

Social Sciences & Humanities NEWSLETTER

Betsy Birmingham appointed Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

Dr. Elizabeth J. Birmingham is a distinguished academic with a wide range of interests including English literature, linguistics, architectural theory and criticism, social innovation, and institutional transformation.

For the past 18 years, Betsy has been teaching at North Dakota State University, a land grant, research-intensive university with an enrolment of about 14,500 students. Over the years she has held a variety of positions including Associate Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Chair of the Department of English, and Director of Upper-Division Writing.

Betsy was born and raised in Iowa and chose to begin university studies at a small catholic college not far from Chicago, Illinois. After graduating with an undergraduate degree in English literature and art history, she went on to complete a master's degree and a doctorate at Iowa State University, but not before spending a year in Australia working as a Fulbright Research Fellow. Her PhD dissertation focused on the ways in which the work of many women architects was ignored or dismissed in the discipline, focusing especially on work of Marion Mahony Griffin (1871-1961), an American architect whose work with Frank Lloyd Wright revolutionized American architecture.

Since taking up her position as dean on July 1, 2018, Betsy Birmingham has been learning as much as she can about Lakehead University's processes and procedures. "The diverse units that comprise the Faculty all have different needs in terms of what they want to accomplish with their students," says Betsy, "whether that is in doing experiential learning, or interdisciplinary learning, or plugging in to the humanities' traditions." As an American citizen now living in Canada, she is also



keen to know more about the history and worldviews of Indigenous Canadians.

While teaching at North Dakota State University, Betsy Birmingham was deeply involved in institutional transformation around issues of gender equity on campus. She was a member of the FORWARD team, a grassroots group of women faculty members who collaborated to receive a grant of \$3.75 million to recruit, retain, and promote women.

She and her husband Kevin Brooks (a Canadian academic originally from Manitoba) have always been drawn to the area around Lake Superior and the diverse interests of the people living in the region. Together they have collaborated to raise five children: Caity, an adult living in Los Angeles; Griffin, a university student studying in Japan; and three who have joined them in Thunder Bay, Makeer, 14, Deng, 12, and Agot, 11.

Betsy is excited about opportunities to learn about the Faculty's goals for the future and working together to support the diverse needs and interests of our students. She added that she would like to thank Dr. Rhonda Koster, "whose tenure as acting dean provided a vibrant model for support of the Faculty, interaction with students, and connection with the community. Rhonda laid the best possible groundwork for the future, and I know I am joined by both students and the Faculty in thanking her."

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Professors at Lakehead are creating life-changing learning experiences

John Danahy had always wanted to visit the battlefields of northern Europe where so many Canadian soldiers, including his own grandfather, fought during WW1. John got that opportunity by taking a new course on Battlefield Tourism developed by Professor Harvey Lemelin in the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks, and Tourism (ORPT).

The 10-day trip to visit battlefield sites and memorials in France, Belgium, and Holland in 2014 was organized by the students themselves. Each student was required to participate in a variety of learning activities as well as to conduct research that was later presented at conferences and published in a peer-reviewed journal.

For John Danahy, the journey was the fulfillment of a lifelong dream. As a young man, his grandfather had served with the Canadian Forces on the motor machine gun brigade, a new style of mobilized fighting that eventually replaced trench warfare. During the trip, John worked on an independent research project to examine how this brigade (and the subsequent rolling barrages) were integrated into the tourist displays and exhibits.



His classmate Sarah Shruiff also worked on an independent research project. She evaluated the displays, exhibits, audio guides, films, and signage used at each of the battlefield tourism sites. She chose one display per museum and analyzed it in detail,

and then she did an overall evaluation of each site. Now Sarah works with Parks Canada as an interpretation officer/coordinator with the Lake Superior National Marine Conservation Area. She says the trip had an enormous impact on her both personally and professionally, and she credits this journey with increasing her passion for interpretation and museums.

“No amount of reading can replace being in the actual place and standing next to the mass grave of 5,000 soldiers,” says Sarah. “Battlefield tourism is not about glorifying or justifying war. It is there to remember all who lost their lives and to ensure that we don’t forget what happened.”

