

The Social

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Western
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Message from the Dean, Robert Andersen

The Faculty of Social Science has been going through extensive faculty renewal over the past few years. In the process, we have also been reinventing ourselves. By hiring in areas of research strength, our departments are bolstering their reputations. Our success is evident in the 2019 QS World University Rankings, which put social science at Western 84th in the world, up from 148th in 2015. In a highly competitive global market, this quantum leap, especially in such a short period, is remarkable. Our success was only possible through the work, leadership, and dedication of our faculty and staff.

In this edition of *The Social*, we highlight some of the many people in the Faculty of Social Science who have played a significant role in our success. The stories you will read give just a small indication of the diversity that our Faculty offers to both students and researchers. Our faculty is complex and multi-faceted, dealing with many aspects of our social, economic and political world.

This issue of *The Social* also features the innovative research of many of our new faculty members. As we welcome new faculty members and recognize their work, we also congratulate our colleagues who took retirement this year after providing decades of outstanding service to the Western community.

Our long-term success will only be assured through the continued dedication of staff and faculty. In this regard, I congratulate Linda Brock and Mel Goodale for their continued service to the Faculty of Social Science. Linda received the University's Outstanding Staff Award in 2018. Mel stepped down from his post as Director of The Brian and Mind Institute after decades of exceptional leadership.

I hope you take the time to read *The Social* to learn about our some of accomplishments. I also encourage you to learn more about our strategic goals and future plans by [reading our 2018 annual report](#), which has just been released.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Andersen'.

Bob Andersen, Professor and Dean

Western University
welcomes its 11th President
and Vice-Chancellor

Dr. Alan Shepard will assume
the role on July 1, 2019



Incubating New Ideas

The Network for Economic and Social Trends launches to address unprecedented global challenges

Modern societies are experiencing unprecedented social and economic changes, including a slowdown in economic growth, rising inequality, and increasing ethnic diversity and geographic mobility.

The unprecedented changes call for a new approach, and new solutions.

On September 28, 2018, the Faculty of Social Science celebrated the opening of the Network for Economic and Social Trends (NEST).

NEST, the flagship research and policy alliance in the Faculty of Social Science at Western University, addresses these challenges by conducting world-class multidisciplinary research, fostering national and international collaborations, and facilitating the training of the next generation of leaders in academia, the private and non-profit sectors, and government.

NEST is the umbrella organization for all six Western Research Centres in the Faculty of Social Science, which set its agenda and provide its governance.

Bob Andersen, Dean of the Faculty of Social Science, said he was driven to organize NEST upon seeing the research excellence of the faculty members in Social Science.

“After extensive consultation, it became clear that we would be even stronger if we worked together,” said Andersen. “In short, we needed to remove barriers and create incentives and structures that encourage meaningful interdisciplinary collaborations. We also needed a way to promote the value of social science research.”

Victoria Esses, Professor in the Department of Psychology, is the first Director of NEST.



“By pooling our intellectual and physical resources, we will have more of an impact than any one researcher or research centre alone,” said Esses. “I look forward to the future activities and successes of NEST, and to working with others interested in conducting research that makes a difference.”

“We’re already one of the best social science research centres in the country – now NEST will take us even further,” said Andersen, excited to see NEST begin working after three years of planning. “Things like economic development, prosperity, educational attainment, migration; you require effective policy to address these, and other issues. It requires rigorous empirical social science research, which is NEST.”

Speaking at the launch, Western University President Amit Chakma spoke about the importance of collaborative research, as a way to strengthen the reputation of the university.

The six research centres are:

- The Centre for Computational and Quantitative Social Science (Director, Dave Armstrong)
- The Centre for Human Capital and Productivity (Director, Lance Lochner)
- The Centre for Migration and Ethnic Relations (Director, Victoria Esses)
- The Centre for Research on Social Inequality (Director, Anders Holm)
- The Centre for Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Reconstruction (Director, Joanna Quinn)
- The Centre for Urban Policy and Local Governance (Director, Zack Taylor)

Members of NEST will apply advanced approaches to studying the changing social, political, and economic challenges facing Canada and the rest of the world.

“By promoting our initiatives and forging partnerships both inside and outside Western, NEST will increase our research profile, both in the international academic community and with policy makers,” said Andersen. “In short, our goal is to make a difference.”





The Intentional City

New centre considers the challenges of the modern city

On November 23, 2018, Western's Centre for Urban Policy and Local Governance hosted its first official event: a public roundtable entitled *The Intentional City: Shaping London's Urban Future*.

This was an important moment for the new Centre, signalling its goal of productively engaging scholars across disciplinary boundaries and building new relationships between Western researchers and the community. Indeed, roundtable participant Neil Bradford noted that "we underestimate Western, the convening power of the university as a neutral third space on issues"—and highlighted the potential for the Centre to play this role.

London is at a crossroads. Neither a core global city nor a place left behind, it occupies the open middle ground of Ontario's and Canada's urban future. What kind of future do we want for London, and how do we get there? Who should lead, and who needs to be at the table? What can London learn from other mid-size

cities? Fundamentally, can London be an intentional city—one that knows what it is, knows what it wants to become, has assembled the resources, including community and intergovernmental support, to get there?

Moderated by the Centre's associate director, Martin Horak, the roundtable brought together civic leaders and academics for an open public discussion of these questions.

Five panelists participated: Pierre Filion, Professor in the School of Planning at the University of Waterloo and an expert in mid-sized cities; Arielle Kayabaga, Councillor-Elect for City of London's downtown Ward 13; Michelle Baldwin, Executive Director of London's Pillar Nonprofit Network and Co-Founder of Innovation Works; John Fleming, Managing Director of Planning and City Planner for the City of London; and Neil Bradford, Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science at Huron University College.



The Heart and Soul of the Dean's Office

Linda Brock honoured with Award of Excellence

The staff in the Faculty of Social Science are amazing and help us reach our mission and goals. Linda Brock, Director of Administration for the Faculty of Social Science was recognized by the University, with the 2018 Western Awards of Excellence, the highest honour for staff member achievement.

As Director of Administration in the Faculty of Social Science, Linda Brock is described by colleagues as the "heart and soul of the dean's office."

In support of the award, it was noted that "Linda is key to the work life of our staff and our academic leaders, and both directly and indirectly she contributes to providing an outstanding Western Experience for students, faculty, and staff."

With her wealth of experience, Brock helps instruct new administrators "with humour and patience."

"Though Linda always insists that she is not an academic and approaches the running of the Faculty from a business perspective, she is deeply committed to providing the best research and teaching environment possible for everyone who teaches and learns in our building(s)." – all while serving as a leader among the Directors of Administration and other administrative leaders on campus.

Brock fosters Western's core values of integrity, respect and commitment to service. Most of her work entails managing financial and human resources and while "it often seems like there is not enough of either, and the problems that reach her desk are the trickiest," both faculty and staff are impressed by her ability to say 'no' constructively.

Colleagues note Brock is always willing to roll up her sleeves and pitch in wherever help is needed, from the most menial tasks to the most sensitive.

More evidence, more complexity

New evidence leads to an evolving understanding of human origins

In human evolution studies, it had long been accepted that modern humans evolved from a single region and population in Africa.

A recently released opinion, published in *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*, challenges this idea.

Eleanor Scerri, the lead author, brought together specialists from a number of fields to discuss population structure and complexity associated with the origin of modern humans. The team behind the paper includes Jay Stock, Professor in the Department of Anthropology. Stock specializes in human phenotypic variation, as reflected in fossil human skeletal remains.

“We know that the fossil evidence for modern human origins begins about 300,000 years ago but there are human remains of early modern humans spanning from Morocco to Ethiopia to South Africa, and all possess features that we would consider ‘modern’, but they don’t appear together in any one time or place,” said Stock. The evidence “could be produced by a variety of scenarios that involve considerable population size, geographic range, and gene flow within Africa.”



- Photo by Paul Mayne

“All the new evidence shows a greater complexity than previously assumed, and shows that the origins of our species were complex,” said Stock. The origin “occurred throughout Africa and the simple models that have dominated the literature for a number of years are no longer supported by the evidence.”

The new evidence came about through excavations in different regions and points to the need for exploration in different areas. “We need to learn a lot more about humans in Africa during the time of our origins. Many parts of the continent have been unexplored,” said Stock. “Evidence shows there is complexity and variation all over Africa, but we still don’t know enough about it.”

Despite challenging the orthodoxy, Stock said the response to the paper has been really favourable. “Researchers have been talking about the complexity of the origin of our species for some time, but this paper provides a systematic reinterpretation of evidence that doesn’t fit the single model of Eastern African origin of modern humans.”

“The *Trends in Ecology & Evolution* paper brought people together to ask a big question about modern human origins, and big questions like that require evidence and data from many areas,” said Stock. “You need the expertise and input from people with diverse backgrounds. It’s only with the contributions of so many people that you get new perspectives like that emerging.”

Stock says the new ideas and variability in early humans show the roots of variations in different populations, and highlights how adaptive humans are to their environment.

“Africa has always been a very ecologically diverse continent. The fossil record shows how people colonized and adapted to environmental variation,” said Stock. “This adaptability is a key characteristic that makes us unique as a species.”

Stock has also recently contributed to research challenging other long held ideas about human origins and migration.

In one study, Stock was part of a group dating human remains found in Saudi Arabia to 90,000 years ago, suggesting that people travelled further than initially thought during the first reported human migration into Eurasia.

Stock also contributed to research revealing patterns of early human migration in the Americas, which suggests that early Indigenous populations split during the Ice Age and later remixed at a later date.

Stock said these recent papers all show that “the more evidence we have, the more we see complexity in past, including how humans moved and interacted over great distances in the past.”

“As you start to dig into parts of the world that may be less explored,” said Stock, “it shows the picture is much more complicated.”

