

THE DEADLY FUNGUS
SPREADING WORLDWIDE

WHAT DOES
"SANCTUARY CITY"
REALLY MEAN?

THE CASE FOR
OPEN BORDERS

RODNEY BOBIWASH'S
FIGHT FOR INDIGENOUS
RIGHTS

University of Toronto Magazine

Autumn 2019

BUILDING A BETTER CANADA

Prof. Jennifer Nagel and Mohamad Al Saleh enjoy a day on Toronto's Centre Island



**“BECAUSE REFUGEES HAVE BEEN SO
DISEMPOWERED BY THE EXPERIENCE
OF FLIGHT, THEY MAY BE MORE,
RATHER THAN LESS, SENSITIVE TO THE
POWER RELATIONS IN SPONSORSHIP”**

— U of T law professor Audrey Macklin

P. 16

THE POWER OF GOOD INTENTIONS

Canada's program of private refugee sponsorship has been held up as a model for the world. Could it be even better?

By John Lorinc

Photographs by
Brett Gundlock



From left:
Hanaa Al Bitar,
Mohamad Al Saleh,
Prof. Jennifer Nagel
and Alaa Al Saleh

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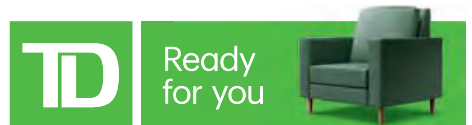
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This shot of Prof. Jennifer Nagel and Mohamad Al Saleh holding hands on Toronto's Centre Island was taken on August 31
by Brett Gundlock

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNIFER ROBERTS



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“AI has its place, and we need it to advance our work and lives. But we also need ‘high touch.’ Losing sight of the value of people has harmful everyday effects.”

BARBARA BAPTISTE, MSC 2005
 “WE’RE BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND WHAT AI CAN AND CAN’T DO,” SPRING 2019



The People vs. AI

Prof. Brian Cantwell Smith, the Reid Hoffman Chair in Artificial Intelligence and the Human, explained why it’s important to understand the limits of artificial intelligence (Spring 2019).

More than 30 years ago, when I started a firm that required “people skills” such as compassion, integrity and

value-based vision, many people came to me and described what technology could do for the company. Some ideas were appropriate and helpful. Back then, I thought of it as “high touch vs. high tech.” Artificial intelligence has its place, and we need it to advance our work and our lives. But we also need “high touch.” Losing sight of the value of people has harmful everyday effects.

BARBARA BAPTISTE, MSC 2005
 TORONTO, ONTARIO

Watching What Kids Eat

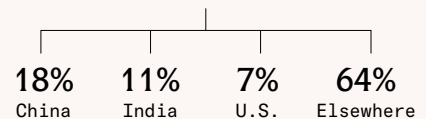
Prof. Mary L’Abbé, who conducts research into the nutritional quality of packaged and restaurant

What city or town were you born in?



44%
 Canada

56%
 Outside Canada



The majority of U of T faculty, staff and students polled were born outside Canada in cities that span the globe, from Porto Alegre, Brazil, to Tehran and Hanoi.

Of these, 18 per cent are from China, 11 per cent from India and seven per cent from the United States.

And of the second-generation Canadians we talked to, 66 per cent have at least one parent of international origin. While many of the polled came from large urban centres (New Delhi, Beijing and Warsaw, to name but a few), small towns were also well represented – including Georgsmarienhütte, Germany, and the market town of Skipton, England.

This highly unscientific poll of 100 U of T members was conducted on two days in July at Sidney Smith Hall on St. George Campus.

Editor and Manager
Scott Anderson

Deputy Editor
Stacey Gibson

Administrative and Editorial Coordinator
Sally Choi

Art Direction and Design
Studio Wyse

Vice-President, U of T Communications
David Estok

Co-Publishers

Barbara Dick

Assistant Vice-President, Alumni Relations

Erin Lemon

Executive Director, Communications and
Public Engagement

Editorial and Advertising Inquiries

416-978-0838

uoft.magazine@utoronto.ca

All correspondence and undeliverable

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food, discussed why she supports a ban on marketing unhealthy food to kids. (Spring 2019)

What is just as important is that children spend far too much time watching TV and using their devices instead of being active. A sedentary child is likely to become a sedentary adult. We don't need another study to determine that people need to move their bodies in order to be as healthy as they can be. Healthy food and exercise equals a better quality of life.
LINDA MINNIS, BED 1974 OISE, HUNTSVILLE, ONTARIO



The Problem with Plastic

Katrina Onstad profiled Prof. Chelsea Rochman, whose research looks at how plastic breaks down and where it ends up (Spring 2019).

In my opinion, the University of Toronto should be a leader and an example in environmental causes. As we know that plastic is choking our environment, especially our oceans and its creatures, I urge you to eliminate plastic from your mailings.

SIMONE DESILETS, TESL 1986
WOODSWORTH, TORONTO

I like Prof. Rochman's backstory: from aspiring actress to United Nations, and how it all came full circle from a childhood wish to end all the trash in the world. I have no idea how to combat microplastics. But as long as humanity has hope, I believe we can do anything.

GREG KUZNETSOV, SECOND-YEAR STUDENT, WOODSWORTH, TORONTO

Plastic waste that's dumped in lakes or sent overseas in containers – and therefore hidden from everyday view – may cause people to believe plastics are not that great a problem. I hope more media attention will help change this way of thinking.

KEVIN WILLISON, PHD 2009, TORONTO

Be the Change

We profiled Bahia Marks, a master's student at the Daniels Faculty who is working with youth in the St. James Town neighbourhood of Toronto to change aspects of their community (Spring 2019).

Fridays for Future, the youth-led organization inspired by Nobel Prize nominee Greta Thunberg, 16, urges rapid action on climate change. This new mobilization is one of the most potent antidotes to despair. Bahia Marks wonders how residents can help design neighbourhoods. Today, students are hoping to design all of society so it's life-enhancing and low-carbon. They deserve our impassioned support.

GIDEON FORMAN, BA 1987 VICTORIA, TORONTO

Local Talent

I am surprised that you reached out to a Brooklyn artist (Nim Ben-Reuven) to design the front cover "thank you" message for the Spring 2019 issue. Surely a local artist could have done an equally amazing job.

DOROTA AZZOPARDI, MSC 2013
BRAMPTON, ONTARIO

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University of Toronto Magazine welcomes letters at uoft.magazine@utoronto.ca. All letters may be edited for clarity, civility and length.



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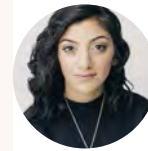


HEARTFELT REACTION

Kurt Kleiner has a confession to make: He didn't recognize the shape of a baby in his wife's ultrasounds, and was only half-convinced the technician could see one either. So he was enthusiastic when he got to see the 3-D printed models of hearts at the Lynn & Arnold Irwin Advanced Perioperative Imaging Lab. "It was amazing to be able to pick up a perfect replica of an individual human heart, to hold it in my hand, and actually look and see the malformation that doctors would have to repair," he says.

– Read more about the lab's 3-D printed models on page 50.

↑
The lab offered photographer Hamin Lee three different 3-D models of human hearts to shoot



SADIYA ANSARI
Ansari (BA 2007 UTSC) first encountered Joseph Carens' argument for open borders (p. 22) in graduate school. For Ansari, who has worked in immigration policy and immigrant services, it framed the relationship between rich democratic states and the migrants in a way that made a lot of sense – and challenged the status quo. As a reporter who often grapples with post-migration challenges as a subject, it was fascinating for her to take a step back and think deeply about the validity of borders themselves. Ansari is a professor of journalism at Centennial College.



JOHN LORINC
Lorinc (BA 1987 UC) was part of a private refugee sponsorship group that formed in 2015, sponsoring two Syrian women who had been stranded in Turkey. "I found

Audrey Macklin's deep dive into the nature of Canada's unique private sponsorship policy [p. 16] to be both eye-opening and deeply familiar," he says. "She argues, on balance, in favour of the program, but offers important cautions about how well-meaning sponsors should approach these relationships to ensure a positive outcome."



NARISA LADAK
Ladak (MMI 2009) is a third-generation South Asian Canadian woman who has lived abroad in Kabul, Afghanistan; New York; and Dubai. As a child of immigrants from East Africa, photographing Petra Molnar – whose research looks at how AI is being used in Canada's immigration decisions (p. 56) – was meaningful to her. Ladak often trains her lens on people who she usually doesn't see in the media, those that are overlooked yet quite beautiful in her eyes; this is where she found alignment with Molnar's research.

Want to contribute? Send your ideas to scott.anderson@utoronto.ca.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (HEART) HAMIN LEE; (ANSARI) PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREA MUSCUREL



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WELCOMING THE WORLD



Recently, I presented a paper at a conference attended by the heads of a select group of major global universities.

My topic concerned the increasingly divergent approaches to the recruitment of international talent among the world's advanced economies. I argued that countries now preoccupied with building walls or burning bridges are putting their own long-term prosperity at risk. I documented how those taking the opposite approach are reaping significant benefits, highlighting Canada as an especially compelling case.

The response from my global counterparts was remarkable. To a person, they said how lucky we are as Canadians and how they wished they operated under a system like ours.

Canada is increasingly distinguished by its enduring, broad consensus in favour of

immigration, as reflected in the system built by federal governments over the past half-century. We see this in the points-based approach used to assess prospective immigrants, and in policies that facilitate the recruitment of highly qualified professionals and grant international students a three-year work permit upon graduation. And when it comes to humanitarian objectives, notwithstanding current contentious debates, Canada remains an appealing destination for refugees and asylum seekers.

Debates on international talent mobility are ultimately shaped by societal values concerning openness, diversity and collaboration. By their nature, universities – and the advancement of knowledge – depend on the free flow of people and ideas across international borders. Ultimately, so do the societies in which they're located.

The model of “brain gain” versus “brain drain” has now been supplanted by the concept of “brain circulation,” in which the mobility of talent creates a network of partnerships that transcends national boundaries and creates opportunities in each participating country. Toronto is a perfect example. The city, where more than half the population was born outside Canada, created more tech jobs in 2017 than the San Francisco Bay Area, Seattle and Washington, D.C., combined. And, among international PhD students who graduated from U of T between 2000 and 2015, 46 per cent are now employed in Canada, while those who left the country are helping to raise our international profile and extend our global networks.

Still, we must not be complacent. We know that geopolitical dynamics and domestic policy shifts can influence the two-way flow of talent in unpredictable and unhelpful ways. Canadians rightly take pride in our model of multiculturalism and openness. But we need to remind ourselves of why it's worked so well, and of the central role of immigration in sustaining our economy and strengthening our society. Institutions such as U of T have a critical role to play in recruiting and welcoming talented newcomers, from wherever they come.

MERIC GERTLER



THINGS I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO

1. Celebrating the 100th anniversary of Hart House
2. Breaking ground for the Schwartz Reisman Innovation Centre
3. Taking part in the opening of the *Maanjiwe nendamowinan* building at UTM

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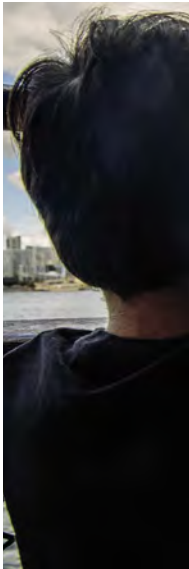
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BOUNDLESS

The POWER of
GOOD INTENTIONS

By John Lorinc

Photographs by
Brett Gundlock



CANADA'S PROGRAM OF PRIVATE REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP



HAS BEEN HELD UP AS A MODEL FOR THE WORLD. COULD IT BE EVEN BETTER?

