically not associated with crime control. Recent qualitative research (Goffman 2014) suggests that the spread

of criminal justice surveillance may be met with an increase in individuals' efforts to evade it. Until recently, however, there had been no quantitative test of this theory.

Consequently, I set out to pursue this line of inquiry in my research. In an article recently published in the *American Sociological Review* titled, "Surveillance and System Avoidance: Criminal Justice Contact and Institutional Attachment," I pose two questions: First, is there generalizable evidence to support the qualitative findings that individuals who have had criminal justice contact avoid institutions that put them in them "in the system"? Second, do individuals abstain from using institutions across the board or are they selective in their institutional avoidance? To answer these questions, I make a distinction between "surveilling" and "non-surveilling" institutions. Surveilling institutions are legally required to keep formal records. Simply keeping records heightens the perception that the police, parole or probation officers could access these data. Examples of surveilling institutions include hospitals, banks, schools, and formal employment. By contrast, "non-surveilling" institutions are those in which individuals can easily opt out of formal record keeping, such as volunteer and religious associations.

In the article, I test the hypothesis that individuals wary of surveillance engage in "system avoidance," deliberately and systematically avoiding institutional contact that puts them in the system, because of the prospect they will come under heightened surveillance and increase their risk of detection by authorities. I analyze data from The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health and the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (97), two large, nationally representative data sets in the U.S. I test whether individuals who are stopped by the police, arrested, convicted, and/or incarcerated are more likely to avoid medical, financial, labor market, educational, civic, and religious institutions, than their counterparts who have not had criminal justice contact.

Regression results demonstrate that individuals with criminal justice contact are indeed less likely to interact with surveilling institutions, such as hospitals, banks, schools and formal employment, than their counterparts who have not had criminal justice contact. Even after controlling for demographic characteristics, income, education, and behavioral characteristics such as drug use or carrying a weapon, individuals with criminal justice contact have 30 percent higher odds of avoiding obtaining medical care, 18 percent higher odds of not having a bank account, and 31 percent higher odds of being neither in school nor working. By contrast, individuals with criminal justice contact are no less likely to participate in non-surveilling institutions, such as volunteer and religious organizations. Furthermore, this article provides empirical evidence that system avoidance is not exclusively a phenomenon among those deeply involved in the criminal justice system; system avoidance comes into effect with even the lowest levels of contact. For example, individuals who have only been stopped by the police (i.e., never arrested, convicted or incarcerated) have 33 percent higher odds of avoiding obtaining medical care than those without criminal justice contact.

I also analyze how individuals altered their behavior across time as their contact with the criminal justice changed. For example, transitioning from having no contact to contact with the criminal justice system is associated with 48 percent higher odds of not obtaining medical care, and 90 percent higher odds of changing from having to not having a bank account.

Understanding system avoidance is important to recognizing the full range of consequences of involvement in the criminal justice system. For example: obtaining medical care is important for health outcomes; banks are necessary for full financial participation in society, savings, credit, and upward mobility; and education and employment are important for economic stability. Moreover, because certain groups, such as low-income earners and minorities, are more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system, system avoidance may be a way the criminal justice system exacerbates preexisting social inequalities. Finally, by severing an already marginalized subpopulation from institutions that are pivotal to desistance from crime and their own integration into broader society, attempts at social control through surveillance may actually fuel some of the very behaviors it is trying to suppress.

The growth of criminal justice surveillance, coupled with the rise of big data, has sparked considerable debate. This research project offers empirical insight into the social consequences of surveillance in the age of big data. It also is an example of how quantitative and qualitative research can complement one another to shed light on social phenomena. In future research projects, I am shifting my analysis to the organizational level, examining surveillance practices in a variety of institutions. Specifically, I am conducting fieldwork with a large urban police department and analyzing the intersection of criminal justice and medical surveillance in a hospital emergency room. ■

Sarah Brayne received her BA in Sociology from UBC and is currently a PhD Candidate in Sociology and Social Policy at Princeton University.

See page 8 for references.