“Looking for life” in Haiti, surrounded by crisis

Greg Beckett’s new book explores how Haitians experience crisis, and how it changes their approach to the future

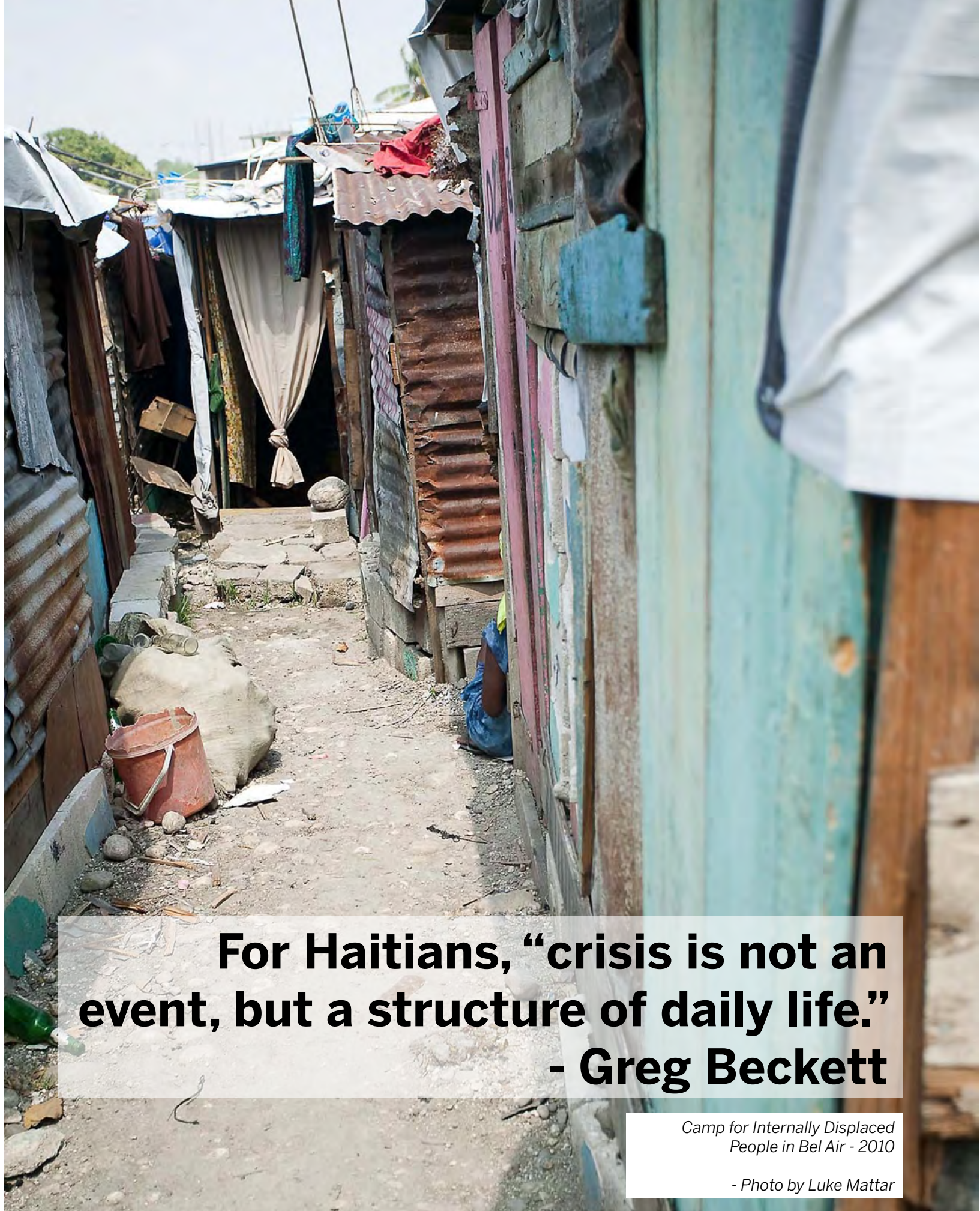
“Haiti is dead, there is no more Haiti”

This idea, repeated to Greg Beckett many times while he was in Haiti, is reflective of how Haitians live their lives, while surrounded by crisis.

It also inspired the title of Beckett’s recent book *There Is No More Haiti: Between Life and Death in Port-au-Prince*. Beckett, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology, has written an ethnography of crisis in Haiti, focusing on how it feels to people in the country, living in a state of crisis, every day.

By giving voice to Haitians, Beckett looks at how people recognize crisis and live with it.

Life in Haiti involves living with layers of crisis, and the book investigates different versions or locations of crisis, including environmental, urban and political crisis.



For Haitians, “crisis is not an event, but a structure of daily life.”
- Greg Beckett

*Camp for Internally Displaced
People in Bel Air - 2010*

- Photo by Luke Mattar



Greg Beckett
Assistant Professor
Department of Anthropology

Beckett spent a decade, from 2002 to 2012, researching the book, speaking with Haitians and seeing first-hand how they live with these layers of crisis.

The Haitian portion of Hispaniola is almost completely deforested, which leads people to move to the city. This leads to an urban crisis, Beckett explains. Port-au-Prince is largely self-built, without centrally organized services. Haitians spend much of their time “looking for life,” with people building their own houses, establishing their own connections to services, and finding their own jobs. This led to a political crisis in the country.

When Haiti experienced a 7.0 magnitude earthquake in January 2010, an already vulnerable society and country was further fractured.



“Outside of Haiti, the understanding of the earthquake is shallow,” said Beckett. For outside observers, the earthquake was seen as a single point of crisis. For Haitians, “crisis is not an event, but a structure of daily life.”

“Haitians understand their current situation through events from their history,” said Beckett, associating their present situation with the past, including parallels between living people and historic figures. Haitians connect the ongoing crisis with crises of the past, with continuing impacts of the slave trade, the revolution and international punishment after the revolution.

For Haitians, their crisis reflects the damages caused by imperialism, racism and predatory capitalism.

These ongoing damages led Haitians to say “Haiti is dead, there is no more Haiti,” even before the devastating earthquake.

While many outside of Haiti may see this statement as being fatalistic or a term of resignation, Beckett said, for those in the country, it was a realization that they could not go back to a situation that existed before. Instead, they would have to move forward and build a future that was still recognizably Haitian.

Beckett’s book looks at how Haitians “live with crisis, how they feel it, in their bodies and in their relationships.”

Beckett hopes that his book will add nuance and complexity to the kind of international intervention happening in Haiti.

“We need to understand that these stories matter,” said Beckett.

International organizations that respond to crisis have the same template that may not be appropriate to all situations, Beckett said.

“If we understand that people who live with crisis everyday have a different theory and understanding of crisis,” it can help inform international responses.

Beckett feels this approach to crisis could have global impact and importance, pointing to possible changes caused by climate change.

“In a global context, how do we think of a crisis so total it shatters a way of life and yet we have to go forward and build a meaningful life and future,” said Beckett. “It’s a profound statement that a cultural world is over and that have to re-build something that is different than what was in the past.”

There Is No More Haiti: Between Life and Death in Port-au-Prince, is published by the University of California Press.

Disability studies “global in nature”

Incoming Anthropology professor Pamela Block researches the history and experiences of disability activists



Pamela Block is joining the Department of Anthropology as a Professor.

Block focuses on disability studies and the Anthropology of disability, researching the history and experiences of disability activists and scholars, with comparative work in the US and Brazil. She is currently Professor of Disability Studies and Director, Disabilities Studies Concentration, Ph.D. Program in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences at Stony Brook University, in New York.

Disability studies has a deeply rooted history in the applied and basic social sciences; Block researches it through the lens of cultural anthropology. In a forthcoming book, *Allies and Obstacles*, Block and her coauthors research the tensions and collaborations between parent advocates, and disability activism led by disabled people.

Since the 1990s, during her dissertation research as a doctoral student at Duke University, Block has continued her work and collaborations, with colleagues in Brazil.

“It’s an interesting time to be doing this work in Brazil, under the Bolsonaro regime,” said Block. “He has ended the National Disability Rights Council. It will be important to watch what will happen with the rights of disabled people and marginalized peoples in Brazil.”

A forthcoming article looks at the experiences of disabled activists and disability rights scholars in times of austerity, including how disability activism and disabled lives are threatened, and how people and systems respond to those threats.

“This research is global in nature,” Block said. “It’s hitting everyone where they are.”

Through medical advancements, many people, who may have previously died as children due to complex chronic conditions, now live into adulthood but require 24-hour support in order to survive. These situations bring up questions of how they might not just survive, but thrive, and what support they should receive to ensure their human and civil rights are addressed, said Block.

“There is not sufficient policy support for people with complex medical conditions to live in the community,” said Block. “Many have to go to nursing homes, which are dangerous because of the risk of infections, pressure sores and other deadly secondary conditions.”

For Block, research into disability issues is personal. She has many family members with various disability experiences, including a sister who is autistic. Block also identifies as neuro-queer. She makes this known so she can be a mentor and support for others in academia who have disabilities.

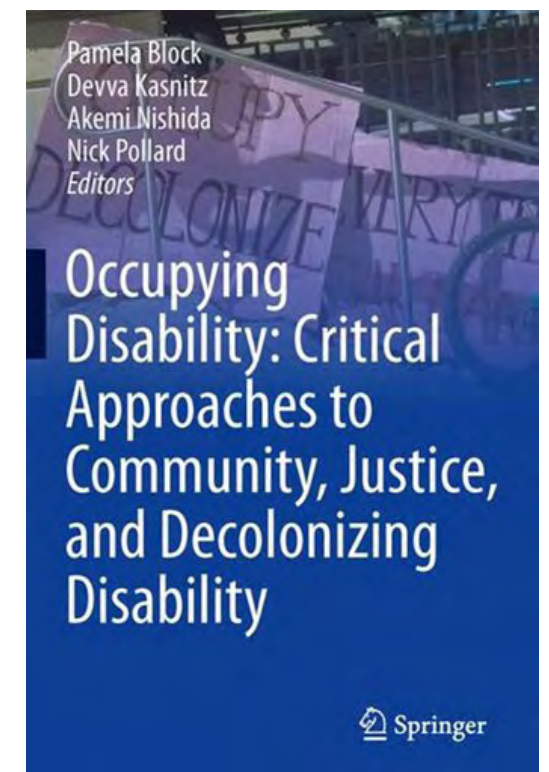
“The largest group of students who receive accommodations are those with non-apparent disability or functional access needs,” said Block. “They deserve to have mentors who are like them.”

Through her research and advocacy, Block already has strong connections to Western, including having worked with Pamela Cushing, Director of Disability Studies in Kings College and Lilian Magalhães, Professor Emeritus of the Occupational Therapy Program, whose scholarship is featured in the conclusion of Block’s co-edited volume *Occupying Disability: Critical Approaches to Community, Justice, and Decolonizing Disability*.

Block looks forward to the opportunity to work within an anthropology department with a diverse research focus.

“It will be a new experience being in a four-field school,” said Block, “and the opportunity to collaborate with linguists, archaeologists, and biological anthropologists is very exciting to me.”

“It’s an amazing opportunity to be with supportive colleagues in Anthropology, as well as Disability Studies, and Occupational Therapy” Block said. “The Anthropology department has been so welcoming, and I’m very excited to be joining the department.”





- Image by Scott Woods

Understanding the roots of loneliness

New study shows that loneliness may be connected to genetics

Is loneliness increasing in the modern world?

Julie Aitken Schermer, Professor in the DAN Department of Management & Organizational Studies is concerned with what she sees as a growing level of isolation, especially among her students.

“People are supposed to be more connected through social media, but they seem to be more isolated,” said Schermer, saying students in her classes do not seem to interact. “When I was a student, it was the best time to meet new friends; you have the common ground of being in the same class.”



**“You don’t have to be alone to be lonely.”
- Julie Aitken Schermer**

- Photo by Adela Talbot

In a recent article, Schermer, along with Nicholas Martin of the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute in Australia, investigated causes of loneliness, as well as the correlations between loneliness and other personality traits.

In the study, they found that about 35 per cent of loneliness is attributable to genetic causes.

“Someone could be prone to loneliness, and their environment could push the development of that dimension,” said Schermer.

The study found that people who are neurotic, tend to be lonelier.

“In a previous study, we found that people who make fun of themselves are often more lonely,” said Schermer. “Loneliness and neuroticism correlate, but loneliness is a different dimension.”

The study also found that people who are open to new experiences may be more likely to be lonely.

“These people could be more likely to assess their situation, and be more aware of their feelings of loneliness,” said Schermer.

“Loneliness could be more of a personality dimension than it is a state of mind or attitude,” said Schermer.

“There is a difference between being alone and being lonely. Loneliness is about not feeling satisfaction with interactions with people, and a feeling that they personally don’t matter,” said Schermer. “You don’t have to be alone to be lonely.”

Identifying inheritable causes of loneliness could help parents, “If parents notice they themselves are lonely, they may want to consider their children, and may want to talk to them about coping methods,” said Schermer. “We can work to teach people coping skills.”