Since joining Lakehead University as a faculty member in 2004, Professor Harvey Lemelin has organized scores of outdoor adventures and collaborative, community-based research projects. Yet even he was impressed by how much his students matured during the Battlefield Tourism course.

Working on community-based research projects can be difficult at times and that is one of the reasons Lemelin will always emphasize the importance of maintaining



professionalism, no matter what happens! On one occasion, when his students' recommendations for a particular type of tourism development did not align with the expectations of the client, he recalls having to step in to defend the integrity of the students' research. But even in these types of difficult situations he sees an opportunity for learning. Says Lemelin: "When you look back on all journeys, which trips do you remember most? The ones that were calm and smooth sailing, or the ones when you had to cope with the unexpected?"



ORPT Professor Harvey Lemelin (third from right) developed a new course that enabled Lakehead students to conduct research at historic battlefield sites in northern Europe in 2014

“Writing is problem solving.”

– Professor Scott Pound

Professor Scott Pound teaches creative writing in the Department of English and is the recipient of Lakehead's 2015 Distinguished Instructor Award. He, too, has been developing transformative learning experiences for his students.

Recently he collaborated with ORPT in developing a course called Adventure Writing, which took place during the study break in February. He and his students went on a rigorous five-day camping, dogsledding, and skiing trip near Ely, Minnesota, and then wrote about their experiences, each from their own perspective. "We slept out-of-doors in unbelievably cold temperatures," says Pound, "Even breathing was a challenge."

In advance of the trip the class studied the genre of adventure/travel writing and completed numerous writing exercises to practise narrative conventions such as conflict, setting, plot, and characterization.

"In this genre, the writer is the protagonist and so students really had to think about what was motivating



Professor Scott Pound

them to take on this challenge," says Scott Pound. "Were they proficient outdoor adventurers who wanted to test their abilities? Or, was this a new challenge? After the trip, the students presented their first draft in class, and then proceeded to do multiple revisions based on feedback from the group. Their final piece was submitted to me for evaluation."

In another creative writing course, Life Writing, Scott Pound partnered with Hospice Northwest in Thunder Bay to pair students with individuals nearing the end of their lives. The students were asked to interview their subjects and then write a legacy document that would be turned over to the family.

"There was no template for this kind of project," says Pound. "We weren't interested in bland chronological summaries; we wanted a compelling narrative that revealed the humanity of each person."



Gavin Shields

Student Gavin Shields believes his legacy piece was probably the most significant thing he has ever written because there was a real honesty about it. "You aren't making anything up," he says, "And you must stay true to your partner's voice."

Gavin was partnered with an elderly woman whose husband had recently passed away. He recalls their first conversation when he made a note of every time her eyes lit up. "When I saw that, I knew the event she was talking about was significant." In the end, Gavin wrote about the entire span of her life, focussing on seven important turning points.

"The thing about experiential learning is that the professor's advice can only take you so far. Sometimes it felt as if we were on a sports team and Scott was the coach. The game plan was meant to be this and this, but you never know. Scott was learning as much as we were."

ALUMNI PROFILES

Michel S. Beaulieu

History Professor

Professor Michel S. Beaulieu (HBA/BEd'01, MA'03) is an award-winning academic who believes that historians have an important role in society. Their job is not only to study and interpret history but also to provide the materials, or the means, by which people can explore the past.

"One of the best ways to understand others is to have a conversation just like the discussions families and friends have around the kitchen table. That doesn't mean you have to necessarily agree with everyone's perspective," he says, "but it is the best way to build relationships and jointly explore and understand the roots of issues and current debates."

Michel Beaulieu's mother is from Newfoundland and his father's family, French-Canadians, worked in the lumber industry in Quebec and Ontario. Michel grew up in Brampton, Ontario, but he discovered early on that Thunder Bay was where he wanted to live and study.

As an undergraduate student at Lakehead, Michel volunteered with a number of non-profits, including the Thunder Bay Museum, and soon began making connections with national, provincial, and regional organizations, on whose boards he would later serve. Some of these included the Ontario Historical Society, the Canadian International Council, Archives Association of Ontario, and the Multicultural History Society of Ontario.