IT WAS ONLY A FEW WEEKS AFTER THE FAMILY OF SIX SYRIAN REFUGEES ARRIVED IN DECEMBER 2015



Syrian refugees
Alaa Al Saleh
(left) and
Hanaa Al Bitar

when the members of the private sponsorship group in Toronto that brought them to Canada faced what Jennifer Nagel, a professor in the University of Toronto's philosophy department, describes as a "pivotal democratic moment."

Over the previous three months, Nagel, together with a "pretty random" collection of colleagues, neighbours, friends and local entrepreneurs, had navigated the complex bureaucratic process of sponsoring the family – a widowed mother and five children, aged nine to 21. Like tens of thousands of Canadians, they had been moved to act in response to wrenching accounts of fleeing refugees and the worst migrant crisis since the Second World War. The group had fundraised, set up sub-committees and cobbled together a memorandum of understanding for its 20-odd participants outlining what to expect as part of the sponsorship process.

After the family arrived, the group learned that the mother also had three adult daughters, married and with their own children, who hadn't made the journey. The mother asked if they'd sponsor these family members. One evening in January 2016, the sponsorship group convened to figure out what to do. Some wanted to take on the rest of the family and expand their fundraising efforts. But a few disagreed, arguing they'd be spreading themselves too thin. After an at-times intense debate, the majority voted to sponsor two of the daughters and their families, bringing the total to 15 people, most of them children. (The third daughter was accepted as part of a government sponsorship.)

Nagel, an epistemologist, describes the subsequent journey as "transformative," but one that felt a bit like "a blind date." How did the experience change her? "It's complicated," she concedes, noting that it busted some stereotypes and that she learned a lot about the city's hidden resources. "I'm not sure if I've done the right thing or not, but I want to be fighting on the side of human dignity and human freedom," Nagel muses. "I feel the refugees are getting something they're very entitled to."

CANADA IS A PIONEER in the world for its private refugee sponsorship program, which first came to widespread attention in 1979, during the Vietnamese "boat people" crisis. In the heady months



before and immediately after the 2015 election, when doors were opened to more than 40,000 Syrian refugees, tens of thousands of Canadians joined sponsorship groups. This outpouring attracted global media attention and prompted the new government to pledge to export the private sponsorship model to other countries.

According to Audrey Macklin, a U of T law professor, some research suggests that privately sponsored refugees fare better in their new home than those



sponsors who do it, or they will not do it, do it again or promote it to others.”

For many of the sponsors, the experience offered a messy confection of feelings: rewarding, but also frustrating and challenging in unexpected ways. Groups of people who may have had only casual ties to one another took upon themselves enormous, time-consuming responsibilities. Often they did so in the absence of any formal structure beyond the legally binding contract they’d signed pledging to financially support their families for a year after they arrived.

David Carter-Whitney (BA 1986 Victoria), a civil servant who co-chaired one Toronto group, says he’s become friends with the family the group sponsored, soaked up a lot about Muslim culture and learned how to leverage the members’ significant social capital and networks to benefit the sponsored family. Through his United Church congregation, the group has opted to sponsor another refugee family. “Everything about it was a really wonderful experience,” he says.

But when Macklin and a research team evaluated the results of a survey that 530 sponsors filled out, other accounts emerged. While the vast majority felt the experience was deeply meaningful and that they’d do it again, many also recognized the power imbalances that are baked into the structure of the private sponsorship program.

The survey revealed that sponsors were typically middle-aged, middle-class and well educated, with more women involved than men. Once the refugees arrived in Canada, many of the sponsors found themselves thrust into what often felt like highly personal roles with the newcomers.



Sponsors Sergio Tenenbaum (left), Jennifer Nagel and Leo Tenenbaum

Macklin points out that sponsors’ education, economic independence, English (or French) fluency, experience, cultural knowledge and social

capital equip them to support newcomers in a multitude of ways. But these same advantages they possess in relation to recently arrived refugees – coupled with newcomers’ financial dependence – mean that the relationship between sponsor and sponsored is, in a structural sense, unequal.

Senator Ratna Omidvar, who co-founded Lifeline Syria and regularly cautioned participants to tamp down expectations about establishing friendships with their families, heard some “pretty nasty” stories about the interactions: groups that pressured their sponsored families to work almost as soon as they arrived to minimize cost or, conversely, refugee families that had “out of whack” expectations about what the sponsors could provide materially.

“People had issues,” says Macklin. “It isn’t all happy romantic stories. But to a person, the experience was really meaningful.”

One of the families that Nagel’s group sponsored

who come through the government program. The reasons are clear: privately sponsored refugees arrive to a network of advocates who provide material support and also advice, contacts and instant social relationships. But, as Macklin noted in her 2017 Woodsworth Goldstein lecture, relatively little is known about the sponsors themselves. When she was named a 2017 Trudeau Fellow, Macklin’s research question was: How does the process of helping refugees become citizens transform the citizenship of sponsors?

“I want to know more about who sponsors are, why they sponsor, what is distinctive about private sponsorship and how the program affects sponsors,” says Macklin, who herself belonged to a group. “The policy reason for this inquiry is simple: if we think private refugee sponsorship is a good idea, then it matters not only that it confers benefits on refugees. It has to be perceived as good by and for the

reported a very positive experience. Alaa Al Saleh settled in Canada in August 2018 with his wife, Hanaa Al Bitar, and two young sons. Although he has found learning English a challenge and has so far worked intermittently, he says the support he and his family have received from the group – which has included a furnished apartment; money for food; and help signing up for English classes, opening a bank account and obtaining a driver’s license – made a huge difference. “The group helped me and my wife start a life in this country, a *good* life,” he says. Al Saleh adds that he has found Canadians largely forgiving when it comes to the language barrier, and he’s hopeful for his family’s prospects. “If you don’t have the language, everybody accepts that: ‘OK, you can’t speak but you’re trying.’”

Macklin’s research aims to determine whether Canada’s private sponsorship program, which took shape during the mid-1970s Immigration Act reforms, has made Canadians more civic-minded and welcoming – or even if such policies represent an antidote to nativist politics. A credible recent public

↓
Jennifer Nagel
and Mohamad
Al Saleh at Centre
Island ferry



“BECAUSE REFUGEES HAVE BEEN SO DISEMPOWERED BY THE EXPERIENCE OF FLIGHT, THEY MAY BE MORE, RATHER THAN LESS, SENSITIVE TO THE POWER RELATIONS IN SPONSORSHIP”

opinion poll shows that Canadians haven’t significantly changed their views on immigration despite a surge of partisan controversy over asylum-seekers in the U.S. making unauthorized crossings into Quebec and Manitoba. (The Liberal government soon began talks to close a legal loophole that allowed asylum-seekers to stay in Canada once they’d made it across the border.)

But besides the social dividends, Macklin has found herself pondering whether and how the private sponsorship program could be improved – a question that others have posed as well. Macklin identifies a few issues: finding ways to include volunteers who don’t have the funds to sponsor refugees; ensuring that increases in private sponsorship don’t give governments an excuse to cut funding for or reduce their commitment to public resettlement; and recognizing the inevitable pressure to enable the reunification of extended families.

Omidvar would make other tweaks, including more formal training for individuals and groups sponsoring refugees and required background checks for participants. She also recommends changes to the tax laws that would allow people to treat contributions to a private sponsorship effort as charitable donations. Governance of sponsorship





PAIRING UP

Can we create better “matches” between sponsors and refugees?

Embedded in the structure of Canada’s sponsorship program is a thorny question: How do refugees and their sponsors get along? But for Craig Damian Smith, the associate director of the Global Migration Lab at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, the more important question is: How does the quality of the relationship affect how well a refugee family establishes itself? Put differently, Smith wants to know if we can do a better job of pairing refugees and sponsors.

To that end, Smith and several collaborators – including behavioural economists at the Rotman School of Management, as well as at the University of Mannheim in Germany and Columbia University in New York – have created Pairity. The platform matches sponsors with refugees based on online surveys of individuals on both sides of the equation (members of a sponsorship group and members of the refugee household fill out one survey. Then one refugee household is sponsored). To generate matches, Pairity uses variables such as the distance between the homes of sponsors and refugees, labour market experience and interests.

Smith is testing Pairity through a pilot with the NGO Justice and Peace in the Netherlands, which randomly sorts newcomers into control groups and those matched based on survey results. Pairity’s effectiveness will be tested by assessing the success of refugees in areas such as labour market participation, language skills and community integration. —**John Lorinc**

↑
Hanaa Al Bitar
on the ferry
leaving
Toronto’s
Centre Island

groups should remain organic, she says, “but some capacity building should be put in place.”

Macklin, for her part, returns to what she sees as the bedrock question of how the personal relationships within the private sponsorship program affect individuals who have survived war, famine and flight before encountering Canadians armed with good intentions, social capital and cash, but scant experience of what is and isn’t required of them.

“My sense is that precisely because refugees have been so disempowered by the experience of flight, they may be more, rather than less, sensitive to the power relations in sponsorship,” she points out. “Having arrived permanently, they want to reclaim a life in which they had an identity that was not about being a refugee, but about being a farmer, or being middle class, or being a respected elder in the community, or brother, or mother or student. The sponsors’ awareness of power imbalances inherent in sponsorship, and how everyone negotiates that while building relationships, matters a lot to the quality of the sponsorship experience.” ■

Slovenian riot police
(not pictured) escort migrants
to a registration camp outside
Dobova, Slovenia, in 2015



WHAT DO BORDERS REALLY DO?

BY SADIYA ANSARI

Police escort hundreds
of migrants who crossed
from Croatia into
Slovenia in 2015



PHOTOGRAPH BY SERGEY PONOMAREV/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

**Lines on a map confer advantages on some
and exclude others.**

**This serves political needs,
but is it morally just?**





THE MIGRANT CRISIS conjures an image of what people must leave – war, famine, gang violence. And yet, a crisis also often awaits them at their next destination. As liberal democracies face rising populism fuelling anti-immigrant sentiment, there’s ratcheting pressure to tighten border control. The result of this in the U.S., for instance, has been a zero-tolerance policy for undocumented migrants, spurring a steady volume of headlines – family separations, squalid detention conditions, weekend raids in sanctuary cities.

The threats to migrants exist not only at the border, but on the journey there. Óscar Alberto Martínez Ramírez and his daughter are two of hundreds who died attempting to enter the U.S. this year. In June, a photo of the pair was published worldwide: the father and his toddler were found motionless, their drowned bodies still partially in the Rio Grande river during the last leg of their journey from El Salvador to the U.S. The reaction was horror, sadness, an outpouring of sympathy. The photo raises the question: In democratic societies, what’s our moral responsibility to those outside our borders?



THE POLITICAL REALITIES OF OPEN BORDERS

While the liberal perspective that there is a moral responsibility to those outside a nation’s borders may be admirable, what’s missing is the reality that the primary responsibility of elected political leaders is to voters inside their borders, says U of T prof. Phil Triadafilopoulos.

“The limits to open borders are partly a function of democracy,” says Triadafilopoulos, an associate professor of political science.

In a democracy, political leaders are accountable to those who elected them, he says, limiting their discretion over border policy to the confines of the mandate they were elected on. And an open borders policy is not exactly a formula for political success. The opposition to taking in more immigrants is often framed as a capacity issue – that countries can’t absorb every potential immigrant who may want to settle there. And even though evidence suggests otherwise – Triadafilopoulos uses the

example of Turkey, which has absorbed more than two million migrants from the Syrian conflict – that doesn’t give license for democratic leaders to overrule the will of the people who elect them.