It could also help organizations create a better working environment.

“Organizations may want to ask people if they have a satisfactory level of interaction with their colleagues,” said Schermer. “A lonely person who remains feeling lonely at work without an outlet may look for another job.”

In future research, Schermer plans to look at different ways people experience loneliness, such as differences between feelings of estrangement from family, compared to feelings of having no friends.

Grappling with the great questions of the age

New DAN Management chair focuses on preparing firms to face the challenges of the future

The world is likely to undergo major changes in the coming years and decades: global warming, the end of internal combustion vehicles, growth in antibiotic resistance, political uncertainty, and more. Geoffrey Wood is interested in how firms can best be prepared for these changes.

Geoffrey Wood will be the new chair of the DAN Department of Management & Organizational Studies. Wood will also be the inaugural holder of the Dancap Private Equity Chair in Change and Innovation. Wood comes from a position as Dean of Essex Business School at the University of Essex.

Wood's work brings together insights from finance, international business, human resources management and organizational psychology to research the relationship between national institutional regimes, how investors behave, the implications for managerial strategy, and how these changes impact internal organizational behaviour.

"These are quite distinct fields; yet there are exciting opportunities for new interdisciplinary understanding and syntheses," said Wood. "It's important that you can build on the knowledge of other disciplines to inform your understanding."

Wood is also interested in how policy changes affect firms. In recent work, he investigated why certain types of national economies have been quicker to adopt energy technologies, how that affects firms as well as the prospects of nations.



"There are two aspects of management: one part deals with embedded systems and processes, and the focus is continuity; the second aspect of management is implementing and managing change in response to internal or external pressures," said Wood. "The tendency is for people to treat these as separate, but they are closely interlinked."

As Chair in Innovation and Change, Wood is prepared to "grapple with the great questions of the age," which he describes as "events which are high-probability, but which we are unprepared for at the same time."

For example, due to global warming, mega-cities such as Los Angeles, Delhi or Beijing may need to be moved, said Wood, a situation people, and firms, are not prepared for.

Another challenge is presented by the rise of antibiotic resistance bacteria; there are structural impediments to the development of long-term drug-based solutions.

"We know from history what it was like without antibiotics, but we don't know what today's world would be like without," said Wood. "Long distance air travel would become dangerous. Working conditions associated with sweatshops would not work. Modern factory farming may not work."

Consumer choices such as a move to electric cars will also have impacts on firms, said Wood. "At least one major car maker is not likely to succeed in making the jump (to electric cars) (as say what happened to Kodak and the digital camera revolution), and this will mean large scale job losses, both in the company and up its supply chain," said Wood. "This will have

an economic impact on at least one major economy."

These events will require organizations and firms to innovate, but first they have to understand the changes occurring.

"Big changes like these don't happen very often in history," said Wood, "and these changes are an opportunity to bring together different disciplinary approaches to management, and, indeed, the social (and natural) sciences at large."

The multidisciplinary approach of DAN Management drew Wood to the department.

The department's approach to management is "broadly social science informed, not just understanding daily processes, but how they fit into the wider social, economic and political context," said Wood.

"In the community of management and organization schools in the UK, the fastest rising schools are social science informed," said Wood. "They are not trying to be the best in everything; they are focusing on a few areas."

Within the department, Wood aims to build research leadership and depth, and build the research informed base of education.

Outside of the department, Wood is focused on "building a one-university approach, building complementarities with other areas of the university, both within and beyond the Faculty of Social Science."

Geoffrey Wood begins his tenure as Chair of the DAN Department of Management & Organizational Studies on July 1, 2019.





Is Marriage for White People?

Working paper examines employment, marriage prospects and financial security

The marriage gap between white and black women in the US is growing, and this may have long-lasting impacts.

While 83 per cent of white women between ages 25 and 54 were ever married in 2006, only 56 per cent of black women were: a gap of 27 percentage points.

'Is Marriage for White People? Incarceration, Unemployment, and the Racial Marriage Divide, a new working paper' by Elizabeth Caucutt, Associate Professor of Economics at Western University, Nezih Guner, CEMFI, and Christopher Rauh, Assistant Professor at the University of Montreal, looks at some of the reasons for the increasing disparity.

The researchers pin-pointed a few key aspects affecting the marriage rates between white and black women.

Due to incarceration and an increased chance of premature death facing black men there are 15 per cent more black women than men in the US population, decreasing the chances a black woman will find someone to marry. High unemployment rates among black men contributes to lower marriage rates among the black population. This was originally highlighted in the Wilson Hypothesis in 1987.

Caucutt and her colleagues built on the original Wilson hypothesis, developing a dynamic picture accounting for different changes in the population.

Their analysis showed that higher incarceration rates, largely due to US drug policy, accounts for 4 per cent of the difference in marriage rates.

Employment situation had a much greater impact, with black Americans disproportionately affected by a decline in manufacturing jobs.

"Employment seems to be the highest driver in marriage," said Caucutt. "If people are unemployed or precariously employed, they are less likely to be married, and less likely to be considered appropriate to marry."

Marriage can provide economic benefits through coordination of resources such as sharing costs of housing, utilities and food. It can also provide security and insurance as people age; single women who never marry are more likely to live in poverty.

The benefits of marriage extend to the next generation as well. "If a child is born into a 2-parent household, versus a 1-parent household, there is a big difference in investment in life possibility," said Caucutt, highlighting areas such as education.



"I'm not saying everyone should be married," said Caucutt. "We want to understand the relationship between things and the results of policy, and what I think it's saying is that there's a reason why there is a big decline in marriage rates among black Americans."

While there has been a decline in marriage rates across the general population, some of this has been replaced with cohabitation. Caucutt says the move to cohabitation has not occurred at the same rate among the black population.

The marriage gap, Caucutt says, is a recent phenomenon. "In the 1950s and 1960s, marriage rates were similar between white and black populations," said Caucutt. "It is not a cultural issue; there is no preferential difference among groups, as everyone gets some benefit from marriage."

Caucutt plans to continue the research with further research into the impact of marriage rates on children, and potential policy implications.

Calculating the risk of work

Amanda Michaud researches labour force participation

Amanda Michaud has joined the Department of Economics as an Associate Professor.

Michaud completed her PhD at the University of Minnesota.

Through the use of economic models, Michaud compares outcomes of policy changes in emerging economies with outcomes in developed economies.

Michaud also focuses on understanding trends in labour force participation, including why people are dropping out of the workforce entirely, and why women are entering the workforce. Based on this, Michaud considers the impact of these trends in the business cycle and potential policy implications of these trends.

“The macroeconomics world is always changing,” said Michaud. “There’s some things that we don’t know if policy can fix. For example, there is a segment of the population that is just on the sidelines, and left out of the economy. Can policy fix that?”

In a recent paper, Michaud examined the disability risks – such as health risks – and economics risks – such as slow wage growth and the risk of losing jobs – of specific occupations.

Men doing physical work, she found, face more disability and economic risks.



“This is important, because we need people to do those jobs, so we should insure them,” said Michaud. “If we provided social insurance for this type of work, say road crews, it would actually make the jobs and services cheaper. If there is a risk and people do not want to do the jobs, then wages need to be higher to get people in.”

Michaud is currently working on a project, funded by the United States Social Security Administration, looking at county level data to examine why disability beneficiaries are so geographically concentrated.

She is also working to ensure economic models include more information about women, a group whom are often not included in models. Data about female workers is often more difficult for economists to understand, said Michaud. “Women face more flexible employment patterns, and have had different employment trends over time.”

Historic data on women’s health could also be difficult, said Michaud. “The data was based on surveys completed by the head of the household, which were generally men, and wouldn’t necessarily have all or accurate information on the health of women.”

The Power of Policies

Juan Carlos Hatchondo researches international finance and sovereign debt

Juan Carlos Hatchondo has joined the Department of Economics as a Professor.

Hatchondo completed his PhD at the University of Rochester, and focuses on macroeconomics, researching international finance and sovereign debt.

Hatchondo studies global and local factors that affect incentives for sovereign states to borrow monies or to default on their sovereign debt.

Using emerging market data, Hatchondo evaluates different debt management policy proposals to improve the function of sovereign debt markets. The work can have direct policy implications for countries or for international organizations.

Hatchondo often works with Leonardo Martinez, an economist who works with the International Monetary Fund. The IMF has used the work of Hatchondo and Martinez while discussing the risks of accumulating sovereign debt.

In 2018, Hatchondo and Martinez published a paper studying the accumulation of foreign reserves by countries that also carry foreign debt. “This is like having debt while also have a chequing account,” said Hatchondo, “and continuing to put money into the account instead of paying the debt.”

The researchers found this situation can be justified by ‘roll-over risk’.

“Governments encounter fluctuations in the demand for the bonds they issue,” said Hatchondo. “They may face difficulty getting



new loans to pay expiring debts. Having foreign reserves is a useful buffer against this.”

In February 2019, Timothy Lane, Deputy Governor of the Bank of Canada, referenced this work, in regards to Canada’s level of foreign exchange reserves, during a speech at Peterson Institute for International Economics.

Hatchondo’s current research focuses on determining a metric for governments to measure their debt policies against.

“We can study the merits of different policy proposals,” said Hatchondo, “but one thing that is lacking is a measure of how much better we can do compared to those proposals.”

“The highest degree of fiscal discipline would be achieved when governments promise a path for sovereign borrowing, but no government can credibly do that,” said Hatchondo. Nonetheless, by determining the best possible approach to paying sovereign debt, with the best possible economic performance of a country, governments could determine how affective other policies could be.

Hatchondo is excited to be at Western. It’s very collegial,” said Hatchondo. “I like my new colleagues and I am looking forward to working with grad students.”



Decolonizing Hockey

Interdisciplinary group examines the role of hockey in the national imagination, and in Indigenous identity

Hockey.

Whether it is memories of early morning games at the local rink, late-night games on a pond, or watching the Canadian men's Olympic team beat the US team on home ice, for many people, hockey is a defining aspect of Canadian culture.

But what is being represented by that idea, and who is not represented in the standard vision and idea of Canadian hockey?

A group of eleven researchers from across Canada and across disciplines are coming together to set the groundwork for a 5-year, SSHRC-funded study into complexity of Indigenous relations with hockey over time, entitled *Decolonizing Sport: Indigeneity, Hockey, and Canadian Nationhood*.

Janice Forsyth is Director of the First Nations Studies program at Western.

"Our central goal is to change how hockey is played and understood on Turtle Island. We are a collective of researchers dedicated to uncovering and engaging with hockey's Indigenous past, present, and future at both academic and community-engaged levels," said Forsyth.

Forsyth said this study is the first of its kind in Canada, as it is the first sustained examination of Indigenous hockey.

"It's a look at hockey that hasn't been done yet," said Forsyth. "Hockey is distinct in our national identity and because of its role in the national imagination, it's an important discussion for reconciliation."

Sam McKegney, Professor of English Literature at Queen's University is the Primary Investigator for the grant. "Hockey often functions to make settlers feel a sense of belonging," said McKegney, "but this can erase Indigenous experiences."

"Hockey can be community building and can foster self-worth, but it is very much combined with colonial violence," said McKegney. "For Indigenous players, it can also provide a means of entry into settler culture."

"Hockey is so often a way to talk about Canada but is often limited to white, heterosexual males," said Jamieson Ryan, a PhD student in English at Queen's University. "We want to complicate that erasure so when you say hockey it is not just a synonym for white, heterosexual male."