The Role of Universities in Economic Revitalization



By Bruce Arai, PhD

The idea that universities play an important role in the economic fortunes of a community is relatively recent. This claim seems hard to believe in the current environment, where virtually every university and college website loudly proclaims the benefits they bring to their city, town, or region. And the current hyper-interest in technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship as economic drivers can make us forget that in the middle of the last century universities were seen as places of unrest, political radicalism and even violence. And in the 1980s and 1990s, they were viewed as parasitic, living off the public purse, while examples of the “useless” research funded by the Tri-Council were mocked in Parliament. In many smaller US and Canadian towns, where the college is by far the largest employer, the citizens have always been a bit more perceptive about the benefits and drawbacks of having a university around. But in the larger cities of 50 years ago, people paid little if any attention to their economic importance.

So what changed to make research, innovation and entrepreneurship, and their enormous contributions to “economic impact” all the rage in current discussions of universities? Part of this is likely due to the buzzwords of the current age - the information society, the knowledge economy, technology, and innovation. Also, research is the more glamorous of the teaching and research duality. Professors, administrators, and even students at times can get all fired up about a new research building, or the potential of a new piece of equipment. But it is more difficult to generate excitement around a new classroom, or even a new co-op opportunity.

A more detailed analysis of the rise of science and innovation as economic drivers can be found in Elizabeth Popp Berman’s (2012) excellent book, *Creating the Market University*. This is a particularly insightful treatment of how universities reacted to and created internal and external pressures to push science near the top of their respective agendas, and how they were both able to capitalize on worries about productivity and innovation declines in North America to acquire resources. Her arguments, refreshingly free of the “market as inherently evil” nonsense, show clearly how institutional logics within governments and universities pushed Science and Innovation as a common ground for generating wealth, for the country and the university. Further, this led both governments and universities to the unexamined idea that science, research parks, and biotechnology can fuel their corresponding economic engines. Though largely unintentional, and not often given proper credit in public circles, the groundbreaking work of Marc Granovetter (1984), Steinmetz and Wright (1989), and others on small firms, innovation, and market networks provided the perfect backdrop for governments and administrators to latch onto and drive the creation of research parks and small business accelerator centres.

And there is no doubt that universities, through their science, technology, innovation, and accelerator parks produce large economic benefits for their communities. The dollars they drop into a community annually run into the millions, and in some cases billions. The University of Waterloo, for example, claims that 46% of their annual spending impact, or \$1.2 billion, is a result of the “university’s role in anchoring the Waterloo Region Innovation Ecosystem”. UBC’s 2009 economic impact study makes a similar case, where research activities account for 50% of the \$10 billion annual impact of the university (Sudmant, 2009).

Science, research and innovation bring other benefits to communities as well. Highly trained people who demand artistic, cultural and recreational fora, as well as better restaurants, schools, and hospitals, are some of the obvious side benefits to the dollars spent and recycled in a local economy. But, just as importantly, research and innovation bring prestige and money from government and industry. All of these things are more difficult to quantify, as most economic impact studies are quick to point out. Nevertheless, these benefits are real and significant, and there is no denying the importance of research and innovation to the economic development of a community.

However, R&D and its associated spin-offs are not the whole story, and in many cases are not even the most significant part of the story. The everyday business of teaching undergraduates, which is at the financial heart of every university in Canada, and most in the US as well, often exceeds the impact of research expenditures every year. Even at arguably Canada’s most innovative and entrepreneurial university, the University of Waterloo, the economic impact of teaching undergraduates, having graduates stay in the region, and the direct and indirect expenditures from the university (54%) outweigh the impacts of research, innovations, spin offs, and commercialization (46%).

Aside from the dollars spent, general university expenditures on teaching and core operations also have many of the spin-off effects

that accompany research outlays mentioned above. The one difference is that teaching rarely attracts prestige and industry money. But teaching undergraduates has other benefits that are not usually associated with research parks. There are at least four main areas of advantage that are not associated with research and innovation parks, and their spin-off companies. I'll try to briefly illustrate these benefits as they have played out since Wilfrid Laurier University opened a campus in Brantford in 1999.