“If you believe in democracy and that the people should have some say in fundamental decisions, which might include who constitutes the polity, then it’s not enough to argue, ‘Well, the people are misinformed or the people don’t know what they’re talking about,’” says Triadafilopoulos.

The democratic imperative leads to immigration policy being framed in the self-interest of a nation, such as inviting immigrants to fill labour-market gaps and combat declining birthrates, rather than fulfilling a moral responsibility. “When managed migration schemes can be seen to deliver, then democratic publics aren’t necessarily totally averse to immigration,” he says. —Sadiya Ansari

The moral case for open borders

JOSEPH CARENS, a U of T professor of political science, has explored the question of moral responsibility of liberal democratic states in relation

to immigration for decades, including in his 2013 book *The Ethics of Immigration*. He makes the case that Western democracies have a clear responsibility to be open to immigrants and also inclusive of those who have already arrived. For Carens, that includes those who have come to a country undocumented, as he wrote in an essay for the *Boston Review*: “The moral right of states to apprehend and deport irregular migrants erodes with the passage of time.” And while he recognizes that state sovereignty means countries are entitled to erect borders, he says it doesn’t absolve them of their moral responsibility to migrants.

A system where birthright rules the chances you have in life, in this case the borders in which you were born, is no better than a feudal system, according to Carens. In a feudal system, the vast majority of people exist as peasants. “To be born into a rich state like Canada, the U.S. or the European states is like being born into the nobility,” he says. “The point of the open borders argument is to get people to see that we have organized the world in a way that can’t possibly be justified if you take seriously the idea that every human being ought to count.”

Carens’ argument for open borders is a radical departure from immigration policies seen around the world today, which are overwhelmingly motivated by economics rather than ethics. But he isn’t naive; this is his



◀ Mexicans deported from the U.S. meet with relatives on the other side of the border wall in the Tijuana-San Diego region. U.S. guards open the gates for four hours on Sundays

stance as a political philosopher, not as a policy wonk. He recognizes all immigration policy requires careful political calculation.

In recent history, the political will of one leader to address the refugee crisis stands out. Under Chancellor Angela Merkel, Germany opened its borders to nearly one million migrants in 2015. But that move fuelled the rise of a far-right party, the Alternative for Germany (AfD). The AfD was launched as an anti-European Union party in 2013 but shifted strategy after 2015, moving further right and campaigning on an explicitly anti-immigrant, anti-Islam agenda in the federal elections in 2017. It managed to garner mainstream support, becoming the third-largest party in Germany's Bundestag.

Carens casts this reaction as an example of opening the door too wide, too suddenly. "If you try to do too much, the result can be counterproductive," he says, adding that this type of reaction will likely negatively affect existing and future immigrants. "Political actors always have a responsibility to assess consequences."

Criminalizing migrants

ON THE OTHER END of opening the door too widely is the trend toward criminalizing irregular migration. In

May, Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the U.S. had 52,000 people in detention, reported as an all-time high. Toward the end of the President Barack Obama era, that number was more than 34,000. That growth is related to the insistence of President Donald Trump's administration that entering the U.S. undocumented is a crime. In reality, while it may be against the law to enter a country without formal permission, Carens says that doesn't have to be a crime – it could just be seen as a civil violation.

This increased propensity toward criminalization leading to detention represents a shift in view, says Carens, from seeing undocumented migration as a civil offense, such as a traffic violation, to a criminal offense. Detaining migrants conflates the offense they're committing – being in a country without permission – with a far more dangerous one. "You shouldn't lock people up unless they pose a threat to society," he says. "Just because they're there without permission, doesn't make them a threat."

This criminalization is the result of migrants being perceived as a threat. Trump, for instance, campaigned on the myth of migrants as criminals. While this is a claim that has been debunked repeatedly, it's certainly not new. A large-scale study looking at data over 40 years in the U.S., for instance, showed that increased immigration levels were consistently negatively correlated with violent crime, such as murder, and property crime. U of T Scarborough professor Donna Gabaccia – an historian of international migration – traces the belief that foreigners are potential criminals back to the 19th century in Canada, the U.S. and Australia. It's a powerful narrative, she says. What she finds particularly disturbing is how asylum-seekers are being criminalized in these countries: "Under international law and under American practice, they have the right to seek asylum and yet, increasingly, they are being discussed as illegals who have committed a crime by crossing the border."

Is it fair to let people "jump the queue"?

ANOTHER COMMON argument against undocumented migrants is that they have not followed the rules like

everyone else. That leads to two criticisms: that they are jumping the queue, and that rewarding them will incentivize more people to do the same.

Carens returns to a tenet of his original argument: that migrants should respect laws of a state related to migration presupposes that the way the international order is set up is just. But setting that aside to deal with the legal and political realities of the day, Carens says the first criticism about rule-breaking comes down to a moral judgment on the character of an individual. And that most people, when faced with an actual undocumented person with deep ties to their community, can see that breaking a rule doesn't make that person morally defective.

The second criticism, that it incentivizes more people to cross borders undocumented, is trickier to untangle because while it's clear that it does encourage others to do the same, it's hard to parse out the exact impact of undocumented migrants. "Part of the problem here is that those who are already sympathetic to immigrants are going to say there are no consequences and those who are hostile to them are going to say there are devastating consequences," says Carens. "It's very hard to get actual empirical information that isn't tainted by these [perspectives]."

But what Carens encourages people to consider are the negative consequences of deportation for those in the community where an undocumented person has deep ties. Deporting people has “devastating consequences” for those who care for them.

The reality is, some migrants simply don’t have a legitimate path to citizenship in many countries. Emily Gilbert, a U of T professor of geography, says while there’s an assumption that borders are more open than ever before, the reality is that while most tourists and those travelling for business move freely, there are many others who have difficulty crossing borders. This is the case even in Canada, which is perceived to be much more open than many other countries that have no path to naturalization. The Canadian system favours high-skilled workers, offering few opportunities for so-called low-skilled workers to become citizens. In her view, the people who the rules are built to advantage are the ones who get to jump ahead in line.

This shift away from permanent immigrants toward temporary migrants in jobs such as agriculture creates exactly the situation the U.S. is facing now, adds Gabaccia, in which a subsection of the population is politically alienated without access to the full rights of citizenship. As a temporary foreign worker in the U.S., for instance, there is no maximum time you can have authorization to work in a country. That means a migrant can be working, paying taxes and deepening ties in a community without access to certain benefits or the right to vote. “Countries [without] the opportunities for permanent residency and naturalization cannot call themselves democracies because they have privileged some people by reason of birth and citizenship and excluded everyone else,” says Gabaccia.

Earning citizenship

WHILE THE QUESTION of who deserves citizenship is a complicated one, Carens has a guiding principle that

makes it quite simple: the passage of time earns people a right to stay. If someone has been in a community for 10 or 15 years, they have put down roots whether or not they have official status, argues Carens. And if someone came to a country as a child, there’s an even more compelling argument that they should be able to stay.

Carens uses the example of Marguerite Grimmond, an 80-year-old woman who was told she had to leave the U.K. after living there the majority of her life. She came to Scotland as a child from the U.S., and when coming back from her first trip abroad to Australia (she was using an American passport), immigration officials told her she would have to leave within four weeks. “The moral absurdity of forcing her to leave a place where she had lived so long was evident, whatever the legal



▲ U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers stand guard at the port of entry into the United States from Tecate, Mexico, in 2018

technicalities,” wrote Carens in the *Boston Review*. After the media picked up her story, Grimmond was permitted to stay.

And there’s another reason this story in particular is powerful for many readers, says Carens: Grimmond is an elderly white woman who wasn’t seen as a threat. For him, it strips the migration debate of the racial and cultural biases that affect public opinion and policy, although they are rarely officially acknowledged.

The recent Windrush scandal in the U.K. revealed different attitudes driving policy, where longtime legal residents from Caribbean colonies were threatened with deportation decades after their arrival. People from Caribbean colonies were invited to Britain to help rebuild after the Second World War, and, being part of the colonies, they had a legal right to citizenship. But under the government’s “hostile environment” policy introduced in 2012, those legal residents were being threatened with deportation. In a parliamentary committee addressing the scandal, Anthony Bryan, who was detained and threatened with deportation, said: “I don’t think I’d have this problem [if] I had come from Canada instead of coming from Jamaica.” His wife put it more bluntly: “[It was] because of the colour of your skin.”

For Carens, that’s why the passage of time is the best way to determine right to stay, rather than measuring integration in some way, which he says “is inevitably tied up with notions of race, religion, ethnicity, culture that are deeply, deeply problematic.”

The narrative of a threatened culture is certainly not new, says Gabaccia, and is particularly concerning her right now as she sees parallels to the rise of fascism. “It’s very demoralizing for someone of my age who’d never expected to see this, but it tells us just how ubiquitous this fear of the stranger is,” says Gabaccia. “It rises and falls, but it never disappears.” ■

A LEGACY GIFT IS HELPING SABRINA TAKE CENTRE STAGE

As a **McAndrew Family Scholarship** recipient, Sabrina—a drama student at University College—can now pursue extracurricular activities. The award has gifted her with time to rehearse, to be an assistant stage manager for a major campus production, and to apply for internships at theatre companies across Toronto. “Serious drama students are working constantly to get ahead and to stand out,” she says. “I’ll always be grateful to the McAndrew family for boosting my success.”

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UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO



TORONTO'S SANCTUARY CITY POLICY STATES THAT ALL RESIDENTS, REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS, HAVE THE RIGHT TO ACCESS MUNICIPAL SERVICES — BUT THE POLICY IS A WORK IN PROGRESS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
GRACIA LAM

Greater Toronto is one of the world's leading immigrant-receiving cities, a place where every second resident was born outside of Canada. But according to Patricia Landolt, migration expert and chair of U of T Scarborough's department of sociology, the ranks of the region's newcomers include growing numbers of refugee claimants, temporary foreign workers and people with precarious migratory status (such as lack of permanent residence or permanent work authorization, limited or no social benefits, and deportability). "Given that we see ourselves as a country of immigrants," she asks, "what does it mean that the [immigration] system starts people on a temporary track?" One that leads sometimes to a prized permanent resident status but may also force other migrants to lose the lives they've carved out, however precariously, in Canada.

Landolt also points out that the common shorthand used to describe such individuals – "illegal" or "undocumented" – fails to capture the reality that migrants experience with changes in their status, and that directly affect their ability to find work and access public services.

In 2013, Toronto city council established a Sanctuary City policy, dubbed Access T.O., which states that migrants with uncertain status have the right to access a range of municipal services. Some other institutions, including certain health clinics and the Toronto District School Board, also provide services on a so-called "don't ask, don't tell" basis.

While City of Toronto officials have pushed to train front-line staff on implementing the Access T.O. policy, critics point out that the Toronto Police Service doesn't comply, and, in fact, assists Canada Border Service Agency officials in enforcing deportation orders.

Although in spirit the Sanctuary City policy is important, in practice it can be quite ineffective since the majority of public services in Toronto are funded in a combination that includes all three levels of government, such as housing and health, notes Landolt.

City officials defend the policy, in part. "It's more than just symbolic," counters Spadina-Fort York councillor Joe Cressy. But, as he acknowledges, "Access T.O. is very much a work in progress."