The team has tentatively defined five aspects they will be investigating, in order to develop an understanding of the meaning of hockey in different groups and communities of Indigenous people.

One aspect will look at youth in hockey, and the experience of player development. Specifically, Professor Robert Henry from University of Calgary will look at the space of the bus, and its potential as a vehicle for reconciliation and decolonization.

Another area of study will look at Indigenous female experiences in hockey.

"So little is known about it," said Forsyth. "The intent is to stop erasure of female experiences by starting with a socio-demographic profile of who plays."

The group will be interviewing Indigenous NHL or pro-level hockey players to learn about the experiences they went through playing pro and getting to that level.

McKegney will research the experience of Indigenous Rec hockey, especially adult players, to develop auto-ethnographies. This area of research will focus on both Indigenous specific teams, and teams made up of Indigenous and non-Indigenous players.

The group will also be looking at the historiography of hockey, how hockey has been tied to Canadian nationalism, and "how hockey has been tracked as a settler enterprise, and the implications of such nationalistic sentiments, at a moment of reconciliation," said McKegney.

"Through archival research, personal interviews, and Indigenous community-led approaches, augmented by statistical analysis, we take up hockey as a site of potential community building and Indigenous empowerment, as well as a site for the pursuit of reconciliation between Indigenous and mainstream Canadian populations," said Forsyth.

Encouraging smart appetite in youth

CIHR-funded project to evaluate usefulness of app to improve food literacy



How do you change how youth think about food and health?

Jason Gilliland thinks the answer may be in the palm of our hands.

Gilliland, Professor in the Department of Geography, is the Primary Investigator on at CIHR grant to evaluate the use of a smartphone based intervention for improving food literacy and diet among youth. The project will focus on encouraging youth to download and use SmartAPPetite, a smartphone app which provides food and health related tips and information to youth.

**“We want to look at how to respond if people make poor choices, as they may not have the information to make good choices.”
- Jason Gilliland**

While SmartAPPetite is available for the public to download, Gilliland hopes to recruit approximately 4,500 students in up to 18 schools for the five-year project.

The app is based on the behavioural economics concept of nudge theory. Through the app users are provided timely tips and information which have all been designed by registered dietitians and are from validated sources. Instead of chastising people for negative behaviour, the tips are designed to provide information on positive food or lifestyle choices they can make, ‘nudging’ them to make good decisions.

“There is a lot of interesting work around nudge theory, and good information about behavioural economics and health in general,” said Gilliland. “We want to look at how to respond if people make poor choices, as they may not have the information to make good choices.”

Students will be asked to provide some information about themselves, such as location, age and gender, and the tips will vary depending on this information, and even potentially on what food choices are available in their proximity. During the study, students will be asked to rate the usefulness of the tips. These ratings will be used to determine which tips are most effective for people in different groups, based on location, gender, and even ethnic background.

The study group will also look at if, and how, the effectiveness of the app is changed by the food environment. Gilliland hopes to see if, through the app, changes can be made to behaviour of

youth to improve the overall diet, and through that, adjust the diet to improve overall health.

“We know dietary quality drops around age 14, when teens start to have more influence around what they eat,” said Gilliland. “If we can impact their decisions then, we can have a long lasting impact.”

The project is bringing together a wide variety of experts, including academics with backgrounds in geography, nutrition, paediatric cardiology, epidemiology, management and organization studies, health promotion, planning, and statistics.

“This is an economics, environmental and informational study all at once,” said Gilliland. “The geographic side is the most important, because we want to know if certain aspects are present in the environment, and then how people use the information.”

“We want to give people enough information to work with the environment they live in, to make healthier decisions,” said Gilliland.

This is the seventh CIHR grant Gilliland has been primary investigator on, many of which have focused on the association of health and the environment.

“I’ve been working on research on the built environment and health for 15 years. I’ve shown the association between the environment and health,” said Gilliland. “I don’t want to keep doing work showing there’s a pattern. I want to look at how to do interventions to improve health.”

Recognizing innovative research in population, environment and health

Isaac Luginaah named as a Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences

Isaac Luginaah, Professor in the Department of Geography, has been named as a Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences (AAS).

The AAS recognizes individuals who have excelled in their fields of expertise, and who have contributed to developing their fields in Africa.

Fellows of the AAS are Africans who may live in or outside the continent, and are elected by AAS fellows based on achievements that include their publication record, innovations, leadership roles and contribution to policy.

Luginaah is a health geographer, and was nominated for his “innovative research in population, environment and health.” His research addresses the impact of environmental hazards and vulnerabilities in population health, and encompasses research in North America, and in Africa.

Luginaah’s North American research focuses on health effects of environmental exposure, and Aboriginal health. With CIHR funding, he is currently researching HIV/AIDS in London, Ottawa, Toronto and Windsor.

His research in Africa focuses on Health Inequalities, HIV/AIDS and food security among vulnerable populations. He was recently awarded NSERC funding for food security research in Malawi. This research includes colleagues from Germany, the Netherlands, Canada, and the United States.



In the nomination for the Fellowship, it is noted that Luginaah “has contributed significantly to environment and health as a major focus and policy-related field within health geography, and has been successful in establishing multidisciplinary collaborations both nationally and internationally.”

Luginaah has published extensively, with more than 170 peer-reviewed articles, and his research has been cited in policy debates and interventions.

Along with his research, Luginaah has helped train the next generation of scholars. His students have come from around the world, including Canada, Cambodia, China, Malawi, Norway, Rwanda, and South Sudan.

“It’s a real honour to be recognized,” Luginaah said. “It’s nice to have acknowledgement from your peers that they recognize you for your work.”

Luginaah is also a member of the Royal Society of Canada’s College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists, and was Canada Research Chair in Health Geography (2007-2017).

Building a new approach to historical evidence

William Turkel named to College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists

William Turkel, Professor in the Department of History, has been named a member of the Royal Society of Canada’s College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists.

Turkel is internationally recognized for his innovative work in digital history. He uses machine learning, text mining, and computational techniques in his study of the histories of science, technology, and environment, drawing on many decades of programming experience.

Turkel’s recent work focuses on global 21st-century history. For Turkel, the massive amount of information and evidence available requires new approaches to gathering historical evidence.

“As historians engage with the global history of the 21st century, we will increasingly need computational tools that help us to monitor historical consciousness in real time. I have been working on methods for the monitoring and mining of large-scale collective memory,” said Turkel. “Since sources are ‘born digital’ at a rate that far exceeds our capacity to read and reflect on them, historians, humanists, and social scientists need to adapt algorithms that can deal with ‘firehoses’ of source material.”

For Turkel, the use of digital technologies in the study of history is natural and necessary.



“At this point, there is not really an alternative. Every historian uses email to communicate with colleagues, submits word processed manuscripts to journals and publishers, uses databases and search engines, and deals with a largely digital secondary literature,” he said. “For the most part, however, those tools were not developed specifically for the historical enterprise. New methods and tools can be.”

Those named to the College represent the emerging generation of scholarly, scientific and artistic leadership in Canada.

“It is an honour and a privilege to be elected to the College, not to mention a bit humbling. I am really looking forward to meeting the other members and learning about their work,” Turkel said. “I hope to participate in new collaborative and interdisciplinary projects that could be of benefit to Canadians as they negotiate the challenges of a rapidly changing digital world.”

The College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists, created in 2014, is Canada’s first national system of multidisciplinary recognition for the emerging generation of Canadian intellectual leadership. Up to 100 Members may be elected each year and membership is for seven years.

A local story with national echoes

Jonathan Vance tells the story of one small rural township during the First World War.

In *A Township at War*, Jonathan Vance, Professor in the Department of History, tells the story of one small rural township during the First World War; it is a story which has parallels across the country.

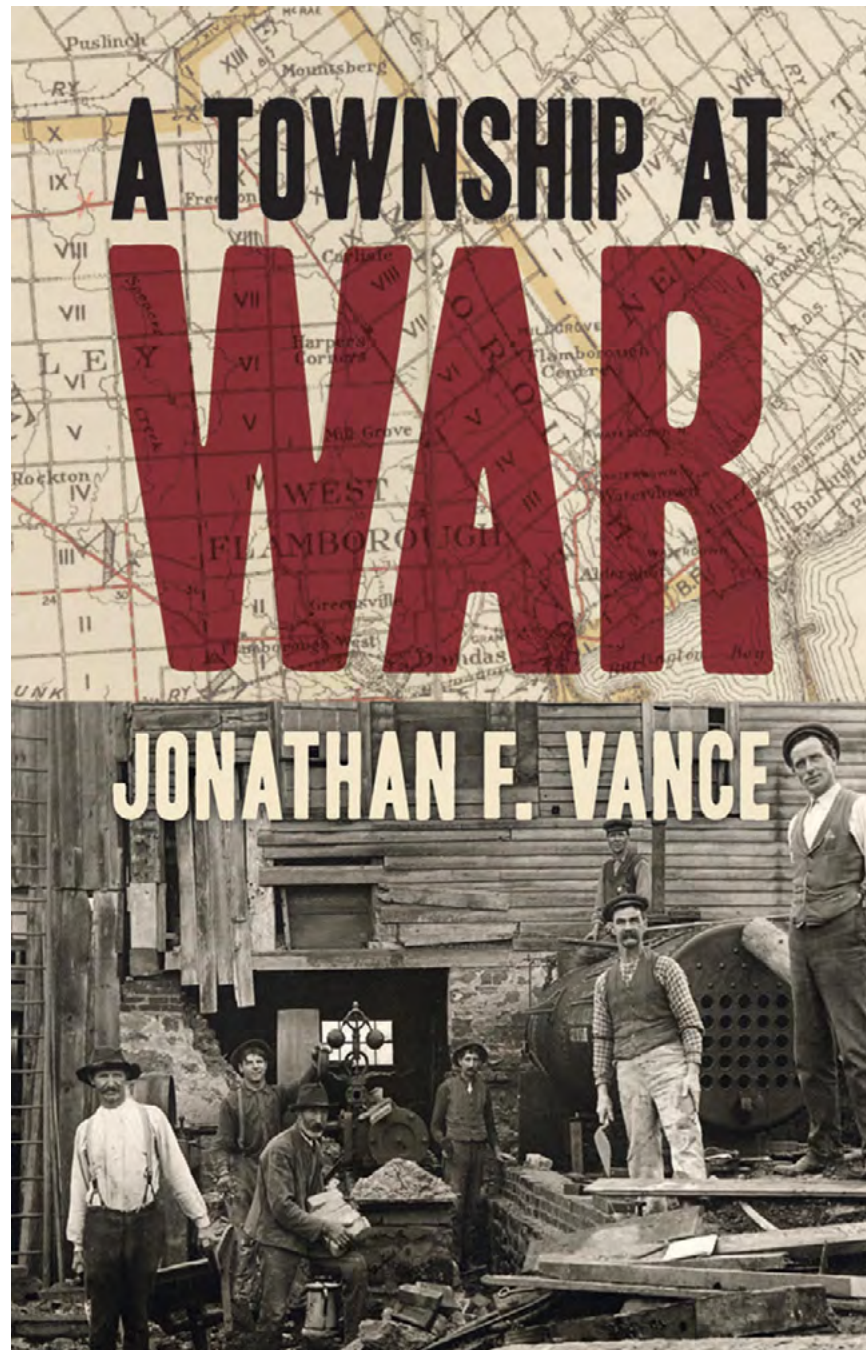
Jonathan Vance has family roots in East Flamborough, and the community of Waterdown, now part of Hamilton. It was these family roots that led Vance to begin his study on the experience of the township during the First World War. But for Vance, the experiences of people from the township were reflective of more than just their own lives; they were repeated and reflected by people across Canada.