First, producing undergraduates keeps people in the community and provides a skilled labour force for the spin-off companies that may emerge from research parks, and for companies in general. Companies continually cite the presence of a university and its graduates as a key factor in decisions to locate in one community versus another (Berry and Glaeser, 2005). More and more companies are relocating to the Brantford area, from Toronto and internationally, because of good transportation routes, cheaper land prices and a more skilled pool of employees. But cheap rent and good highways are of little use to companies if they can't find a competent workforce.

Second, and relatedly, a university is critical to the long term health and generational renewal of any medium to large size community in Canada. Brantford didn't have a university until 1999, so high school graduates who wanted a degree were forced to leave the city for decades. And most of those people didn't come back. The cumulative effects of this were that high school completion and university degree attainment rates were significantly below the Ontario average, and teenage pregnancy rates were among the highest in the country. Now, with a campus that offers programs in Education, Arts, Social Sciences, Business and Social Work, university-bound kids from Brantford have a place to go, and just as importantly, the campus attracts 75% of its students from outside Brantford. A large percentage of these students stay in Brantford after graduation, and work for the increasing number of companies that are relocating to the area.

Third, not every community can host large-scale science and tech parks. In virtually every case, a successful university research park is built around a large, research intensive university. And, in Canada, large means a large number of undergraduate students to financially support greater research intensity. This is fine in major urban centres, but small and medium-sized communities often cannot and should not support research parks, but they will still benefit greatly from the less glamorous business of producing good undergraduates. And, as Berry and Glaeser (2005) show for the US, having a higher percentage of the adult population with a university degree is critical for the long term success of that community. Places with low levels of university attainment rapidly fall behind economically. In other words, the benefits of producing and retaining graduates should not be confined to larger cities, or to those places that won the historical lottery.

Fourth, research parks, by their very nature, usually need to be in brand new spaces. The building requirements for labs and other dedicated spaces are almost always too expensive to squeeze into older, retrofitted buildings. But offices and teaching spaces can be developed in older buildings, and there are significant benefits to doing so. In Brantford, a city with a once decrepit downtown, the university has restored a dozen buildings with spectacular results. Not only has this been much more environmentally friendly, it has deepened the connection between the university and the citizens of Brantford by revitalizing the proud history of the community. Indeed, what Laurier has done in Brantford has become one of the two or three prototypes across North America for how universities and communities can work together for their mutual advancement. And all of this has been done by focusing on the core business of teaching undergraduates.

To conclude, many university administrators, usually from larger research-focused institutions, stress the importance of research as a university's primary contribution to economic growth. But as Robert Campbell astutely points out, the primary role of a university is the education of its students, not to be, "the champions of the commercialization of research" (Campbell, 2013). So the next time you read about how much the research park, the innovation hub, the accelerator centre, or the entrepreneurship launchpad based around a university is contributing to the economic vitality of a community, take a moment to remember the students, and how much they are contributing to the local economy. ■

Dr. Bruce Arai is Dean of the Faculty of Human Social Sciences at Laurier University.

See page 8 for references.

The Freedom of a PhD

*By Jacqueline
Schoemaker Holmes, PhD*



When I was 18 years old, I decided to become a doctor. You know, not the kind that saves lives, but the kind you have to explain over and over again to your relatives at Thanksgiving dinner. Admittedly, this was an unconventional decision for my 18 year old self, but after unsuccessfully trying to convince my parents that I should be allowed to be a chef or a florist during winter break my first year at Carleton, I had to choose something. So I said "hello!" to the path to a doctoral degree. It seemed as good an idea as any. I liked school and the universe had granted me some ability at it, so why not become a Doctor of Philosophy? Or whatever the designation PhD meant. My journey to university had itself been somewhat unconventional as I went ahead of my peers thanks to a kindly high school guidance counsellor who had encouraged me to fast-track. I didn't know at the time that fast-tracking actually meant leaving all your high school friends behind and making a go of it for a month in a residence unit with six other girls until you couldn't take it anymore. But such was the inglorious start to what would become one of the biggest journeys of my life on a path that seemed to lead in one direction: To A Professorship.