—John Lorinc



HEALTH CARE

IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH

What happens when someone with precarious immigration status needs emergency care?

In autumn 2016, a man holding an adolescent girl in his arms arrived at the Canadian Centre for Refugee and Immigrant Health Care, a free walk-in clinic in Scarborough, Ontario. The clinic hadn't opened yet that morning, but the man was kicking at the door, desperate to get in. The girl was his 12-year-old daughter, "Miriam." She had been losing weight rapidly, and was now confused and having trouble breathing. Her dad had put off seeking help, believing she had the flu and would get better. In addition, he had no money for fees. Then he heard about this place. It was free.

The clinic's medical director, Paul Caulford (BSc 1972, MSc 1975, MD 1978), happened to be there already and saw them right away. He diagnosed the girl with Type 1 diabetes. Her blood sugar was dangerously high and Miriam was entering a coma. She had to go to hospital, Caulford told them, or she would die. A staff member drove the family to a Toronto hospital, where Miriam was admitted and

treated. About five days later, she walked out stable and safe – and with a bill for more than \$20,000.

The family were refugees who had fled Ethiopia, but they'd made a classic mistake: they had not claimed their refugee status at Toronto's Pearson Airport, where they entered the country. If they had, they would have been entitled to something called the Interim Federal Health Program, which provides health care similar to OHIP. It would have covered doctors, hospitals and diabetes supplies. But because they had made their claim a few days after arrival, at an office of Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada, they were entirely uninsured. Refugee health care wouldn't kick in until their claim was processed at a meeting scheduled for at least a month. Miriam would almost certainly have been dead by then.

Such are the unlucky people among us whose precarious immigration status leaves them without the protection of basic health coverage. Refugees who don't know the system. Failed claimants who lose health care while they appeal. Temporary foreign workers between jobs. Students who overstay their visas. People who sneak into the country for a better life and end up living underground.

Just because they don't have status doesn't mean they don't get sick, says Caulford. "They break bones, they get pneumonia, they get appendicitis," he says. "They can never afford the bill." Caulford has seen the number of people seeking help at his clinic go up eightfold in the 20 years since it opened.

Many of Toronto's doctors think that health care should be provided to all people who reside here, says Meb Rashid, a professor in U of T's Faculty of Medicine and a family doctor at Women's College Hospital's Crossroads Clinic, which offers care to newly arrived refugees. "Many would argue, and I would be one," he says, "that health care should not be connected to immigration status."

That is a key purpose behind Toronto's designation as a Sanctuary City: that all people get access to municipal services regardless of immigration status. The problem is that the city only has control over what the city delivers, and in the realm of health, that isn't a lot, says Dr. Ritika Goel, who is part of the family health team at St. Michael's Hospital and a lecturer in U of T's Faculty of Medicine. Toronto Public Health administers vaccines and runs groups for new parents, among other things, but the heavy lifting of health care is done by the province. "Sanctuary City doesn't substantially improve people's access to health care," says Goel, who also provides shelter-based health care through Inner City Health Associates in Toronto.

Patients who go to an Ontario hospital without coverage will most likely be billed, she says. Many hospitals demand cash or a credit card up front. Some hospitals follow up with collection agencies. "So it's not a symbolic bill," says Goel. "It's a real bill."

In instances where the patient isn't in need of emergency care and doesn't have the money, they can be turned away. Caulford had a young patient who broke his arm when he fell out of a tree at school. Sanctuary City meant the boy could attend school like any other kid, says Caulford, but fixing the arm was another matter. Expensive treatments like surgery or cancer care are even more difficult to access, says Goel. She knows of two people who had cancer, were unable to afford treatment and died.

"I think we need to use the frame of human rights when we're talking about health – health care as a human right," says Goel. She is not the only one to think so. The United Nations Human Rights Committee recently chastised Canada for its record, citing the specific case of Nell Toussaint. Toussaint came to Canada from Grenada as a visitor, but stayed and worked low-wage jobs for years. Some of her employers deducted federal and provincial taxes, CPP and employment insurance premiums. But because she was without status, she was not entitled to health care. She could not afford to pay for it, so she went without. As a result of untreated Type 2 diabetes, her mobility, vision and speech were compromised.

But it's not only philosophical, it's pragmatic, says Dr. Anna Banerji, associate professor of pediatrics at U of T's Dalla Lana School of Public Health and chair of the North American Refugee Health Conference. Many of these people will eventually become Canadian citizens. If a person gets sick while uninsured and suffers permanent injury, we'll pick up the tab in the long run anyway – and that might be steeper. Or we might create new problems. Banerji recalls the



IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Prof. Anna Banerji of pediatrics says it would help to open more clinics that accept patients even without an OHIP card or other coverage. Clinics such as the Canadian Centre for Refugee and Immigrant Health Care in Scarborough allow patients to be seen regardless of status before their health deteriorates, she says.

"When charged high bills they can't afford, [undocumented patients] go underground and some of these health conditions get worse, so it's not very cost-effective in the long run," she says.

Prof. Carles Muntaner of U of T's Dalla Lana School of Public Health says migrants' access to health care is an issue inseparable from their employment status.

Certain European countries, such as the Netherlands and Denmark, do a better job of caring for migrant workers because they offer more generous unemployment benefits.

And basing access to health care on one's immigration status or ability to pay can be a slippery slope to privatization, he says. —Geoff Vendeville

✔
"I THINK WE NEED TO USE THE FRAME OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHEN WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HEALTH – HEALTH CARE AS A HUMAN RIGHT," SAYS DR. RITIKA GOEL

case of a child who had typhoid fever. She was treated, but the bill came to more than \$30,000. The dad, who was a skilled worker, fell into deep depression. "There's no reason for this," she says.

Goel supports a campaign called "OHIP For All," which argues for health care for all residents, regardless of immigration status. Ahead of last year's provincial election, the NDP topped that – and for the first time in Canada made a call for a full Sanctuary Province. But there's little to be proud of when you compare what Canada does for people with precarious status to what other high-income countries do. "Overall, the situation is better in many other places," says Goel. In the European Union, it is standard to provide emergency care without charge to people of precarious status, she says, and many countries offer much more. And although Canadians don't like to hear it, there are places in the U.S. that are doing a better job of caring for the truly precarious, says Goel. Because many U.S. citizens face major health-care challenges, there are workaround systems and these can often be used to support people with precarious immigration status, she says.

"Among high income countries, I'd say Canada is quite unusual in that we tend not to even talk about this population," says Goel. "We pretend they don't exist." —Alison Motluk

EMPLOYMENT

THE HARD LABOUR OF FINDING GOOD WORK

Migrants are determined to find jobs, but face systemic barriers

When Ruba Bilal and her husband, along with one of their sons, landed in Toronto in 2016 as a privately sponsored refugee from Syria (via Lebanon), they focused intently on finding good jobs that matched their respective career experiences.

After enrolling in bridging and mentorship programs, Bilal, a 43-year-old business administrative lead, sent out dozens of resumé. Then she learned about Jumpstart, a non-profit that matches recent refugees with jobs. Through the organization, Bilal found work in 2018, first at a non-profit and subsequently at a Mississauga property management company where she now oversees an HR team of 13 direct

CREATING ACCESS TO QUALITY JOBS

What can be done to give migrant workers equal access to decent jobs? U of T Scarborough prof. Patricia Landolt says a good start is to abolish “closed work permits,” which restrict migrants’ ability to change employers or to transition to a higher skill level. Also, permits attached to a lower skill level don’t have a pathway to switch to permanent residence. “It basically creates a ceiling on their mobility, not just at a particular place of work but within a sector,” she says.

In addition, Prof. Ito Peng of U of T’s Centre for Global Social Policy says

migrant workers would benefit from a faster system for assessing foreign credentials as well as practical supports such as workshops on resumé writing and job interviews. Peng also suggests better employment protection and higher wages in general.

“Public policy shouldn’t just focus on the newcomers themselves but also on Canadian employers and business people,” Peng adds. She notes there’s a need for anti-discrimination and anti-racism workshops to counter unconscious bias among employers. —Geoff Vendeville

THE VAST MAJORITY OF MIGRANTS ARRIVE WITH A STRONG DETERMINATION TO FIND JOBS. “I’VE NEVER INTERVIEWED ANYONE WHO SAID, ‘I’M NOT GOING TO TRY AS HARD AS I CAN,’” SAYS PROF. PATRICIA LANDOLT

reports. “We started with zero,” she reflects, “but the people around us were all supportive. It was something amazing, like magic.”

The vast majority of migrants arrive with a strong determination to find jobs, become self-sufficient and regain the sense of self-worth that work brings. Even those who come to Canada on temporary permits express the desire to be as productive as possible, says Prof. Patricia Landolt, chair of U of T Scarborough’s sociology department and an immigration scholar. “I’ve never interviewed anyone who said, ‘I’m not going to try as hard as I can.’”

But there are systemic barriers that thwart migrants’ desire to work, such as lengthy credential recognition processes and Canadian work experience requirements.

In big cities such as Toronto, the story of migration and work is intensely complicated and variable. Some, such as Bilal, land on their feet; others struggle in low-paying and menial jobs. Migrants who have lost their status may be forced to take informal work in fields such as hospitality where they are paid in cash and enjoy almost no legal protections from abusive employers.

The sprawling health-care and long term-care sectors depend on thousands of caregivers – and “the vast majority are women, and a large proportion are immigrant women and women of colour,” observes Prof. Ito Peng of sociology, who oversees the Gender, Migration and the Work of Care project at U of T’s Centre for Global Social Policy.

Many are here on temporary work visas, but she says it’s not uncommon for these “documented migrants to become undocumented when they overstay their visas.” Some have good reason to want to stay on: careworkers and live-in domestics in other countries, including much of the Asia Pacific region, aren’t covered by employment standards laws, says Peng, who is also director of U of T’s Centre for Global Policy.

Landolt’s research also shows that the number of migrants entering Canada on temporary work visas as a proportion of overall immigration has increased dramatically in recent years. Some of these migrants go on to establish lives here and seek permanent resident status – but this drawn-out bureaucratic process can take years, creating uncertainty and a period of “precarious non-citizenship.”

In 2006, Landolt and her team interviewed 300 migrants who had come to Canada from Latin America and the Caribbean. The researchers found that people who had spent any time in precarious status were more likely to find poor quality work and maintain poor quality work instead of advancing through higher-skilled and better-paying positions, as is the more typical trajectory with permanent residents. As she says, “The system is creating a probationary pool of people with one hand tied behind their backs in terms of rights.” —John Lorinc





DETAINMENT


IMMIGRATION DETENTION

When it comes to who can be detained, and for how long, there is much discretion

Eight-year-old “Aaliya” was at school when her mom was arrested by Canada Border Services Agency. The officers and her mother came by during recess and scooped her up. Home for her and her mom for the next 13 months was immigration detention.

One hundred and fifty-one minors spent time in immigration detention in Canada in 2017-18, according to the Canada Border Services Agency. Seven kids were on their own, but most were pulled in when a parent was apprehended. Parents who don’t have a trusted guardian must take their kids with them into the detention centre or leave them with child protection authorities.

Fourteen of these children were Canadian citizens. And being Canadian puts them at a disadvantage: as citizens, they can’t be formally detained, so they


 CANADA IS ONE OF THE FEW WESTERN COUNTRIES WITHOUT A TIME LIMIT ON HOW LONG SOMEONE CAN BE DETAINED

can’t even get hearings to address their detentions.