Drawing upon his own father's collection of letters and records as well as those from the local township archive, Vance tells the history of the First World War through a personal lens, and a rural lens, one that is not often seen in histories of the war.

Much of what has been written about the First World War comes from an urban perspective, or from urban sources, said Vance, but, in his book he notes "Throughout the war years, rural life remained the dominant Canadian experience. And an intimate look at one township can tell us much about a war that has largely been interpreted through an urban lens."

The generation that went to war was "the first generation to feel comfortable going back and forth between urban and rural areas," said Vance. "They probably felt more at home in rural area than urban areas." They carried these connections to their rural communities with them as they left to the front.

"The men and women at the front have a passionate or even obsessive desire to stay connected with home and the other people they knew who were at the front," said Vance. "Connections in this way provided a lifeline to feel grounded. It became a life-preserver. When dealing with the insanity of the front, they look to talk to someone from home, or read newspapers and have a connection to reality."



**“People at the front probably weren’t too connected to what they were fighting for.”
- Jonathan Vance.**

The war had a great impact on the home front. “Families were more interconnected and used to doing things together,” as compared to those in urban areas, Vance explained. “If someone left for the front, or was killed, the impact would ripple in rural communities more so than in urban areas.”

At the front, and in Canada, people seemed more concerned with local concerns than with the larger issues at play.

“People at the front probably weren’t too connected to what they were fighting for but if they can have a connection to issues at home, it gave a sense of constancy, to keep their mind in order,” said Vance.

In their letters, people are not concerned about larger political issues that many historians now considered important, such as conscription, suffrage, or language rights. Instead, they focused on very local issues, such as the state of roads or the railway, and local politics and rumours.

While Vance does not generally study rural history, the book started as a personal quest to tell some of the stories of the people who he grew up with. It soon became more.

“As I started to look at it more deeply, I saw general connections and lessons that could be applied to rural areas in Canada and around the world,” said Vance.

As Vance notes in the introduction “The voices of the past will tell us what was important to them; our job is to avoid assuming that we know better than they do.”

Since the book launched in October 2018, Vance has presented in many small communities across South-western Ontario, and the response has been very positive. Many people have told Vance that the stories told in the book are reflective of their own communities.

The book, Vance said “has something to say to everyone even though it’s very specific to place.”

A Strategic Focus

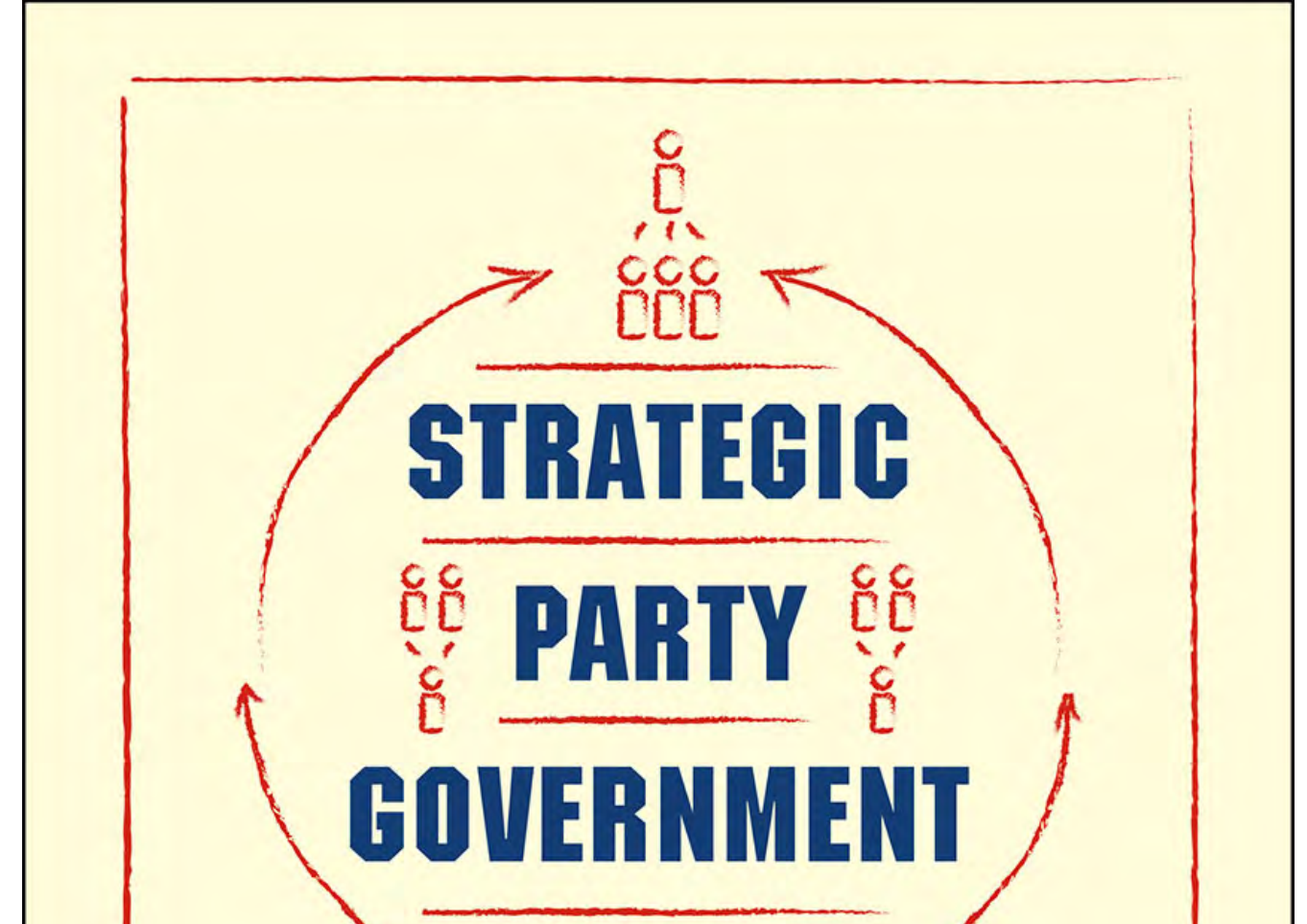
Matthew Lebo joins Department of Political Science as new department chair.



In August 2019, the Department of Political Science will welcome Matthew Lebo as a Professor and as the new Department Chair.

Lebo is currently Chair of the Department of Political Science and Director of the Center for Behavioral Political Economy at Stony Brook University in New York.

Lebo researches politics and political parties in the United States and the United Kingdom. Much of his research has focused on how politicians and political parties structure and coordinate choices to win legislative battles and win elections, making trade-offs between electoral and legislative decisions. He is also interested in elections and election cycles.



His book on the state of party politics in the United States, *Strategic Party Government: Why Winning Trumps Ideology*, written with Greg Koger, was published in 2017.

He also has interests in political methodology, researching the tools used to study political data over time, and developing new tools for time-series analysis.

"This is a great opportunity for the department," said Bob Andersen, Dean of the Faculty of Social Science. "Matt is an exceptional scholar and a proven administrator."

Lebo has published many articles in the top political science journals, including in the *American Journal of Political Science*, the *British Journal of Political Science*, and *The Journal of Politics*.

Lebo sees the chair position as "a great opportunity to advance the Department of Political Science at Western, work with new colleagues and develop new programs."

Lebo foresees that meeting the needs of students will be among the most important undertakings of the department in the near future.

"Political Science is a hot topic with growing interest from undergrads and graduate students who are want to learn skills that make for valuable degrees," said Lebo. "So meeting the demands of students is a challenge and finding the right tools to send people out in the world with a degree in political science is something you always have to adapt to."

In coming to Western, Lebo returns to his roots, as he originally started his undergraduate studies at Western, and then completed his BA and MA at the University of Toronto. He completed his PhD at the University of North Texas.

"Western is an incredible university and where I got my start in Political Science," said Lebo. "The social sciences are strong and getting stronger. It's an exciting time to be joining the faculty in a leadership role."

Populism in the City

The success of Ford Nation in Toronto challenges the traditional view of populism as a movement of rural and post-industrial regions.

What does the success of Ford Nation say about populism?

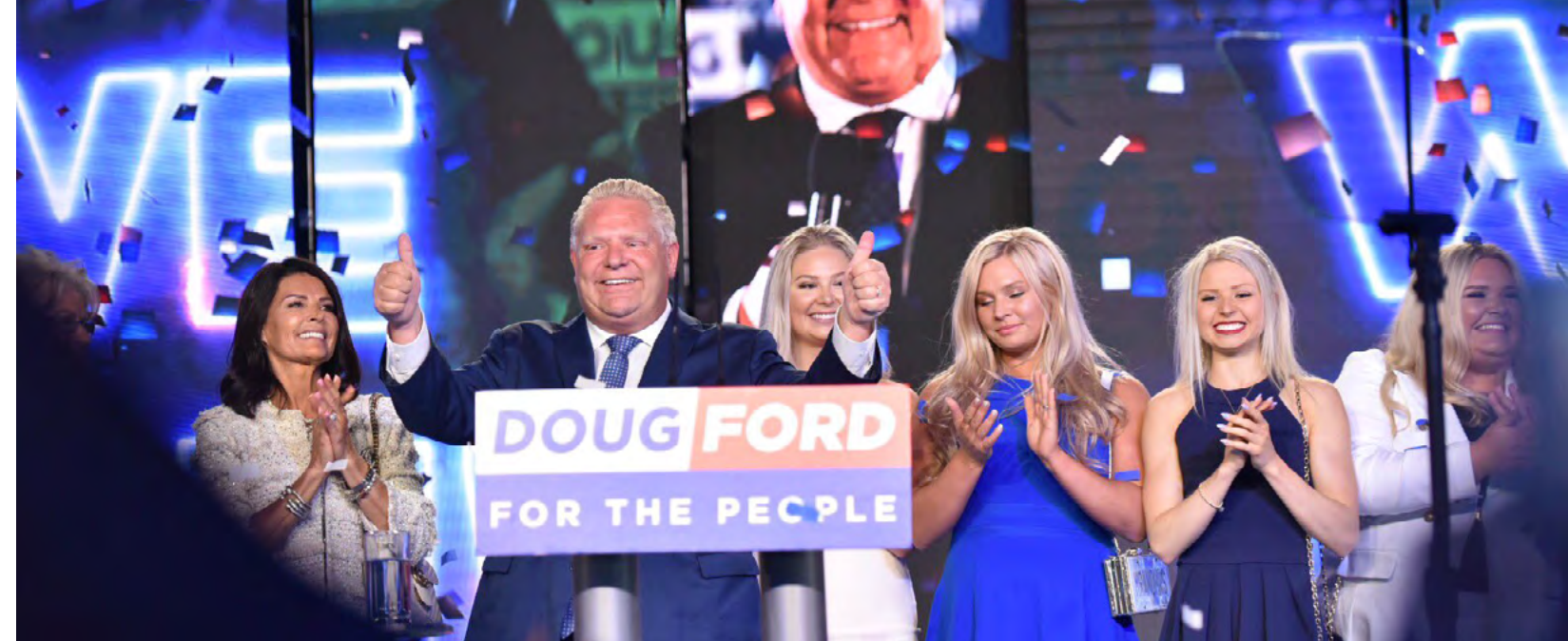
Zack Taylor, Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science, and Director of the Centre for Urban Policy and Local Governance, has researched the growth of populism in Ontario, and the success of Ford Nation, in two recent publications.