When one of his History professors (Ronald Harpelle) suggested he investigate a group of amateur filmmakers working in the Lakehead in the 1920s, Michel soon realized he had a topic for a master's thesis. Later he worked alongside Kelly Saxberg, a contemporary filmmaker living in Thunder Bay, who was documenting the life of the group's leader, Dorothea Mitchell, and editing her last silent film entitled *The Fatal Flower*.

It was while Michel was working on his PhD at Queen's University that his academic interests began to shift away from the history of Ontario film and theatre and move toward the province's wider social, political, and economic history. He became fascinated with the history of the Finnish-Canadian community as well as the labour history of natural resources industries such as mining and forestry. Says Michel: "I began to ask questions about why so little [outside of Thunder Bay] was known about the Finnish Labour Temple in Port Arthur, and that the meeting to form Canada's first social democratic party occurred here in 1911."

Since joining the faculty at Lakehead University in 2007, he has produced more than 40 academic publications, either alone or in collaboration with colleagues. Now chair of the Department of History, he is currently studying a number of single-industry communities in Canada, Finland, and Uruguay, and reflecting on what makes them sustainable.

Professor Michel Beaulieu is definitely a fan of the "applied" approach to the study of history. His classes are often held in



local museums and libraries, with assignments contributing to ongoing community projects. He also has provided graduate students opportunities to visit the Library and Archives Canada, which is just down the street from the Parliament buildings in Ottawa. He says it is important for student to "get comfortable" working with original historical documents, some of which date back to the early seventeenth century.

Beaulieu still spends prodigious amounts of time volunteering in the community and has been honoured with several awards for his contributions, including a Young Alumni Award from Lakehead (2010), a Heritage Award from the City of Thunder Bay (2011), and a Northwestern Ontario Visionary Award (2016). His work building connections with the Canadian Armed Forces also led to the Department of History receiving a Canadian Forces Liaison Council's Award of Excellence for Best Practices in Employer Support: Educational Institution (2015).

Currently he is president of The Champlain Society, an executive member of the Northwestern Ontario Archives Association, vice-president of the Ontario Historical Society, and vice-president of the Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society and co-editor of its peer-reviewed journal *Papers & Records*.

As the outgoing president of the Alumni Association of Lakehead University (his two-year term ends in October 2018), Michel is proud of the way his *alma mater* is connecting with graduates in order to support future students. Not long ago, he identified an underfunded departmental scholarship in need of topping up. He made a gift and a yearly pledge to the scholarship, and then encouraged other members in the department do the same.

Of all people Michel Beaulieu, the historian, can appreciate the long-term impact Lakehead University is having on Canadians.

DAVID A. GROULX

Poet

Poetry by David A. Groulx (BA'97) speaks to the daily realities of living as an Indigenous person in Canada. Like brilliant shards of glass, says one reviewer, his poems cut deep with their clear-eyed honesty. To date, he has published 10 books of poetry and his work has been featured in over 180 magazines in 15 countries around the world.

David was raised in the Northern Ontario mining community of Elliot Lake and is proud of his Aboriginal roots: his mother is Anishnabe and his father is French-Canadian. He chose Lakehead for its Indigenous Learning program, which he says was unique at the time because it came from an Indigenous perspective. Says Groulx: "That was and still is important to me, to hear your own voice and think your own thoughts as an Indigenous person, a voice that often gets drowned out in the dominant society."

At Lakehead, David Groulx received the Munro Family Memorial Prize for Poetry and then moved on to study at



the En'owkin Centre in Penticton, BC, where he received the Simon J. Lucas Jr. Memorial Award. In 2011, he won the Poetry NOW 3rd Annual Battle of the Bards and the following year he served as writer-in-residence for Open Book: Ontario. In 2014 he was nominated for a National Magazine Award and in 2016 his most recent book, *The Wabigoon River Poems*, was nominated for the Archibald Lampman Award.