As well, in Canada, any non-citizen can be detained, says Hanna Gros (JD 2016), an immigration and refugee lawyer with U of T’s International Human Rights Program. That includes the undocumented and people claiming refugee status right through to those who are already permanent residents. “Detainees don’t have a countdown to their date of release,” she adds. One man was detained for more than 11 years. Canada is one of the few Western countries without a time limit.

“There is a lot of uncertainty in the system,” says Gros. Officers and adjudicators have a lot of discretion. “If people are deported while certain applications are being processed, there’s a much lower chance that it’s going to be granted.”

A Sanctuary City designation is only as good as “the implementation of it,” says Michaela Beder, an assistant professor in U of T’s department of psychiatry. “It has to be widely known across public services and appropriately enforced.”

That means there’s a risk every time a person with undocumented status interacts with authorities: Not having proof of payment for your transit fare. Taking your assaulted child to the hospital. Trying to drive your drunk boss home from a night out. None of these real examples ended well. —Alison Motluk



CHANGING CANADA’S DETENTION SYSTEM

The work of U of T’s International Human Rights Program (IHRP) has led to real change in Canada’s immigration detention system. Along with other groups, IHRP has lobbied for avoiding family separation when a parent is detained. And the number of children who are detained in Canada has, in fact, dropped. In the GTA, for example, three children were detained in 2018-19, according to the Canada Border Services Agency. Says Hanna Gros, a lawyer with IHRP, “It’s been really great to be able to make headway on this front, acknowledging that we are by no means at a point where we can stop doing advocacy on this.”

IHRP’s advocacy work has also led to regulatory

changes. Adjudicators in detention hearings must now take into account the best interest of the child, whether they are formally in detention or are in a facility because their parents are detained.

Thanks to Gros and her colleagues, some stats are now publicly available on the number of children in detention in Canada, the average length of detention and whether or not the children are Canadian citizens. While IHRP has yet to receive complete data, Gros says, “We have some data now so we know what we’re dealing with.”

IHRP has also worked with the Canada Border Services Agency and the Immigration Division on developing policy guidelines. —Romi Levine



SHELTER


HOME TRUTHS

Toronto's housing crunch affects many residents, but newcomers with few resources are especially vulnerable

In the months after she arrived as a refugee from Gaza last October, Rana Arqawi had a crash course in the ways of life in Toronto's sprawling western suburbs: snow, sluggish city buses, a landscape dotted by both Tim Hortons outlets and Middle Eastern pastry joints.

Arqawi (not her real name) soon secured a federally funded apprenticeship with a real estate firm. She relished the Canadian work experience. "I was over the moon when I was working with them," the 20-something migrant says over coffee in a Tim Hortons in Mississauga. "I consider myself lucky."

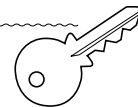
While she's happy to be here, Arqawi has faced


 THE COMBINATION OF UNCERTAIN IMMIGRATION STATUS, PRECARIOUS HOUSING AND DOMESTIC STRIFE CAN RAPIDLY RATCHET INTO CRISES

challenges with housing. She shares an apartment with someone who needed a roommate to cover costs; there's little money left over after the rent is paid. "It's expensive," she says. "I wish I could live by myself."

Toronto's notorious housing crunch affects a wide range of residents, but newcomers with tight budgets are especially vulnerable. The City of Toronto's policy is to not ask those seeking refuge in a shelter for their citizenship status – yet not all municipal shelter officials are aware of the city's "don't ask, don't tell" policy. And non-status migrants and immigrants with a precarious immigration status – refugee claimants, international students, temporary foreign workers – often have difficulty finding suitable housing. Some landlords will not rent to non-status migrants and people with a precarious status are not eligible for subsidized housing, notes Rupaleem Bhuyan, an associate professor in the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work and lead researcher of the Migrant Mothers Project (see sidebar, p. 36). Illegal rooming houses have sprung up in many areas. As for the Toronto Community Housing Corporation, the City of Toronto controls the lengthy waiting list for apartments and determines which tenants receive rent subsidies. Only those with stable immigration status are eligible.

Bhuyan says the combination of uncertain immigration status, precarious housing and domestic strife can rapidly ratchet into crises. She cites the story of a mother stuck in a shelter with her children. The woman had fled her home country because of domestic abuse. She enrolled her children in local schools, but was not eligible for Ontario's Portable



CREATING HOMES FOR REFUGEES

Hundreds of unaccompanied youth arrive in Canada every year seeking refugee status, but figuring out where to house them remains a serious issue. David Roberts, associate professor, Urban Studies Program, is working on a new initiative with community and academic partners to ensure their transition to life in Canada is secure. The group aims to co-design housing options that best meet the needs of these young people. "The idea is to bring groups who haven't historically worked together to better learn

about different parts of the system," says Roberts. Organizations such as Matthew House Toronto and YES will be working alongside researchers at U of T, Laurentian University and the Art Institute of Chicago and with adults who came to Canada as unaccompanied minors to create a blueprint for housing based on evidence and lived experience. "It's one thing to invite people to Canada as refugees. It's another thing to give them the ability to succeed and to thrive here," Roberts says. —RL

Housing Benefit for survivors of domestic violence because her abusive spouse did not reside in Canada. “She was really ready to start a new life, but she couldn’t move on,” says Bhuyan, noting that funding cuts to legal aid put many low-income households at risk of no legal services – including immigrants applying for a refugee claim, those dealing with wrongful evictions or other legal issues. (The provincial government had made a decision in the spring to cut funding to community legal clinics that represent many undocumented migrants. Late in the summer, however, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced \$26.8 million in new funding for legal aid for refugee and immigration claims during a pre-election visit to the city.)

While the political debate about precarious migrants churns along, Arqawi continues to look for work, wait for news about her claim and retain a positive outlook. “I’m looking on the bright side,” she says. —John Lorinc

and turn themselves in. It wasn’t the only such incident: according to media reports, two other Costa Rican children were arrested at another Toronto Catholic school, then taken with their mother and another sibling to a detention centre to await deportation.

The following year, the Toronto District School Board (which operates separately from the Toronto Catholic District School Board) unanimously passed the “Students Without Legal Immigration Status Policy,” a resolution that essentially pledged a “don’t ask, don’t tell” approach to enrolling children of undocumented migrants and preventing border officials from entering school premises.

At the time, Francisco Villegas had recently begun a PhD in sociology in education at OISE, co-supervised by Patricia Landolt, an immigration scholar

EDUCATION

THE FREEDOM TO LEARN

Toronto schools aim to provide a safe space for children, regardless of citizenship status. But there are flaws that need to be addressed

In April 2006, officials of the Canada Border Services Agency entered a Toronto Catholic school and threatened to arrest two sisters, ages 14 and seven, if their parents – Costa Rican migrants denied refugee status a year prior – didn’t come to the school immediately



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who chairs UTSC's department of sociology. Growing up, Villegas spent 15 years as an undocumented migrant in the U.S., eventually completing a graduate degree at San José State University that focused on undocumented students there and, as he puts it, "the interplay between hope and hopelessness."

Soon after arriving in Toronto, Villegas waded into the controversy about the Canada Border Service Agency's instances of nabbing children in schools. He served as a liaison between a network of advocacy groups, the Don't Ask Don't Tell Coalition and the TDSB as it worked on implementing the policy.

Villegas's thesis focused on the TDSB's implementation of the policy. "The policy was written in a straightforward way, but was implemented weakly," says Villegas (PhD 2014). The ban, he observes, didn't stop border officials from waiting outside schools. And the board provided little information for school administrators on staff training. Villegas also argues that the board's approach of directing families with precarious status to complete their children's registration at the TDSB's head office discourages applicants and increases their sense of risk. "The undocumented experience becomes exponentially more dangerous the more people who know your status."

Landolt observes that this step of registration offers insights into the subtle shift in the nature of borders. As Canada brings a growing number of people in through temporary worker programs, the task

▼
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 SAYS FRANCISCO
 VILLEGAS



THE MIGRANT MOTHERS PROJECT

The Migrant Mothers Project was established as a research project by Prof. Rupaleem Bhuyan of U of T's Faculty of Social Work with a network of service providers, legal advocates, community health workers and grassroots organizations. In 2014, project members held a community forum and co-wrote policy briefs to outline rights for undocumented students,

and how to advocate for their rights. The Migrant Mothers Project:
 > Developed education for front-line workers;
 > Reviewed federal, provincial and municipal policies that shape access to services for students lacking stable immigration status;
 > Developed an intersectional framework for federal and provincial policies. —JL

of checking migration status falls increasingly, by default, to employers or civil servants in public institutions such as the City of Toronto – as opposed to immigration and consular officials at official ports of entry. The border "becomes diffuse and downloaded," she says. Villegas adds that the TDSB, in effect, became a border zone for families with precarious status because of the documents and processes necessary to enrol students. —John Lorinc



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A HEART OF COURAGE



AS AN ACTIVIST AND AS
DIRECTOR OF U OF T'S
FIRST NATIONS HOUSE,
RODNEY BOBIWASH
FOUGHT TIRELESSLY
FOR THE RIGHTS OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE.
HE ALSO MAINTAINED
THE ANISHINAABE
VIRTUES OF HUMILITY
AND APPROACHABILITY



BY MEGAN EASTON

PHOTOGRAPH BY
NICK IWANYSHYN

IN AUGUST

1992,

about 70 white supremacists gathered north of Montreal for Aryan Fest. Rodney Bobiwash, anti-racism co-ordinator at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto at the time, spent two days trailing the attendees, spying and eavesdropping on them in sub shops, bingo halls and parking lots. In his meticulous trip log, he recorded several brushes with danger. For example, one of the Quebec Ku Klux Klan leaders got a knife from his van when Bobiwash wrote down his licence plate number, but then abruptly backed off. On the way home to Toronto, Bobiwash was stuck in a traffic jam. Suddenly, the same KKK leader jumped out of the car ahead, cursing and accusing Bobiwash of following him. “Quite a humorous coincidence,” wrote Bobiwash, who died in 2002.

That he could be amused by this confrontation – and others – is a testament to Bobiwash’s unique brand of activism. “He could be deadly serious on the issues that mattered, then comedic in his observations and very quick with a joke,” says his friend Kenn Richard, founder of Native Child and Family Services of Toronto and a sessional lecturer in social work at U of T. And though Bobiwash fought tirelessly against injustice, including for several years as the director of First Nations House at U of T, he didn’t lose sight of the common humanity of those who perpetrated it. “Way before I met him, I heard about Rodney as an Indigenous rights leader, thinker and go-to person,” says Richard. “But everything he did was coloured with self-deprecation and humour – even when things might appear to be humourless, as many Indigenous issues do. He was an activist at heart, and he activated us all.”

Born in 1959 in Blind River, Ontario, Bobiwash was one of eight children of a single mother (his father died when he was one). He was part of the Anishnabek Nation, from the Mississauga First Nation on the north shore of Lake Huron. “So much of Rodney’s work was an expression of who he was as an Anishinaabe man,” says Rebeka Tabobondung (BA 2001 Victoria, MA 2008), who knew Rodney at U of T when she was president of the Native Students’ Association. “He had those Anishinaabe virtues of being humble, approachable and welcoming. There was no hierarchy in his thinking about people.”

Yet Bobiwash had to search for his Anishinaabe identity. He moved from Blind River, a few kilometres from the Mississauga First Nation, to a town near Sudbury, Ontario, when he was young. He had little exposure to Indigenous life there. His family struggled with poverty and at 12 he was taken into foster care on a farm. “I spent time in the children’s aid as a kid,” he told a *Toronto Star* reporter. “That’s probably the experience of most Indian people in this country. Nothing unique in that.”