Writing with Daniel Silver and Fernando Calderón-Figueroa of the University of Toronto, Taylor examined the rise of suburban populism in Toronto. They write that most analyses of populism, “deem cities counter-movements to and targets of populist force, which tend to be concentrated in rural areas and declining post-industrial regions.”



- Photo by Paul Mayne

“Other cities may become ripe for populist insurgencies.”
- Zack Taylor



- Photo from flickr account of Doug Ford/Ford Nation

The article, which was profiled by urban geographer Richard Florida on the *Atlantic Magazine*'s CityLab blog, challenges this idea.

Rob and Doug Ford both received substantial support from Toronto's ethnically diverse suburbs in their 2010 and 2014 campaigns for Mayor of Toronto.

Unlike right-wing populism movements from other countries, Ford's populism included many non-European and non-Christian immigrants. The movement remained “socially conservative in that it was hostile to gay rights and feminism, and fiscally conservative in its drive for low taxes,” the authors said.

“Ford's supporters could present themselves as defending traditional religious and family values against secularism and feminism imposed from above.”

In a separate article in *Inroads*, Taylor interprets the geographical distribution of support for Doug Ford's Progressive Conservative Party in his successful 2018 provincial election campaign. He finds that the party's support was mostly drawn from rural areas, however it also attracted votes in the post-war suburbs of greater Toronto.

Doug Ford was able to transfer his late brother's base to provincial politics, combining support from “the ethnically diverse Toronto coalition his brother had built and joined it with a largely white rural population.” He did this while keeping many aspects of Rob Ford's approach as mayor: avoiding nativist appeals, maintaining suspicions of the progressive ‘elite’ and claiming to speak for and directly to a ‘silent majority’ of taxpayers.

Rob Ford's campaign and time as mayor was “a clear translation of the populist logic to the local setting – the candidate as the authentic embodiment of the popular will against a self-interested elite.” His success shows “how the populist repertoire may be adapted in unusual contexts while retaining its core features,” suggesting alternative conditions where populism may thrive.

In the two publications, Taylor concludes that “other cities may become ripe for populist insurgencies,” particularly those experiencing uneven growth and social divisions. At the same time, he raises the question of whether Doug Ford's suburban-rural coalition is durable given his need to satisfy the demands of both groups.

- Original Image via www.vpnusrus.com

Social media distortion

Examining the role of social media in misinformation and political polarization

Mathieu Turgeon has joined the Department of Political Science as an Associate Professor.

Turgeon completed his PhD in Political Science at the University of Texas at Austin, and focuses his research on political behaviour, studying how citizens form and develop political opinions and process political information.

His previous research has focused on political behaviour in a variety of countries, including Canada, France, the US, and Brazil.

Most of his recent work researched the impact of compulsory voting regulations in Brazil. While Brazilians can vote at the age of 16, they are required, by law, to vote after they are 18. Voting becomes voluntary again when voters turn 70. Most Brazilians know that voting is compulsory but very few understand how the age criterion applies, making it difficult to evaluate the true impact of such regulation.

Turgeon is particularly interested in how behaviours changed based on increased knowledge of the law.

“Turnout is generally pretty low in democracies,” said Turgeon, “and compulsory voting is the best institutional arrangement to make people vote because most people tend to comply with the law.”

Lack of political knowledge will play a large part in Turgeon’s next project as well. Turgeon recently received a grant from Facebook to examine the role of misinformation and political polarization.

Turgeon will focus on WhatsApp, a messaging app that is very popular in Brazil, and which was heavily used in the 2018 Brazilian presidential election to share political information. The app, which is owned by Facebook, has more than 100 million users in Brazil.

“Many people in Brazil are polarized against one party, and not necessarily in favour of another,” said Turgeon. Many voters strongly favour or oppose the Workers’ Party, which was formerly led by Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, or Lula. This polarization may lead voters to be more willing to share and believe misinformation on social media.

“People have a distorted view of what’s happening,” said Turgeon. “They process information in light of what they already believe (being true or not), and accept or reject information through this lens,” an action known as motivated reasoning.

This study is important as social media becomes a more prominent tool for sharing information.

“In the last few rounds of elections held around the world, there has been a proliferation of information shared on social media,” said Turgeon. “Thirty years ago, newspapers and broadcast and cable news networks were the main sources of information. Today, anyone can be an opinion maker. Social media allows information to be shared at a faster pace, but we have lost quality control of that information.”

“We think fake news may have an impact on public opinion and vote choice, but in reality we don’t know much,” said Turgeon. “The only studies out there suggest the overall impact may actually be small and not too worrisome.”

Turgeon will examine what moderating variables or circumstances may lead to misinformation having a more significant impact.



“Where the fake news being circulated may have a direct impact in your interests, you may give more credence to it,” said Turgeon.

In the recent Brazilian election, misinformation was shared, claiming that people would lose a government subsidy if they did not vote.

Turgeon aims to explore if fake news exerts greater effect on people’s behaviours and opinions when it represents a direct threat to their own interests.

“Misinformation has already existed, but we weren’t looking at it. Misinformation now moves so quickly and people may be giving it more weight today than before,” said Turgeon.

Sharing of information has changed how people view their own competency. While previously, many people may not have had much knowledge about political topics or processes, “now a lot of people think they have information, but a lot of that information is wrong,” said Turgeon. “If someone strongly holds misinformation they think are true, it becomes much harder to update their beliefs.”

Seeking the meaning of visual signals

Marieke Mur researches how the brain extracts meaning from visual signals



Mur's recent work suggests that the visual cortex is especially sensitive to features of a visual stimulus that provide clues about category membership. As an example, Mur points to an apple and a face, which are both round, but the presence of facial features causes the brain to interpret the stimulus as a face, and act accordingly.

Precisely how the brain accomplishes this feat remains unclear. "We know where it is happening, and we know what is happening, but now we want to know how it is happening," said Mur.

To understand how this process occurs, Mur uses deep neural networks, which are computational models of visual processing that are loosely inspired by the brain. They consist of units ('neurons') that are organized in multiple layers ('brain regions') and connected with weights that can be modified by training ('synapses'). Deep nets can be trained to categorize objects, and once trained can match new object images into existing categories. In recent years, with increased computational power and many images available for training, deep nets have come to rival human observers at object recognition. They are therefore increasingly used for object recognition in computer and artificial intelligence applications, such as self-driving cars.

Researchers have begun to use deep nets to understand how the brain transforms

incoming visual signals into meaningful object representations. Deep nets may provide a good model of the neural computations that support this transformation. To determine how good of a model deep nets are, researchers assess whether their internal representations match the object representations computed by the brain.

"We want to see if it is the same so we can build a plausible model of how visual processing in humans works," said Mur. "The better the model, the better we understand how the brain works."

Mur plans to work on these questions with researchers from the Department of Psychology, and from other faculties, including Jörn Diedrichsen, a Professor in the Department of Computer Science.

"Western is a great place to be, because there is an institutional focus on neuroscience and a lot of opportunity for interdisciplinary work," said Mur. "I want to bridge cognitive neuroscience and computer science."

In her future research, Mur will examine how the brain flexibly integrates visual meanings with behavioural goals. Much of these functions take place in the frontal cortex.

"My research is extending to include higher order cognition," said Mur, "and that is another exciting reason to be at Western."

Marieke Mur has joined the Department of Psychology and the Brain and Mind Institute.

Mur uses fMRI and computational modelling to research how the brain extracts meaning from incoming visual signals, and how it flexibly integrates that meaning with ongoing behavioural goals to produce appropriate responses. For example, when we are driving, our brain interprets the scene around us: we may recognize pedestrians, other cars, and perhaps a yellow traffic light. How we respond to these objects depends on their meaning and on the current situation and goals. For example, if we are in a hurry, we may decide to drive through, otherwise, we may stop.

Over the past decade, Mur and other researchers have developed novel brain imaging analysis methods for measuring the patterns of activity that different objects elicit in the brain – leading to the discovery that the visual cortex acts as an object classifier – generating patterns of activity that distinguish biologically meaningful categories of objects. For instance, the visual cortex generates very distinct patterns of activity for animate versus inanimate objects, e.g. pedestrians versus cars.



Meet your new digital colleague

Researchers study how companies can make the most out of AI employees.

Siri, Alexa and Cortana.

Artificial Intelligence is making its way into our homes and smartphones, and is increasingly finding its place in the workforce.

A group of researchers from Western's Department of Psychology has partnered with an AI start-up company to study how companies can most effectively integrate AI into their operations. The project is funded by Mitacs.

"For many workers, there may be a fear of replacement, but there is also value in augmenting the skills of existing employees," Alex Benson, Assistant Professor, said. "Many companies are looking for ways to leverage AI technology in the workplace for the betterment of workers."

John Meyer, Professor, and Julia McMnamin, a PhD student in the department, make up the rest of the research team.

McMnamin has been working with Kiite, an AI start-up company, to study the implementation of an AI powered intelligent sales coach, and better understand how human workers interact and react to the technology.

In the testing phase, the Kiite bot has been introduced in the offices of a number of companies. Kiite has developed the bot to assist companies with the on-boarding process of new employees and increasing employees' access to information to help them perform better in their organizational role. Workers are encouraged to ask the chat-bot questions about the company, procedures, and other information.

In the study, McMnamin has interviewed workers from participating companies to explore their baseline attitudes of AI in the workplace, as well as how they would like to use a chat-bot.

"We are trying to understand why people are liable to trust or dis-trust an AI co-worker," McMnamin said, including considering what kind of questions people would approach a human co-worker with, and which they would ask an AI co-worker.

McMnamin plans to keep interviewing users and will provide feedback to the product developers, to assist with the design of the Kiite bot.

"Users tend to support the idea that AI can take on tedious tasks and workers can focus on high-level tasks they enjoy," said McMnamin. "We want to know how companies can implement AI so employees feel more empowered. It's important to understand the range of potential reactions."

"There is a real need to understand the ways in which working alongside AI technology may support or thwart employees in their day-to-day job functions," said Benson. "On average, AI is viewed as more objective and consistent in its decision making. Interestingly, this means that people tend to place more trust in AI to do specific tasks than humans. However, people lose trust in AI quicker if there are errors. To err is human, so we are more accepting of mistakes from people."

The partnership with Kiite has been a chance to be part of an emerging field of study. "To study something as it is being developed and implemented is rare," said Benson.

For McMnamin, the project has been an opportunity for hands-on research and knowledge translation. "One of the most difficult things in our area of research is getting access to participants in the workplace," she said. "It's a great opportunity to talk to people about their experiences as they happen."

The team expects to complete the study and analysis of data in summer 2019.

Two decades of visionary leadership

Celebrating Mel Goodale's twenty-year tenure as Director of the Brain and Mind Institute

After nearly 20 years, Professor Mel Goodale has stepped down as Director of the Brain and Mind Institute (BMI) at Western.

Founded in 2000, the BMI is now one of the top centres for cognitive neuroscience in the world. Goodale led it from its inception as the Centre for Brain and Mind in 2000 until early 2019. He is now able to devote himself full time to his students, and to the cognitive neuroscience research he loves.