In an interview published online by Black Coffee Poet, David Groulx speaks about his motivation for writing poetry. "I want to be a witness," he says, "a witness to the living and a witness to the lives around me and that part of this country that breathes, sweats, bleeds, and dies. I want to speak for the people who wear hard hats and cowboy boots, not scarves and berets."

How It Is to Be Indian in Canada

BY DAVID A. GROULX

You are afraid
conscious that you are not White
you are aware that you are outnumbered
all the time
you feel that you do not belong
But you do
you are always asked stupid questions
like
What's your breed?
What's your Indian name?
What do you do when a coyote passes by?
Do you know so/and/so from Vancouver
or Winnipeg? or Montreal?
When you are Indian in Canada
you know the cops don't normally drive that slow
in Port Arthur or Tuxedo
you know you are a rare commodity for tourists
and easy *pickings* for Children's Aid
your senses are always razor-sharp
on edge
of society
and this makes our lives shorter
and precious

Larissa Speak

Lawyer

Larissa Speak (HBA'08, JD'16) started out by doing an undergraduate degree in English literature at Lakehead University. It was a wise decision that ultimately led to a career in law.

After completing her master's degree in English at Queen's University, Larissa applied and was accepted to be part of Lakehead's inaugural class in its new Faculty of Law. Today she is one of three staff lawyers employed by the Kinna-Aweya Legal Clinic in Thunder Bay.

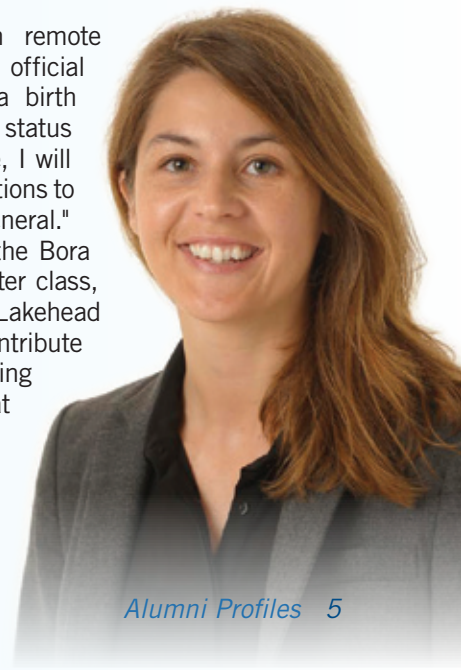
Larissa Speak's first job, after graduation in 2016, was a one-year contract at the Superior Court of Justice, where she conducted research and writing assignments for the judges in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Today, most of her legal work at the Clinic involves advocacy, which she says also makes good use of her research, writing, and communications skills.

Larissa is a member of Fort William First Nation and is happy to be back living in Northwestern Ontario where she is "just a five-minute drive away from a hiking spot." Although she enjoyed living in Kingston for three years, she found it shocking that many people there had no idea where Thunder Bay was located.

Larissa provides poverty law services, which she broadly describes as helping people secure their social service benefits and child benefits. In addition, she assists her clients with housing issues, such as eviction, and she travels regularly to Armstrong, Whitesand First Nation, and Gull Bay First Nation to provide legal services for people living in those communities.

"Many people living in remote communities don't have official identification, and without a birth certificate they cannot get a status card. Often, while I am there, I will help people with their applications to the Office of the Registrar General."

Like most graduates in the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law's charter class, Larissa is a keen supporter of Lakehead University and eager to contribute to the law school's ongoing development. "I had a great experience at Lakehead," she says, "so if the University asks me to do something, I will do it."



Social Sciences and Humanities Undergraduate Research Internship



McKenna Boeckner

UNBOXING THE INTERNET

If you are an undergraduate thinking about doing a master's degree there is no better summer job to have than a Research Internship. Just ask

McKenna Boeckner. In 2017, Dr. Monica Flegel and Dr. Judith Leggatt hired him to assist with their research into online criticism. The two English professors are examining Internet criticism of diversity in Marvel comics; that is, comic books featuring non-white and female superheroes.