Despite the adversity in his childhood, Bobiwash’s intelligence and ambition sustained him through school. In a personal essay he wrote when he was a student at Trent University, he says, “All my life I have been trying to find out what it means to be an Indian” through books, TV and movies. He went on to earn a degree in native studies, then became the first Indigenous student sponsored by the Canadian government for graduate studies at Oxford University. On his return to Canada, Bobiwash taught in the native studies programs at the University of Manitoba and then Trent, where he was a politically active faculty member. When he proposed joining some students to participate in the logging protests in Temagami, his department warned him that he wouldn’t have a job to come back to. He went anyway, and lost his position. His wife, Heather Howard-Bobiwash (PhD 2005), an associate professor of anthropology at Michigan State University and affiliated faculty at the Centre for Indigenous Studies at U of T, says uncompromising adherence to his principles was typical. “He saw it as simply following through on the traditional Indigenous responsibility to defend the land.”

In the early 1990s, Bobiwash moved to Toronto and extended his activism to combating the escalating neo-Nazi movement, specifically the Heritage Front. “Rodney did more to shut down hate than any other anti-racism activist back then,” says Elisa Hategan, who was briefly a member of the Heritage Front as a teen but now writes and speaks out against far-right extremism. Bobiwash filed a complaint with the Canadian Human Rights Commission against the organization’s phone hotline for its attacks on him personally and Indigenous people generally. He also started Klanbusters, an anti-racism hotline and newsletter that provided information on the activity of hate groups in Toronto and encouraged grassroots action against them. In this pre-Internet time, the phone line quickly filled up with vitriol and threats against his life. “The irony of anti-racism work is that it can lead to an increase by reactionary forces,” he said in a 1992 *Metro News* article. “However, the work done so far will lead to greater efforts at self-defence in the community.”

Even when the Heritage Front directly targeted him with a harassment campaign, he didn’t back down. “I wasn’t part of their strategy to terrorize activists, but I was aware of it,” says Hategan, who later turned against the Heritage Front and helped secure criminal convictions for its leaders. “When I had to go into hiding, though, he helped save my life. He enlisted six members of the American Indian Movement to keep me safe when I went to court. He gave me money, let me stay in his apartment and took me out to dinner.”

During the harassment campaign, Bobiwash was under 24-hour police protection. “That was an ugly time,” says Richard. “He must have felt some anxiety, but he was always up front, standing tall with a bit of a smile on his face and burning commitment in his eyes.” Tabobondung remembers Bobiwash often referenced

Ogitchida, an Ojibwe warrior. “Ogitchida means big-hearted, and the members are those who are brave enough to fight for their people until death or victory. Rodney wasn’t afraid of standing up for the right thing. Only certain people have that courage, and that’s what made him so special as a leader.”

Bobiwash did take the basic precautions of keeping his home address and number unlisted. “I don’t shrug this off, but I don’t lose any sleep either,” he told the *Medicine Hat News*. He even went for coffee once with the leader of the Heritage Front. “There’s no reason to be unnecessarily rude just because I don’t agree with what he stands for. I don’t see any reason to deny his humanity.”

In the end, Bobiwash played a pivotal role in dismantling the Heritage Front. Then he shifted his focus to illuminating the Indigenous history of Toronto and heightening awareness of its contemporary Indigenous population. In a 1996 letter to *Eye Weekly* in response to an article that linked “scalping” to First Nations peoples, he wrote: “There are 65,000 Native people living in Toronto, of which the vast majority live their lives, do their work, and seek to live in some sort of peaceful coexistence with those visitors to our lands who have come and never left. The harmful stereotypes inherent in [this] article do little to further peaceful coexistence and provide fuel for unrest and misunderstanding.” With Howard-Bobiwash, he started a community history project at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto in 1995 and shared the knowledge through a “Great Indian Bus Tour” around town. “He led the tour and was so entertaining that he kept everyone riveted, even when it was five hours long,” says Howard-Bobiwash. Today the project lives on as part of “First Story Toronto,” which provides a bus tour and more.

Toronto has the largest Indigenous population in Ontario and the fourth-largest in Canada. There’s a long history of urban migration of Indigenous people, who often move to cities looking for work, says Michael White, special projects officer for Indigenous initiatives at U of T. “Unlike settler and immigrant populations that tend to build communities within urban centres, Indigenous peoples don’t tend toward this type of social grouping. There are many reasons for this, including lack of access to economic resources and employment.”

Bobiwash was deeply knowledgeable and passionate about promoting Indigenous education, self-government and resource rights. Whether he was writing academic papers, speaking at conferences or talking to people one-on-one, however, he didn’t “blame and shame,” says Richard. “Rodney was one of the earliest Indigenous activists to speak plainly and notwithstanding any offense taken by anybody. But he was well-received by the non-Indigenous sector because he never made it about a personal attack on anybody. He let the facts stand on their own.”

That approach extended to Bobiwash’s role at U of T, where he expanded services and support for First Nations students while lecturing in the Aboriginal Studies program. “He always said the

“RODNEY ALWAYS SAID THE MOST SUBVERSIVE ACT WAS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE TO JUST BE WHO WE ARE”

most subversive act was for Indigenous people to just be who we are – speaking our language, maintaining our ties to the land, eating our traditional food,” says Tabobondung. “At U of T, he created space to do that. It was quite revolutionary for the time. His main message was that we had to deconstruct traditional colonial institutions, including the university, and he was one of the first Indigenous people to do that at U of T.” Bobiwash pushed to include the Indigenous perspective in the curriculum, while also building a sense of community at First Nations House.

In the few years before he died, Bobiwash’s health was declining because of severe diabetes and its complications. Nevertheless, he kept up his work as an Indigenous rights leader the best he could. Bobiwash travelled extensively in these last years, forging relationships with Indigenous communities in Mexico, Colombia, Brazil and Russia. When fellow Indigenous activist Kimy Pernia Domicò from Colombia disappeared in 2001 after speaking out against a plan to dam his people’s river, Bobiwash maintained a regular Friday evening vigil outside the Colombian consulate. When Bobiwash died on January 13, 2002, Colombian activists held the same vigil, but made it for him. At the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, a fire burned outside for three days. On the last day, 700 people came together for a ceremony. In a memorial, Tabobondung wrote: “What appears idealistic and altruistic, a lost cause to most, was totally logical to Rodney. There is either justice or there isn’t; we fight for our survival or we don’t survive.”

After his death, other scholars and activists stepped forward to continue his work. “He was a born educator,” says Prof. Keren Rice, founding director of U of T’s Centre for Indigenous Studies. “Rodney’s vision for Indigenous Studies continues to be reflected in the program’s philosophy, which is about Indigenous perspectives on histories, civilizations, epistemologies and world views. While it’s impossible to teach and learn these things without introducing settlers, the focus is not on settler views but on the priorities and aspirations of Indigenous peoples in Canada and throughout the world. Another important goal is to encourage students to engage in social activism.”

Bobiwash’s 60th birthday would have been this past summer, and no one can say exactly what he’d be doing if he were still here. He’d probably be pleased to see the progress U of T has made in implementing the calls to action in the university’s Truth and Reconciliation Steering Committee, such as increasing recruitment of Indigenous students and faculty, says Howard-Bobiwash. “But he’d also be in the thick of efforts to make sure that the ongoing issues of settler colonialism aren’t swept under the carpet.” Would the big-hearted warrior still be fighting the good fight? Says Richard, “Rodney burned pretty bright. A guy like him doesn’t just retire.” ■

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The Deadly Global Fungus

Prof. Leah Cowen's lab aims to understand how *C. auris* works and how to stop it



In 2009, medical researchers in Japan examined the infected ear of a 70-year-old woman and found a curious new pathogen – a drug-resistant fungus that no one had ever identified. The researchers christened it *Candida auris* (*auris* is Latin for “ear”) and published a paper about it.

Ten years later, *C. auris* has spread to six continents and more than 30 countries, including Canada. It is hard to diagnose with standard lab tests, and difficult to treat because it has developed a resistance to antifungal drugs. *C. auris* spreads easily through touch and can survive on surfaces for weeks. It kills between 30 and 60 per cent of people it infects, most of whom are hospital patients.

Although *C. auris* is recognized as a serious emerging global health problem, its origins remain mysterious, how it functions isn't well understood and treatment options are limited. For Prof. Leah Cowen, all of these unknowns made it an intriguing organism to research. Cowen is chair of U of T's department of molecular genetics, and holds the Canada Research Chair in Microbial Genomics and Infectious Disease. Her lab aims to understand

how *C. auris* works, and hopes to develop new drugs that will be effective against it and other fungal pathogens in humans and crops. “We’ve been very busy trying to understand what genes are responsible for drug resistance in this organism, and what genes are important for its ability to cause disease,” Cowen says. In fact, she and her research team have identified a molecule in the fungus that is a promising target for what could eventually be a new class of antifungal drugs.

At Cowen’s lab in the MaRS Centre, the interdisciplinary group of 26 researchers includes structural biologists, geneticists and chemists. They work on understanding the different genes that affect the behaviour of disease-causing fungi, including the genes that make them drug resistant and give them the ability to harm humans. The team also exposes the fungi to different substances, hoping to find something that causes them to weaken or die and could therefore be used to develop new drugs.

The fungi kingdom includes a broad range of organisms such as mushrooms, as well as yeasts, mildews and moulds. In healthy people, fungal pathogens tend to be an annoyance – a case of athlete’s foot, for instance, or a yeast infection. Most fungi prefer temperatures cooler than the human body temperature and so don’t infect people as easily as, say, bacteria.

Even so, around the world, fungi kill 1.6 million people a year – nearly four times more than malaria. Often, the victims are people with weakened immune systems, such as those with HIV-AIDS, those who are undergoing chemotherapy or those who are on immunosuppressant therapy following an organ transplant.

Other types of disease-causing fungi are far more common, but cases of *C. auris* are on the rise. In the U.S., about 700 people have been found to be infected with the fungus, and screening has found another 1,300 people carrying the

fungus but not made ill by it. Canada has had 20 cases of *C. auris*, with no attributed deaths.

Fungal infections are notoriously difficult to treat. That’s partly because human beings are much more closely related to fungi than most other pathogens, including bacteria and viruses. This makes it harder to come up with drugs that will harm the fungus but not the patient. Fungi also have cell walls that drugs have difficulty penetrating, and excel at pumping harmful substances out of their cells.

Although there are well over a dozen classes of drugs to treat bacterial infections, there are only three main classes of antifungal drugs. As the use of drugs in humans, plants and animals increases, pathogens of all sorts, including fungi, are developing resistance. And because there are only three classes of antifungals, doctors quickly run out of options.

It’s not yet clear where *C. auris* came from, but its high tolerance to salt suggests it evolved in brackish, marshy areas. Researchers can’t find any trace of it before 1996, and the best guess is that



C. AURIS IN CANADA

C. auris has been reported in four Canadian provinces: British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec.

until then the yeast lived unnoticed in the environment, and only recently became dangerous to humans.

One theory is that as temperatures have risen due to global warming, *C. auris* has evolved a tolerance to heat. At the same time, it was exposed to residues of the antifungals used on crops, which led it to develop resistance to antifungal medications. Heat tolerance and drug resistance combined to make it dangerous to humans.