Goodale has a long history with Western University. He received his PhD from Western in 1969, and then after a postdoctoral fellowship at Oxford, and a lectureship at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. He returned to a faculty position at Western in 1977.

Goodale has devoted his career to Western, to the BMI, and to the cognitive neuroscience of vision, a field in which he has made fundamental contributions. In addition to his appointments in the Departments of Psychology and Physiology & Pharmacology, Goodale co-founded Western's Graduate Program in Neuroscience in 1991, which expanded to include more than 90 researchers and an undergraduate program.



Goodale, together with his colleague and friend David Milner, used neuropsychological methods with a brain-damaged individual known as DF to demonstrate that “seeing” isn’t one single process. Rather, one brain system enables us to identify objects in the world while another system enables us to act on – to reach for, to grasp, and to manipulate – objects. Goodale and Milner’s discovery in 1992 of this human perception-for-action visual system, which built on years of their careful research in a nonhuman model, has transformed what it means “to see”.

Starting in 1994, Goodale and Ravi Menon, now a member of the BMI and director of the Centre for Metabolic Mapping at Robarts, collaborated to make Western the site for the strongest fMRI scanners for studying the human brain in Canada and establish Western as a leading national and international site for cognitive neuroscience.

“The idea of a formal centre for promoting research in cognitive neuroscience grew slowly. It emerged from the natural collaborations that developed amongst a number of us across campus who were interested in how the brain gives rise to cognitive processing and behaviour,” said Goodale. “These natural grass-roots collaborations led to an application in 1999 to a successful MRC/CIHR for a Group Grant on the neural foundations of action and perception.”

By 2000 the Centre for Brain and Mind was the focus of cognitive neuroscience at Western. The stellar research of Centre members, as well as Goodale’s tireless advocacy, ensured University support that enabled Western to attract a Canada Excellence Research Chair position and several ancillary positions to the Centre in 2011, when the name was changed to the BMI.

“BMI grew organically from a small core of researchers interested in how the brain supported action and perception,” said Menon. “It really was Mel’s leadership and vision and the cross-fertilization between like-minded faculty members that blossomed into what is the BMI today.”



“The BMI today is a result of the evolution of a quarter century of modern cognitive neuroscience at Western and it’s been an absolute delight to work with Mel along that whole journey.”

- Ravi Menon

In 2013, cognitive neuroscience at Western was named a Cluster of Research Excellence by the University, which was accompanied by \$12.5 million to the BMI and six faculty hires. Work on the new Western Interdisciplinary Research Building, which now houses some core BMI members and their labs, was begun shortly thereafter. In 2015/2016 BMI members applied for, and successfully obtained, \$66 million in funding from the federal Canada First Research Excellence Fund for the BrainsCAN initiative, which supports cognitive neuroscience research at Western, and which enabled further faculty hires.

“Mel has a remarkable ability to bring people together, both within the university and building reputation and connections outside the university,” said Bob Andersen, Dean of the Faculty of Social Science. “He is an exceptional researcher, and an institutional builder on a level most people could only dream about.”

Since 2013, 29 faculty members of the BMI have been hired in 14 different departments. Under Goodale’s leadership, the BMI has grown from a small nucleus of researchers to a community of 84 core and associate principal investigators drawn from seven faculties at the University, as well as from the Robarts and Lawson Research Institutes.

“The greatest achievement, I believe, has been the creation of a community of collaborative scientists, both PIs and trainees, who produce cutting-edge research in cognitive neuroscience,” said Goodale. “It would not be an exaggeration to say the BMI is recognized world-wide as a leading centre for research in this field – and as a place where people work well together.”

Building on this success, BMI members have, in the last five years, attracted equipment and operating funding from a large variety of provincial, federal and international sources. They supervise large numbers of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, and engage in hundreds of national and international collaborations across all five continents. Under Goodale’s leadership, growth of the BMI team has emphasized not just research excellence but recruitment of energetic, optimistic, and community-minded individuals who work together collegially.

“Mel’s a treasure to the faculty and to the university,” said Andersen, “His energy and vision were clear to me the first time I met him. For Mel, it wasn’t about him or his achievements. He wanted to promote the work of others, and make it clear how neuroscience is important.”

“It’s an important lesson to realize that the grass-roots initiatives that ultimately led to the BMI take years to build. And also that the time and effort involved to bring that shared vision to fruition builds friendships and collaborations that are lasting,” said Menon. “The BMI today is a result of the evolution of a quarter-century of modern cognitive neuroscience at Western and it’s been an absolute delight to work with Mel along that whole journey”.

Aside from his tireless work on the BMI, Goodale has published more than 375 papers so far, which have been cited more than 20,000 times. His many contributions have been recognized locally, nationally and internationally. He is a Distinguished University Professor and Canada Research Chair (Tier I) at Western, he is a Fellow of the American Psychological Society, has won multiple awards for distinguished contributions and leadership from the Canadian Society for Brain, Behaviour, and Cognitive Science (CSBBCS), and is an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, the Royal Society of Biology (UK) and the Royal Society (UK).

A search led by Western’s Vice President (Research) resulted in Ingrid Johnsrude being selected to succeed Goodale as BMI director. Johnsrude was recruited from Queen’s five years ago, and is a Western Research Chair, jointly appointed in the departments of Psychology and Communication Sciences and Disorders. Her aim is to work with colleagues to continue to improve the excellence and impact of neuroscience research at Western, and in London.

“What a marvellous thing (Goodale) has built by bringing people together who share a common phenotype, a highly collaborative, low-ego group of excellent scientists, really great people to work with,” said Johnsrude. “I don’t know whether Mel did this on purpose, or whether it just happened, but there is a very particular phenotype here and it has served the institute very well.”

Union strong

As the share of workers belonging to a labour union has dropped, new research looks at the impact this change has had on non-unionized workers.



- Submitted Photo

Across the US and Canada, the share of workers belonging to a labour union has dropped dramatically, and this has resulted in significant loss of wages for non-unionized workers, according to new research.

New research from Patrick Denice, Assistant Professor of Sociology at Western University, and his colleague Jake Rosenfeld at Washington University in St. Louis, entitled “Unions and Nonunion Pay in the United States, 1977-2015”, has investigated the lost wage potential among non-union workers in the private sector due to a decrease in unionization.

“We tend to think of unions as self-interested, which is true to some extent,” said Denice, “but even if you aren’t in a union, you benefit from a strong union environment.”

The pair looked at the wages of non-union, private sector workers in occupations and regions with high and low union rates; that is, they compared wages of people working in the same types of jobs, in similar places, with different rates of unionization. Accounting for the impact of automation, de-industrialization, and off-shoring, their findings show that wages are higher among non-unionized workers in places where unions are stronger. There are a number of reasons why strong unions would benefit unorganized workers. If there is a unionized workplace in an area, Denice said, other non-unionized local employers might increase their own wages and benefits in order to compete for workers and to discourage potential union organization in their own workplace.

In the 1970s, one in three, or around 33 per cent, of private sector workers in the United States were members of a union; the current rate is approximately 6.7 per cent. Since the 1970s, changes in how employers view and deal with unions, as well as changes in legislation, including

states’ passage of “right-to-work” laws, have contributed to the weakening of unions. Denice said that de-industrialization has also had an effect, as organized labour’s concentration in the manufacturing sector left unions particularly vulnerable to off-shoring, automation, and the closing of factories.

“If the private sector labour movement hadn’t declined from its late-1970s levels, non-union men working full-time would be making about \$3,000 more annually, on average, and women would be making just under \$1,000 more each year,” said Denice.

The gender disparity is due, in large part, to the fact that jobs predominantly filled by men were more heavily unionized than those predominantly filled by women.

The results, Denice said, show that even non-unionized workers have a stake in the health of the labour movement.

In August 2018, voters in Missouri struck down the state’s proposed right-to-work legislation, suggesting that people may see the benefit of unions, even if they are not part of a union themselves.

“Even relatively moderate rates of unionization can have benefits for non-union workers,” said Denice.

Policy makers who are interested in reducing pay inequality and closing the gap between the highest and lowest earners should see unions as a way to raise those nearer the bottom, regardless of whether those specific workers are unionized or not, said Denice.

Looking to the future, Denice said that to the extent that union rates are falling in other places, they may see a decline in wages.

“The US is an outlying case of severe union decline, particularly in its private sector, but there are similar patterns playing out elsewhere.”

**“Even relatively moderate rates of unionization can have benefits for non-union workers,”
- Patrick Denice.**



- Image by en:User:Jengod - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3076647>

Parental parity

Despite policy objectives of provincial and federal governments, use of parental leave is often unequal

How can governments encourage equal use of parental benefits?

Some governments provide parental benefit which offer financial support for parents to temporarily stay home with new children. During this time, parents and infants form critical bonds, and having this time improves both parent and child outcomes. But, not everyone has equal ability to access these benefits or chooses to use them, and policy changes often affect some subgroups more than others.

Rachel Margolis, Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology, along with her colleagues Michael Haan and Anders Holm, also from the department, and Feng Hou, from Statistics Canada, investigated how policy changes that extended benefits and offered new options impacted patterns of use and sharing parental leave in Canada.

Since 2000, two major changes in parental benefits were implemented in Canada.

In 2001, federal parental benefits to be shared between the two parents were extended from 10 to 35 weeks, which, combined with already existing maternity benefits (15 weeks), provided a total of 50 weeks paid time-off in the first year of a child's life. The hours worked required to qualify for benefits were also reduced.

In 2006, the province of Quebec introduced a new, five-week, non-transferable benefits period for fathers. It also increased the benefits rate and introduced flexibility in how benefits could be taken.

Both sets of changes were made, in part, to encourage fathers to use benefits. They were also designed to increase benefits eligibility for people in lower income brackets. The 2006 changes were more effective in this regard, by specifying time reserved for fathers.

"When time to be shared is introduced, women tend to take more of it, and nursing generally plays an important role in this decision-making," said Margolis. "The changes in Quebec gave Dads who wanted to take leave the ok to do so, both from their partners, and from their work."



**“When time to be shared is introduced, women tend to take more of it,”
- Rachel Margolis**

Margolis said that high-income families are more likely to use parental leave in general, as they are more likely to qualify for leave through work requirements. Both the 2001 and 2006 policies were successful in encouraging greater use of benefits among lower-income families, but the policies encouraged fathers' use of benefits much more in middle and high income families. Quebec's reform led to more sharing across all income groups, but three times as much for middle- and high-income families than low-income families.

When thinking about future potential federal policy changes, Margolis said that if the goal of governments is to create more gender equality, policies should provide time reserved for each parent separately, including reserved weeks for both parents, and higher top-ups.

More equal sharing has a big effect on how parents split household duties, and how they interact with their children, Margolis said.

These results are timely, as since 2015 the federal Liberal government has announced two other changes to parental benefits.

The first is an extension for federally-regulated employees, allowing them to spread 12-months of parental benefits over 18-months, at a lower pay-out per month.

Margolis said this is not likely to have the desired effect of having more fathers take time, as it does not actually make it easier for men to take time off and may even result in less women going back to work after the birth of a child.

"Eighteen months is thought to be too long if the goal is to get women back to work," said Margolis. "The optimal time off is around six months off."

In March 2018, an increased benefits of five additional weeks off if both parents opt to take time came into affect. Margolis said this is likely to be more effective for increasing benefits use among fathers.