McKenna was asked to review YouTube videos and video commentary noting patterns and doing discourse analysis. At the same time, Monica was reviewing the online blogs and Judith was reviewing the online news services. Their findings are being combined for a paper entitled *"Not my Captain America": Race-Bending, Reverse Discrimination and White Panic in the Marvel Comics Fandom* for publication in an anthology on Race in Fandom.

Overall, McKenna was pleased with his contribution to the research project and grateful for the opportunity to edit a six-part YouTube video series about the team's discoveries, entitled *Unboxing the Internet*. He believes the work helped him to secure a place in the University of New Brunswick's graduate program in creative writing, which he begins in the fall of 2018. What advice would he give to students thinking about taking on a Research Internship? "Don't miss the opportunity!"



Professor Isabelle Lemée and Brittany Vescio

ON/NOUS/VOUS

Brittany Vescio says her 2016 Internship with Dr. Isabelle Lemée was invaluable. This was Brittany's first taste of conducting research in the field of linguistics, and it laid the foundation for a thesis she completed the following year for her undergraduate degree in French and Concurrent Education.

Brittany's task was to transcribe a number of tape-recorded conversations made by Lakehead undergraduates speaking French, and then code the data for analysis using a linguistics software program. The research was done for an academic paper Professor Lemée was writing on the acquisition of indefinite subject pronouns (on/nous/vous) by Anglophone learners of French Level 2 from Northwestern Ontario. A year later, Brittany had the opportunity of joining Isabelle to present their findings at an annual conference in Toronto organized by the Association of French Language Studies.

Professor Lemée believes the summer Research Internship was useful because it helped Brittany confirm that she wanted to carry on with postgraduate study after her HBA/HBEd. Says Lemée: "The partnership was constructive for both of us, because it helped the student see the other side of a professor's job (i.e. research) and it helped the professor to know the research skills of a student, which is something that academic work does not always allow us to do."

The Anthropocene

Philosophy Professor Todd Dufresne hired Georgina Chuatico in 2016 to conduct preliminary research for a book he is writing on the Anthropocene (Earth's most recent geologic time period distinguished by being human influenced). Essentially he is trying to think through the implications that global warming has for philosophy and vice versa.

"The book I am creating will incorporate a lot of popular and scholarly sources," says Dr. Dufresne. "Georgina dug up primary materials, like charts and statistics and articles, and sometimes compiled the data for me into original charts or graphs. She saved me a lot of time, which allowed me to focus on the writing and interpretation."

The idea of the Internship is to mentor a young student in the ways of professional research, says Todd Dufresne. "It is a value-added activity that you rarely see at the undergraduate level, and it really gives the student an advantage over others when they move on to graduate work."

Georgina is now at the University of Western Ontario in the second year of a collaborative master's program in sociology, migration, and ethnic relations. She says the summer Internship — with all its freedom and flexibility — enabled her to become more independent, resourceful, and self-disciplined. "I knew I enjoyed researching and learning new things, but after working with Todd I became much more motivated to complete a master's degree," she says. "It is possible that I will go on to do a PhD, but at this point I just want to finish my master's degree and get some work experience, hopefully in the field of immigration."

ALL THINGS MONSTROUS

Andrew Mason was an undergraduate studying psychology and criminology at Lakehead's Orillia campus in 2017 when he was offered an Internship by Dr. Ryan McVeigh, a professor of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Studies. McVeigh needed help in developing a new course on the sociology of monsters. He knew Andrew was a fan of horror fiction having taught him in two other courses, Sociology of the Body and Sociology of Violence.

Andrew's work was broken into two stages. First, he conducted web-based searches in order to compile lists of central academic authors in the field, professional

associations dedicated to studying monsters, and any university or college courses on the topic. Next, he catalogued representations of monsters in popular culture (e.g. movies, television, literature, art, music, and folklore) and produced an annotated bibliography of useful sources.

"The Internship was an effective way to conduct a sweeping review of an existing field and get a sample of how it is currently being treated," says McVeigh. "Since I knew Andrew was a fan of all things monstrous, the job would provide him with the opportunity to develop his research skills and build a knowledge base

around a topic he personally cared about."