One of the Cowen lab’s most promising treatment approaches involves a protein in the fungus called heat shock protein 90 (Hsp90). This “chaperone protein” helps other important proteins do their jobs. Hsp90 also helps cells adapt to stressful environments. This includes damage caused by exposure to toxins. Work at the Cowen lab shows that Hsp90 plays an important role in *C. auris*’s resistance to drugs.

Earlier this year, Cowen’s team published a paper that describes their work using a strain of *C. auris* they engineered so they can easily turn down the gene



responsible for Hsp90. Without a fully functioning Hsp90 protein, *C. auris* has a much harder time surviving, and is much more susceptible to antifungal drugs.

The research opens up a hopeful treatment option. Cowen and her team want to find a molecule that will penetrate the cell wall of the fungus, then bind to and disable Hsp90, weakening the yeast and making it more vulnerable to existing antifungal drugs.

“We’re uncovering fundamental biology. How do these organisms become drug resistant? How do they cause disease? What kind of molecules can we use to perturb those processes? Do these molecules and their targets in fungal cells influence interactions with host cells? We’re interested in going all the way to translate those discoveries into new therapeutic strategies,” says Cowen, a co-founder of Bright Angel Therapeutics, which develops treatments for drug-resistant fungal infections.

One potential problem with targeting Hsp90 is that the protein is also present in human cells, and fulfils similar important functions there. A useful drug will have to target the fungal version of Hsp90 while mostly leaving the human version alone. Work in Cowen’s lab has shown this is possible. The researchers have found that although the human and fungal versions of Hsp90 look similar, the fungal version is somehow more flexible – the protein “stretches,” making room for the potential drug molecules to interact with the target. By taking advantage of the difference, Cowen and her team hope to develop a drug that kills the pathogen, and leaves human cells alone.

“We think in the next few years we’re going to see at least a couple of new classes of antifungals come on board,” Cowen says. “We’d like one of those to have come from our lab.”—Kurt Kleiner



How to choose a nutritious “digital diet”

Anna Lomanowska (PhD 2011) quit social media soon after she started examining the effects of digital technologies on well-being. “I felt I had more breathing room to think,” says Lomanowska, a former assistant professor of psychology at U of T Mississauga and director of the Digital Well-Being Lab.

A researcher in cyberpsychology, Lomanowska says drastically cutting screen time is impractical for most people. Instead, she promotes strategies that support a healthy, balanced life while using technology. For example, she returned to Twitter but doesn’t have it on her phone and checks it only once a day. —Megan Easton

Choose a nourishing “digital diet”

Lomanowska suggests we care for our brains the same way as our bodies by monitoring our digital intake. That means limiting consumption of the media equivalent of junk food, such as addictive games, and adding more wholesome fare such as self-care and meditation apps.

Be mindful about tech time

“Simply increasing our awareness about how we use technology can help take us out of autopilot, where we reach for our devices and are suddenly down a rabbit hole,” says Lomanowska, a member of the international Digital Wellness Collective, which includes professionals in education, mental health and software development. Be intentional, whether picking up your phone to check the time or sitting down to answer work email.

Get practical

Skip the radical digital detox, says Lomanowska. Small changes can be “a catalyst for transformation.” Below are some of her suggestions.

- › Evaluate whether your high-use apps and websites drain or enrich your well-being, then adjust your usage accordingly.
- › Don’t keep your phone on or near your body 24-7.
- › Have at least one screen-free meal every day.

A Bridge Over Troubled Water

Flooding may have left some Torontonians feeling hopeless, but Fadi Masoud — an expert in landscape architecture and urbanism — is helping design a more resilient city

It's easy to feel defeated living in Toronto. We're the city of sky-high housing costs and transit paralysis and the Maple Leafs. A local could be forgiven for deciding that things here don't always work so well.

But on a hot day in June, Fadi Masoud, an assistant professor at the Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, is an optimistic antidote to civic defeat. Gym bag slung over his shoulder, he plays cheerful tour guide through the city's transforming waterfront, walking fast and pointing out all the things that are going right. "Toronto is leading the world on flood protection, and most people don't have a clue," he says, semi-jogging through Corktown Common, a rolling green space at the mouth of the Don River that's a precursor of what's to come in the ambitious redesign of the Port Lands. A speed stroll through Corktown Common is an act of time travel to the city's resilient future. According to Masoud, the kind of devastating flooding we saw this year (and in 2017)

may not vanish, but will be much better managed.

"I came here as a student years ago when this park was just mud. Amazing!" says Masoud as we pass an athletic field where a trio is playing Frisbee. Next, we hit a marsh on the western perimeter, a wetland habitat for chirping birds and rustling amphibians. Above us, on a hill, kids are loudly romping in a splash pad beside the park's solar-powered pavilion.

Less than a decade ago, this area was deemed a writeoff, a post-industrial void susceptible to the Don River's damaging whims. But now, Corktown Common sits on a functional flood plain. Landscape architects ensured that each design feature — wetlands, berms, mixed elevations — worked in concert to safeguard downtown Toronto's eastern flank from the inevitable floodwaters. Because of that design, new buildings and businesses could safely pop up nearby. "It's





PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNIFER ROBERTS

Prof. Fadi Masoud
at Corktown
Common in Toronto



not just a park,” says Masoud, pointing out an urban prairie with clusters of wildflowers. “It’s also a form of infrastructure. It’s both civic and functional.”

After earning a post-professional master’s degree in landscape architecture from Harvard University and lecturing at MIT, where he headed research projects on coastal flooding in Florida, Masoud began a faculty position at U of T in 2017. It was a homecoming – he’s a graduate (MLA 2010) and Torontonian, having arrived from Jordan with his family at age 14 – but one of the biggest draws for Masoud was the prospect of working in a city that’s aiming to apply the principles of resilient design that he was teaching.

Today, Masoud sits on the Design Review Panel of Waterfront Toronto, the federal-provincial-municipal agency behind the \$30 billion revitalization of 800 hectares of Toronto waterfront. And while Masoud didn’t design Corktown Common, he speaks about the U.S. firm that did – Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates – with the awe of a rookie NBA player talking about LeBron James. “What we’re looking at here is design excellence. Good landscape architecture understands that you can’t work against the forces of the environment you live in. The landscape should dictate where streets go, where parks go, how we orient our buildings. We should take cues from the environment to generate urbanism,” says Masoud. “A place that’s designed for resilience is one that works well within its context and can cope and manage with whatever stresses and shocks it comes across” – including flooding. →



Masoud uses Toronto's waterfront as a case study in an upcoming book called, cheekily, *Terra-Sorta-Firma: Reclaiming the Littoral Gradient*, a graphic atlas that looks at the world's developed coastlines – places where cities have been built on top of saturated lands such as estuaries and marshes. "Land reclamation," as this process is called, has created a troubled urban cycle: waterfront districts can be inherently unstable, vulnerable to flooding and natural disasters, but they are also highly desirable property, leading to ever more development.

The question of how to better design flood-prone urban areas led Masoud and Prof. Elise Shelley to create a Daniels Faculty course that involves students working with planners in flood-prone Broward County, Florida. Last year, 19 students travelled to the fast-developing coastal region to find ways to improve the area's resiliency; their creative solutions included rainwater storage and more flexible zoning regulations. The course received the 2018 Sloan Award, a Studio Prize from *Architect* magazine, for innovative teaching and creative student projects.

Though oceanfront flooding isn't Toronto's problem, Masoud sees similarities in how both places urgently need to adopt a way of thinking that links urban land use with landscape. "It's not enough to expand a sewer pipe anymore. There has to be a holistic and integrated approach to how you develop cities, and that's the same in Florida or Toronto."

Tensions between the environment and urbanism first came to Masoud's attention when he was growing up in Amman, a Jordanian city where historic ruins stand side by side with rapid, hyper-modern urbanization. Fruit trees



“LEADING WITH
LANDSCAPE IS A VERY
HEALTHY WAY OF CITY
BUILDING, BUT IT’S ALSO
VERY INCREMENTAL.
IT TAKES TIME”

surrounded his childhood home, and he used to pluck cherries and apricots in his yard. But as the city grew, Masoud noticed changes. "Over my lifetime the place became a concrete jungle," he says. The fruit stopped growing. A centuries-old grove of olive trees disappeared. "You could see there was no thought whatsoever put into the relationship between how the city was mushrooming and growing, and how the landscape around it was being affected. That was always in my subconscious."

The family immigrated to Toronto in 1998 and over the course of Masoud's adolescence in the city, he saw urbanism accelerate yet again as cranes and

skyscrapers began to dominate the Willowdale skyline. He enrolled in and graduated from an urban planning program at the University of Waterloo but wanted to push the boundaries of the profession and look for more solutions. He saw landscape architecture as a burgeoning corner of urbanism, and enrolled in the master's program at U of T.

We walk south, toward the western edge of the Port Lands. This massive area used to be a marsh but in the early 20th century it was industrialized and paved over, making it highly susceptible to flooding. This century-old pattern is familiar to Torontonians. As the city develops, green space is swapped for asphalt and concrete, which is less able to absorb the rains that climate change has exacerbated. Natural waterways get buried. The city's ancient stormwater infrastructure gets overwhelmed, causing floods.

The redesign of the Port Lands is a reckoning with this reality.

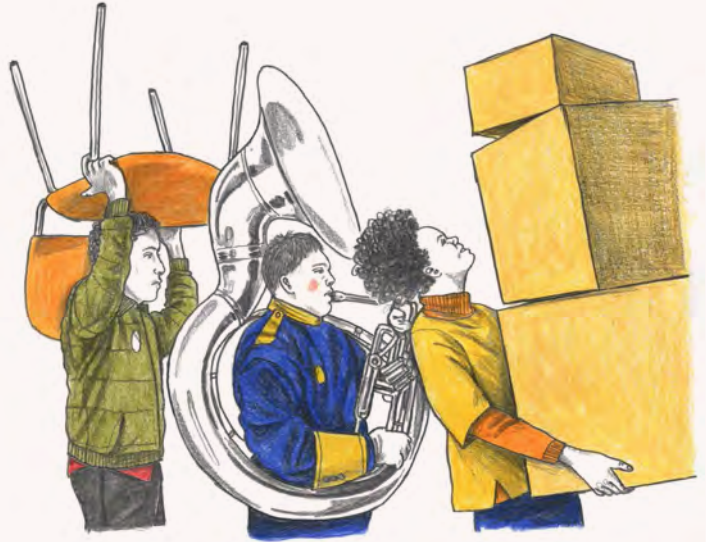
Scheduled for completion in 2024, it will be Corktown Common amplified – with promenades and playscapes next to wildlife-friendly wetlands and channels you can canoe down. But perhaps the most radical element of the new waterfront will be the renaturalizing of the mouth of the Don River. Designers will add another waterway, effectively relieving the old river by building a new one.

Neighbourhoods built near this urban river park may include Quayside, the proposed Google-backed Sidewalk Labs project – which, Masoud notes, would also benefit from Waterfront Toronto’s flood-protection innovation. “Landscape elements such as berms, waterways and vegetation also make for a ‘smart city.’ Leading with landscape is a very healthy way of city building, but it’s also very incremental. It’s not instantaneous development. It takes time.”

We finally near the Port Lands, but the work site is cordoned off with chain link. In the distance is the hulking machinery that will, ironically, be used to reunite the city with its natural state. Looking at the hard-hatted construction workers, this well-designed future seems far away. Across the harbour, the Islands are partially under water for the second time in three years. I can’t match Masoud’s optimism.

“There’s no doubt climate change is making the city more susceptible to flooding, but the fact is, it always flooded here,” he says. “The landscape told us what to do. We just weren’t listening.”