"I don't think it will increase use as much in the rest of Canada, as it did in Quebec," said Margolis. "It will likely have more uptake in gender-equal couples and have more impact among middle-income families. In those household with more traditional gender roles, the five-week change likely won't have as great an impact on parental leave for Dads."

Margolis and her colleagues are continuing their research on parental benefits, with an examination of how benefits use impacts wage growth, both within couples and as a family unit.

Honouring excellence in teaching

Wendy Pearson was recently named a 2019 recipient of the prestigious 3M National Teaching Fellowship

- Photo by Paul Mayne; Story by Debora Van Brenk



For Western Professor Wendy Pearson, teaching excellence is about valuing people as much as pedagogy. It is a lifelong commitment that has earned her recognition among the national classroom elite.

Pearson was named a 2019 recipient of the prestigious 3M National Teaching Fellowship, one of 10 recipients nationwide. The award goes to an elite group each year who show excellence in teaching philosophy. She becomes the 25th winner in Western history.

"I'm fairly experimental as a teacher so I may be talking (to colleagues) about this thing that I tried that worked really well or this thing that was a total flop," she said.

"I'm not really enamoured of the test/exam/essay combination most people do some variation around. For me, the value of being experimental is that it does do something for a specific course but it's also a way of trying to get people to think a little bit differently. They're all used to doing the research essay; they're all used to the final exam; they're all used to these specific things. So it's one specific set of skills. But once they've mastered those specific skills, or once they're better at them, I don't think that's always pushing them beyond their comfort zone."

Her teaching and research engage a range of fields, including film studies, feminist theory, cultural studies, queer theory, science fiction and Indigenous studies.

While teaching Canadian film studies, Pearson realized that few students had even watched Canadian films. That led her to create Canada Watches, a competition in which all students watched different films, created Wiki pages to promote them to their classmates, and then voted on the best of the bunch. The winning team received movie passes – and all gained insight into far more movies than would have been possible in a traditionally designed class.

For one of her Queer Studies classes, students designed an infographic or a public service announcement to explain why queer theory is important today.

That wasn't as successful, but it was also an opportunity to learn, she said, recalling a presentation by English professor emeritus Allan Gedalof (himself a 3M National Teaching Fellowship recipient). His teaching philosophy was to fail, try again, fail again and fail better.

"That sums up for me a lot of what we do. When something fails, or doesn't completely succeed, you just have to do it better next time," said Pearson, Chair of Women's Studies and Feminist Research.

Established in 1986, the 3M National Teaching Fellowship is awarded annually by 3M Canada and the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE), a private-sector and not-for-profit co-operative initiative. The award recognizes university and college teachers who have shown local, national and international leadership in teaching excellence and have a superlative, sustained undergraduate teaching career.

Of Pearson, the award committee said, in part: "Good professors inspire their students to be better scholars. Great professors inspire students to be better people. Wendy Pearson's approach to social justice is personal. She starts with individuals and figures out what they need to function in the world, and she makes the changes happen that will make those individuals comfortable and capable. With patience and quiet guidance, she creates a classroom community of engaged individuals who discover how to learn and find their own place. In short, she prepares students to change the world."

That self- and world-changing notion is entirely by design, Pearson said.

Pearson hopes she has encouraged students to have "the confidence to think through their ideas, and the evidence to support them and express them well."

She added, "I've been the 'out' person in the classroom since 1984 when I was teaching part-time at Trent (University). Quite often, I might be the only out faculty member the students know. That's less true these days. But if you're white, straight, middle-class – all those things – the classroom is kind of designed for you. Everything is sort of set for your comfort level and comes out of your cultural background. If you don't fall into one of those boxes, it can be a much less welcoming space.

"What I've been trying to do is make the classroom as inclusive as possible so that people don't come in and feel really uncomfortable."

She said one rewarding aspect of her work has been to be part of a team that led the department out of declining enrolment and into new and better course offerings.

Pearson has developed about two dozen new courses at Western and won the Edward G. Pleva Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2016.

Among her many advocacy activities, Pearson is co-founder of the Queer Caucus at Western, which links LGBTQ+ people and their allies from across campus to forge a strong community, and organized an annual Queer Research Day.

Farewells

The Faculty of Social Science is made up of excellent professors and lecturers, dedicated researchers and teachers, working to make to create the best student experience in a research oriented university.

This year, we are saying goodbye to many faculty members who dedicated many years to our mission.

Nick Kuiper

Professor, Psychology
Joined Western in 1978

Research has focused on individual differences in sense of humour, with implications for stress, coping, psychological well-being, physical health, and social interactions



Don Abelson

Professor, Political Science
Joined Western in 1993

Specializes in American Politics and US foreign policy, the role of think tanks and their efforts to influence public opinion and public policy



Salim Mansur

Associate Professor, Political Science
Joined Western in 1987

Specialized his focus on international relations and comparative politics with special interest in the politics of South Asia and the Middle East.



Linda Eligh

Lecturer, DAN Management
Joined Western in 2002

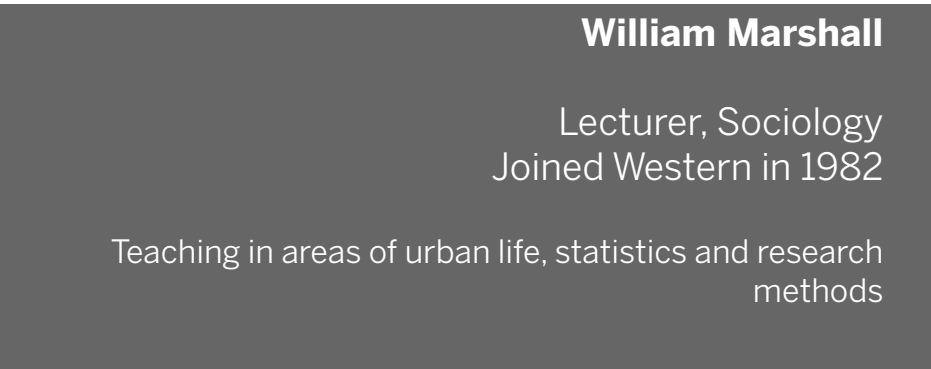
Teaching in the Human Resources stream, including Recruitment and Selection, Strategic Human Resources Planning, and Training and Development



Albert Katz

Professor, Psychology
Joined Western in 1976

Researches the role of social and cultural factors in the processing of non-literal language, both online and offline



William Marshall

Lecturer, Sociology
Joined Western in 1982

Teaching in areas of urban life, statistics and research methods

Jim Neufeld

Professor, Psychology
Joined Western in 1972

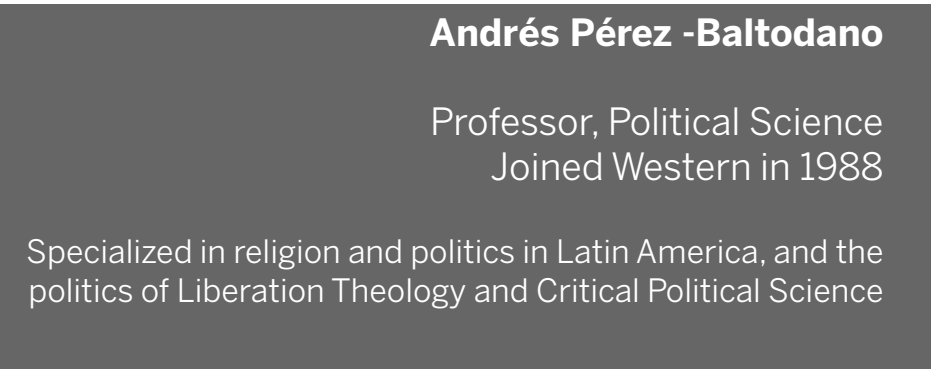
Research is centered on psychological stress and coping, and as well on cognitive functioning in schizophrenia



Martin Kavaliers

Professor, Psychology
Joined Western in 1981

Researches social behaviour and social neuroscience; and how individuals deal with the problems and threats that they encounter in the natural environment



Andrés Pérez -Baltodano

Professor, Political Science
Joined Western in 1988

Specialized in religion and politics in Latin America, and the politics of Liberation Theology and Critical Political Science



Mitch Rothstein

Professor, DAN Management
Joined Western in 1988

Recent research involves developing and applying a model of workplace resiliency that can be used for leadership development

Klaus-Peter Ossenkopp

Professor, Psychology
Joined Western in 1980

Researches in the area of behavioural neuroscience with an emphasis on brain-behavior relationships



David Sherry

Professor, Psychology
Joined Western in 1993

Research focuses on the evolution and neurobiology of memory and spatial orientation

Chris Smart

Professor, Geography
Joined Western in 1988

Research focuses on integrating contemporary hydrological monitoring technologies into appropriate spatial and temporal measurement schemes



In Memoriam: Brock Millman



The Faculty of Social Science mourns the passing of Brock Millman, Professor of History.

The following text was prepared by Professor Jonathan Vance:

The History Department is mourning the loss of a dear friend, colleague, and teacher – Professor Brock Millman died on 3 December 2018 at the age of 54.

A graduate of The University of Western Ontario, the University of London, and McGill University, Brock joined the faculty of his alma mater in 2001. His teaching in military history and International Relations was shaped by an incisive mind and animated by an acerbic wit. His standards were high and he expected a lot from his students, but at the same time he was a very forgiving teacher whose kindness knew few bounds.

As a scholar, Brock’s range was impressive. After publishing fine monographs on Anglo-Turkish relations, the British government, Somaliland, and Canada during the First World War, he turned to researching the Irish Revolution – a history that he found charmingly irrational. He had an encyclopedic memory, from which he could pull endless amusing references from obscure and unusual archival collections that he had visited.

Brock would cringe at being called “passionate” about anything, so we’ll just say that he was deeply committed to many things – to scholarship, to his family and friends, to his students, to his Regiment. His integrity was complete; he was a man to whom principles mattered a great deal. His sense of duty and service was strong – Brock went to Afghanistan in part because, having sent his own soldiers there for many years, he believed that it was only right that he send himself as well.

We shall never know what wonderful books Brock would have written if he had the chance – or what lectures he would have given, what seminars he would have led. But we know that we have lost a remarkable mind, a true heart, and an unquenchable spirit. Go well, dear friend.

Recognizing our outstanding faculty

The strength of the Faculty of Social Science comes from the expertise of our faculty members. Congratulations to our award winning faculty members.

David Sherry, Department of Psychology

Distinguished University Professor

Sherry is widely acknowledged as the international research leader in his field. His research, teaching and service activities have helped shape Western's global reputation as an internationally leader in the fields of neuroscience as well as avian research, and for being an international destination for students.



Godwin Arku, Department of Geography

Western University Faculty Scholar

Arku has made exceptional contributions to research, public policy, and student training in the area of Urban and Economic Geography, with a focus on three substantive areas of research: housing, urban development, and economic development.

Shelley McKellar, Department of History

Western University Faculty Scholar

McKellar is known internationally as one of Canada's leading experts in the history of medicine and is a specialist in the history of surgery, medical technologies, and the material culture of medicine. She is also a prominent public historian and the co-director of the Medical Artifact Collection at Western University.



Laura Stephenson, Department of Political Science

Western University Faculty Scholar

Stephenson has been at the forefront in pushing the field on comparative political behaviour and institutions in new and substantial directions. Her research investigates how individuals behave politically in response to the institutional structures in their lives.