Andrew completed the work while holding down a full-time summer job with the YMCA in Orillia. Today, he is contemplating a career in the field of mental health and thinking about doing a master's degree in psychology.

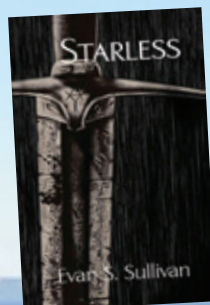
Editor's Note:

The Undergraduate Research Internship program was established in 2016 and is funded by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities and the Alumni Association of Lakehead University.

ALUMNI PROFILE

EVAN SILLS

Fantasy Fiction Writer



Evan Sills (HBA'14, MA'16) has long been a fan of fantasy literature. As child in Grade 6 he started reading J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and by Grade 9 he was writing stories of his own.

In 2017, Evan published his first novel, *Starless*, under the pen name Evan S. Sullivan. Now, with the help of a grant from the Ontario Arts Council, he is completing his second novel set in a similar fantasy world.

"*Starless* is a deconstruction of the genre of heroic fantasy, which focuses on issues of morality, race, gender, and mental health," says

Evan. "I would call it a meeting point between *Game of Thrones* and *Heart of Darkness* with inspiration from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*."

The book is published by UK-based Austin Macauley Publishers Ltd. and can be purchased locally in Chapters and Coles bookstores (in Thunder Bay) as well as online through Amazon.ca and Amazon.com

Currently, Evan Sills is working as a sessional lecturer in the Department of English, where he teaches courses on academic and business writing.

Your legacy is enriching my future.

The support I received through the estate of Florence Shuttleworth-Higgins has allowed me to focus more on my studies, bringing me closer to my career goals and dreams.

~ **Marinda Tran**, Bachelor of Arts
Recipient of the Florence Higgins Music Scholarship
(2017), Lakehead University



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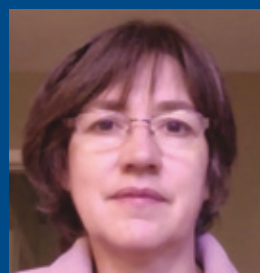
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**EXCEPTIONAL.
UNCONVENTIONAL.**



Lakehead
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BOOKS



Exploring Social Inequality
in the 21st Century: New
Approaches, New Tools,
and Policy Opportunities

**Edited by Dr. Jennifer Jarman and
Paul Lambert**

Published by Routledge

Professor Jennifer Jarman's new book offers a clear and critical overview of current debates about social inequality from the perspective of a group of researchers at the forefront of social stratification analysis.

Originally published as a special issue of the journal *Contemporary Social Science*, the book includes new findings about the growth of wealth inequality in the G20 countries, and a detailed examination of tax policies designed to reduce inequality without affecting economic growth. With substantial contributions to the analysis of inequalities in education, and explanations of the processes and consequences of social and gender-based exclusion, this book is essential reading for anyone interested in understanding contemporary social inequality.

Jennifer Jarman is a Cambridge-educated sociologist who has been teaching at Lakehead's Thunder Bay and Orillia campuses since 2011. Her academic interests focus on employment, equity, law, and the impacts of fast-paced social and economic change.

"My research and teaching explore the changing world of work and its implications for those who slog off to a workplace every day, as well as for those who are unable to find a workplace to slog off to," says Jarman. "I think that understanding the structure of possibilities facing individual workers is important not just for the individuals themselves. It is also the basis for understanding the future of the communities and regions whose continued existence depends upon the ability to foster acceptable, sustainable, and just work."

Professor Jarman's academic publications have focused on the development of equal pay legislation, gender segregation patterns in employment, the global call centre industry, and the growing employment insecurity and inequality of the 21st century. Currently, she is working on a book entitled *The Legal-Rational Society*, which explores the relationship of Canadian law and society both generally, and in the central domains of employment, education, and immigration.

Jennifer Jarman is part of the Resources, Economy and Society Research Group at Lakehead, which presented a full-day forum at the Orillia campus during Research & Innovation Week in March 2018. The event featured a student poster presentation and panel discussions on poverty and civic engagement, understanding food (in)security, and the global food chain.



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