Now, do you know what happens when you complete roughly 12 years of post-secondary education, reach the end, and you say to yourself: Wait a tick; I'm not sure I want any of this anymore? Besides total existential crisis and a Pompeii-style meltdown, you figure, what else could I possibly do? What am I actually trained for? Will anyone in the "real world" want me? Tough questions to answer when you've been trained and groomed for one career option (see A Professorship above). Now this is a tough position to be in because you have suspended, for some time, the reality of how few tenure-track positions are out there, how competitive and saturated the market is, and how you've never actually (in my case) asked yourself if that is what you really want because you figured you did because doesn't everybody, and plus, all your really wanted to do

was cook or arrange flowers in the first place, so how can I possibly be in this position right now!?!?!?

Inevitably, what called me out of academia in the end was community work. While I was trying to juggle the end of writing my dissertation, starting a post doc, teaching, and generally keeping my head on straight, I decided to volunteer for PACE Society – an organization that serves survival sex workers in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside. Kerry Porth, at that time the Executive Director at PACE, came to guest lecture in my fourth year Feminist Theory class and after that, I couldn’t stop thinking about how I wanted to be involved. I joined the Board of Directors soon after and the rest is history. And by history I mean that right after I graduated in 2010 I moved to small-town Newfoundland and ran a centre and transition home for women and children who had experienced violence. I was now the Executive Director! And I couldn’t have been more proud of myself or the work the organization was doing. I doubled our annual budget by using my grant writing skills (can anyone say SSHRC?) and I put my theoretical training to use *in the field*. For me, it was astonishing, beyond liberating, and beyond my comprehension about what I could do with my degree(s). I went on to become the Executive Director of an organization for girls near my hometown in Ontario thus fulfilling a passion I have for serving girls and young women and encouraging them to be anything and everything they want to be. What I do now blends my academic training with my community service work because I teach in the college system, thereby preparing other front-line social and health care workers with the social scientific knowledge that everyone needs to succeed, and I offer classes, workshops, and training in meditation and mindfulness in the community. I have just recently returned from an educators’ retreat that I co-facilitated with a friend who is a yoga instructor and high school teacher. We spent a beautiful weekend on the banks of the Ottawa River in an old growth forest preparing educators of all levels, from across Ontario, for the academic year ahead. The thing is, I never imagined any of this when I thought A Professorship was my only option. I perhaps didn’t allow myself to dream what might be because I was too worried about who I was supposed to be.

Unlike some, I had a tremendously supportive doctoral supervisor by the name of Dr. Dawn Currie (whom I am sure some of you have the privilege of knowing and working with). As I wrote in a letter of support for one of her well-deserved teaching awards:

Dawn’s support for her students is not cookie-cutter; she does not demand that her students mirror her or achieve success as defined by her. In my time at UBC, it was obvious that we, Dawn’s students, had a range of interests in terms of working in the community, working with youth, being academics, teachers, advocates – all of these goals were held in esteem by Dawn. Never did Dawn sway in her commitment to our education as academics, but she did acknowledge the world outside of academia through her support for all of us and our myriad goals (not to mention through her own community service education in Canada and abroad)... This is the act of a generous mentor, of someone whose ego does not limit who their students can, will, and should be.

I know that not everyone is as fortunate as the students of Dawn Currie are and that we do not all receive the kind of messaging and unfailing support that says, “You’re okay (or will be) even if

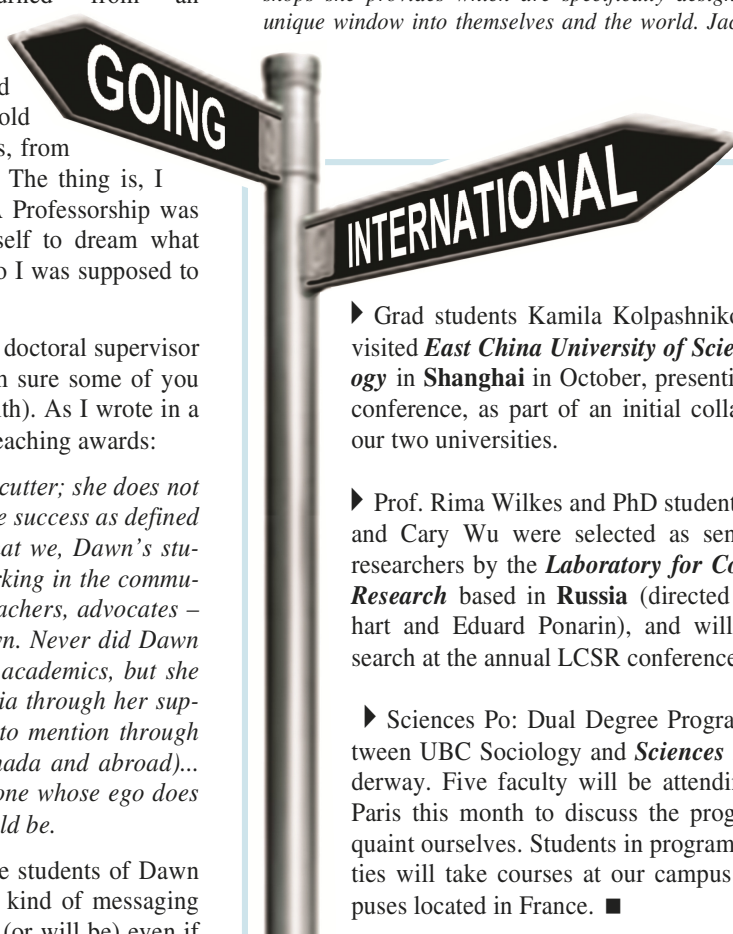
you don’t get/or don’t want A Professorship.” This is the message I want to send any soon-to-be-graduated doctoral student (and even those who are just starting out in a doctoral program). You will be okay. You will be more than okay. The freedom that a PhD grants you is only limited by your ability to dream about what you want for yourself and your life. A friend once said to me, “That’s the thing about a PhD - it trained me to teach myself anything.” And this is the reality; if A Professorship isn’t in your future because you can’t get it or don’t want it, you have not failed. You do not disappoint. You are among the brave academic souls that swim in the waters of the “real world” (that yes, you will sometimes feel maladapted to), and you will make it better. So. Much. Better.

As I embark on a new academic year with a new project underway that I believe will change my community for the better, I am proud of where I have been, where I am, and where I am going.

May you too give yourself permission to dream big, diverse, daring dreams, and may you realize that the only limits to the freedom that a PhD grants you are the ones you put on yourself. ■

Dr. Jacqueline Schoemaker Holmes is a sociologist and an educator who specializes in the study and practice of empowerment at both the individual and the community level. As a teacher and an advocate, Jacqueline combines her academic knowledge and community-based practice in the research-based, community-tested, accessible, and interactive learning opportunities she offers. Her pan-Canadian experience includes leading both non-profit women’s and girls’ organizations, training diverse audiences including front-line community service providers, and over fourteen years’ experience teaching in higher education. Jacqueline is deeply committed to helping individuals find their inner strength through the training and workshops she provides which are specifically designed to offer everyone a unique window into themselves and the world. Jacqueline’s work on gen-

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► Grad students Kamila Kolpashnikova and Cary Wu visited **East China University of Science and Technology** in **Shanghai** in October, presenting their work at a conference, as part of an initial collaboration between our two universities.

► Prof. Rima Wilkes and PhD students Edward Haddon and Cary Wu were selected as senior and associate researchers by the **Laboratory for Comparative Social Research** based in **Russia** (directed by Ronald Inglehart and Eduard Ponarin), and will present their research at the annual LCSR conferences in November.

► Sciences Po: Dual Degree Program partnership between UBC Sociology and **Sciences Po, France** is underway. Five faculty will be attending a workshop in Paris this month to discuss the program and help acquaint ourselves. Students in programs at both universities will take courses at our campus and at four campuses located in France. ■



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der, love, sexuality, and women's empowerment has been published in a variety of venues including peer-reviewed academic publications, edited collections, and leading Canadian newspapers and magazines. Jacqueline is a professor of social sciences at St. Lawrence College's three Ontario campuses and is the Founder and Wellness Educator at Heart Shrine. In both settings, Jacqueline is committed to serving her students and the community by fostering wellness, wisdom, and joy in individuals, groups, and organizations. To find out more about Heart Shrine please visit www.heartshrinewellness.com.

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