—Katrina Onstad



Walk on the Wild Side

On January 9, 1976, an unusual parade of about 150 Innis College students and faculty headed north on St. George Street accompanied by the U of T Engineering Society’s Lady Godiva Memorial Band. There were no floats or costumes, but plenty of desks, chairs and bookshelves held aloft by the participants on their way to the official opening of Innis’s new quarters.

“They were in a festive mood as they carted furniture from their old home at 63 St. George Street to the new, but very empty, college building at 2 Sussex Avenue where the college sits now,” says Professor Peter Russell, Innis principal at the time. The motley items they transported were left behind by the movers. In his *Principal’s Report* that year, Russell wrote about the “strange band of characters jostling their way up St. George Street with beat-up blackboards and battered chairs.”

Founded in 1964, Innis College’s first location was on Hart House Circle. The move to 63 St. George in 1968 was

meant to be brief, but plans for a twin-tower eight-storey building were quashed due to government funding cutbacks. When Russell became principal, he made his acceptance contingent on a promise of university funding for a permanent home for the college.

The procession on that cold January day ended with a ceremony where Russell and Pauline McGibbon, who was lieutenant-governor of Ontario and a former U of T chancellor, cut knotted shoelaces, not a ribbon. Both the march and the “shoestring” symbolized the building’s tight budget and reminded attendees of the Innis Kitchen Sink Fund, created with the aim of raising \$50,000 from Innis alumni, students and staff to furnish the building. “Staff and students were showing the resourcefulness and independence – as well as the sense of humour – that had come to be marks of a community built in limited material circumstances,” says Russell. —Megan Easton

These 3-D printers create perfect models of life-sized human hearts, spines and other body parts that help students train

In a small, windowless room at Toronto General Hospital, a bank of seven 3-D printers runs day and night, patiently laying down layer after layer of coloured plastic. When the printing is done, the pieces are trimmed and fitted together into perfect models of human hearts, life-sized and correct down to the smallest detail.

The 3-D printers are part of the Lynn & Arnold Irwin Advanced Perioperative Imaging Lab at the University Health Network’s Peter Munk Cardiac Centre. Combined with advances in medical imaging and computer modelling, they are allowing doctors to get a better look at heart defects before they go in to repair them, as well as providing better training methods.

The models of the hearts use extremely detailed data from MRIs, CT scans, ultrasounds or other imaging techniques. Normally, doctors are working with two-dimensional images on a printout or a flat screen. As anyone who has ever tried to see their baby on a prenatal ultrasound can appreciate, this isn’t always easy. By turning the data from those images into three-dimensional computer models, and using those models to make solid printed hearts, the lab gives the doctor something that can be held in the hand and examined in detail.

With the printers whirring away in the background, Josh Qua Hiansen, the biomedical industrial designer at the lab, shows how the model will be used by

SIZE COMPARISON



Typical heart



Patient’s enlarged heart



Horse heart



Elephant heart

doctors. This particular patient has a malformation of a part of the heart called the superior vena cava, which is allowing blood to mix with blood from pulmonary veins. Doctors want to fit an implant to close the malformed area, and they will use the model to make sure the implant is sized and positioned appropriately to close the area.

The lab was created in collaboration with Matt Ratto, a U of T professor in the Faculty of Information and the head of the university’s Critical Making Lab. Co-founders are Dr. Massimiliano Meineri, a U of T professor of anesthesia, and Dr. Azad Mashari, an anesthesiologist at Toronto General Hospital and a U of T lecturer who heads the imaging lab. The mandate is to evaluate, refine and translate 3-D imaging, modelling and micromanufacturing techniques into clinical and educational practice.

Mashari says that the new techniques provide an inexpensive and flexible way to create all sorts of learning aids. These include medical “phantoms” – printed hearts, spines and other body parts. For instance, heart phantoms are used to train ultrasound technicians. And a phantom spine in flesh-like gel can be used to instruct on how to give spinal injections.

With the capability provided by in-house 3-D printing, along with 3-D computer models and even virtual reality, Mashari thinks that training and medical visualization will continue to become less expensive and more effective. —Kurt Kleiner

This picture shows the top of the heart, so it is as if you were looking down at it from above the person's head

This 3-D printed model of the heart is taken from the scan of a patient with Dextrocardia and transposition of the great arteries. The patient has had many surgeries in order to create a normal circulation.

Superior vena cava and right atrium

The model shows the spaces inside – as if the walls of the chambers, arteries and veins had been removed, and only the blood they contain was visible. This allows doctors to get a good look at the connections between the chambers of the heart.

Artificial conduit connecting the right ventricle to the pulmonary arteries (also green)

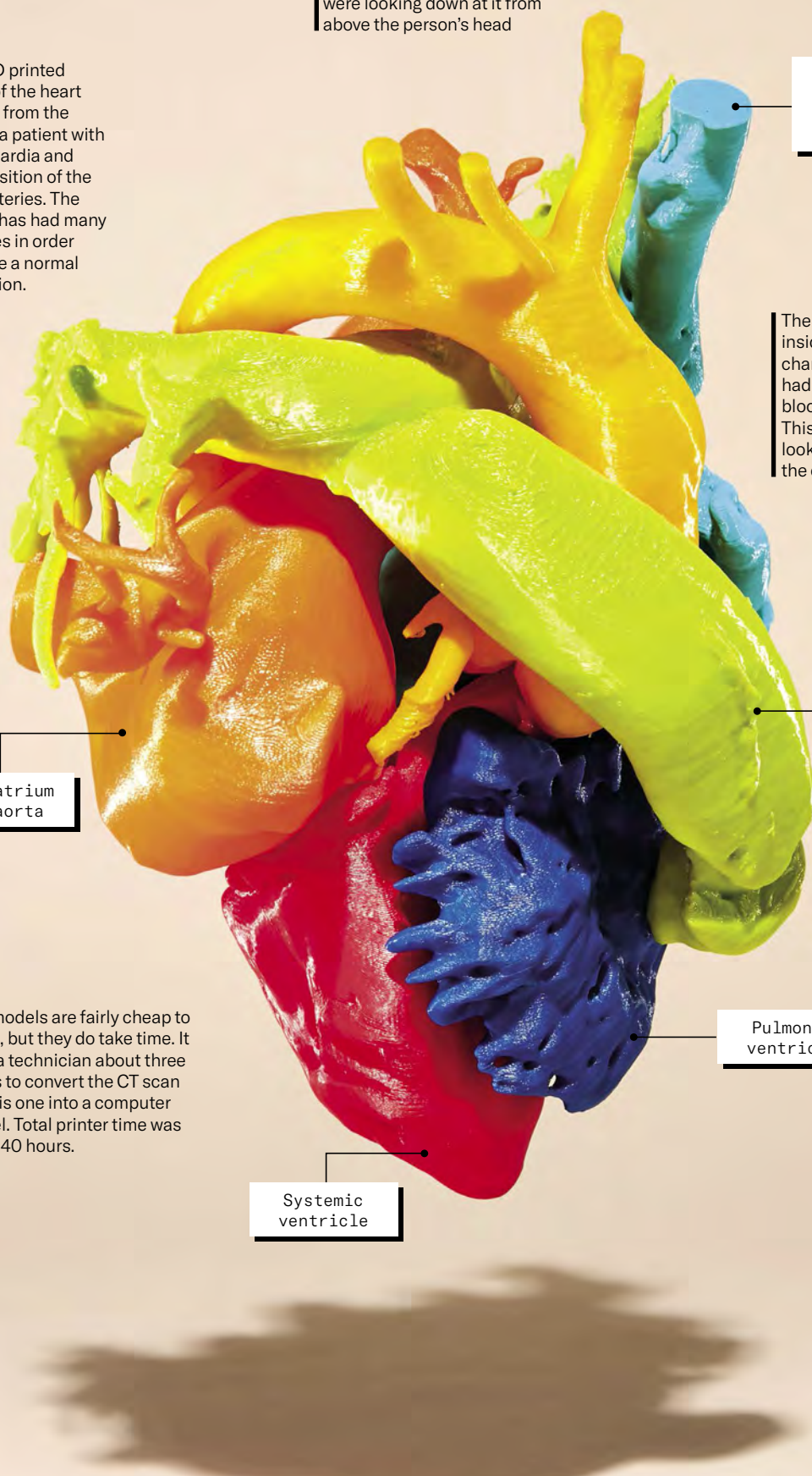
Left atrium and aorta

Pulmonic ventricle

The models are fairly cheap to make, but they do take time. It took a technician about three hours to convert the CT scan for this one into a computer model. Total printer time was 30 to 40 hours.

Systemic ventricle

To make the heart, images from CT scans were converted into 3-D computer models, and then rendered into thousands of "slices." The printer used these image slices to build up the pieces one layer at a time.





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through her volunteer work. And she's paying it forward in more ways than one. As an Arts & Science donor, she has also made a commitment to the Faculty in her will. She wants the next generation of students to have access to the resources they need to reach their full potential.

Find out more from niamh.earls@utoronto.ca or **416-978-1570** or learn more about Katrina's story and opportunities for planned giving at alumni.artsci.utoronto.ca/katrinastory/



A Bright Future for Front Campus

U of T’s plans for new trees, gardens and green space around King’s College Circle bring the university a \$100,000 gift

The University of Toronto will plant more than 200 new trees around King’s College Circle and Hart House Circle – and preserve 365 others – as part of its Landmark Project to revitalize the historic centre of the St. George campus.

The plan, which will help the city toward its goal of 40 per cent tree cover, recently received a \$100,000 grant from the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation, with funding from the City of Toronto.

The Landmark Project, which goes to Governing Council this fall, will renew 35,000 square metres of green space at the heart of the St. George campus. The

planting of dozens of new trees and gardens around King’s College Circle – and throughout the whole project area – along with the replacement of roads with pedestrian and cycling paths, will be one of the most noticeable changes.

Bursts of colour

Joseph Bivona, a project manager with Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA), the landscape architecture firm working on Landmark, says his team has chosen several flowering species to highlight the change of seasons, particularly winter to spring.

As students are writing their final exams in April, King’s College Circle will brighten with colour –

pink cherry blossoms, bright yellow dogwood buds and magenta redbud blooms. “We’ve chosen trees that will flower early and bring lots of joy,” says Bivona. As the leaves turn in the fall, the circle will shimmer with red, orange and gold.

Because front campus is used for recreation, MVVA will set the flowering trees in clusters around the outside of the field; taller oaks and maples will stand in the corners of the site, providing shade for studying and relaxing. Small plazas and seating areas will offer a chance to take in the view.

Broad-based support

Along the west side of Tower Road, next to the playing fields, new amphitheatre-style seating will be added. Columnar oaks will rise behind the seats, forming what, from the north end of the road, will look like a wall of green – with gaps that become visible as you walk toward Soldiers’ Tower. “The oaks will really put the focus on the tower,” says Bivona.

So far, nearly 2,100 alumni and friends have contributed more than \$5.9 million to the project. The support is an indication of how strongly alumni feel about the central campus landscape and the university’s plans for it, says Donald Ainslie, principal of University College and co-lead of the Landmark Project.

A perfect partnership

Amory Ngan, the project manager for the city’s tree-planting strategy, says U of T’s Landmark project gives the city the opportunity to add trees to one of the municipality’s largest and most heavily used green spaces on private land. The Landmark project, adds Ngan, “serves as a great example for what other institutions in the city might be able to achieve. It’s absolutely fantastic.” —**Scott Anderson**

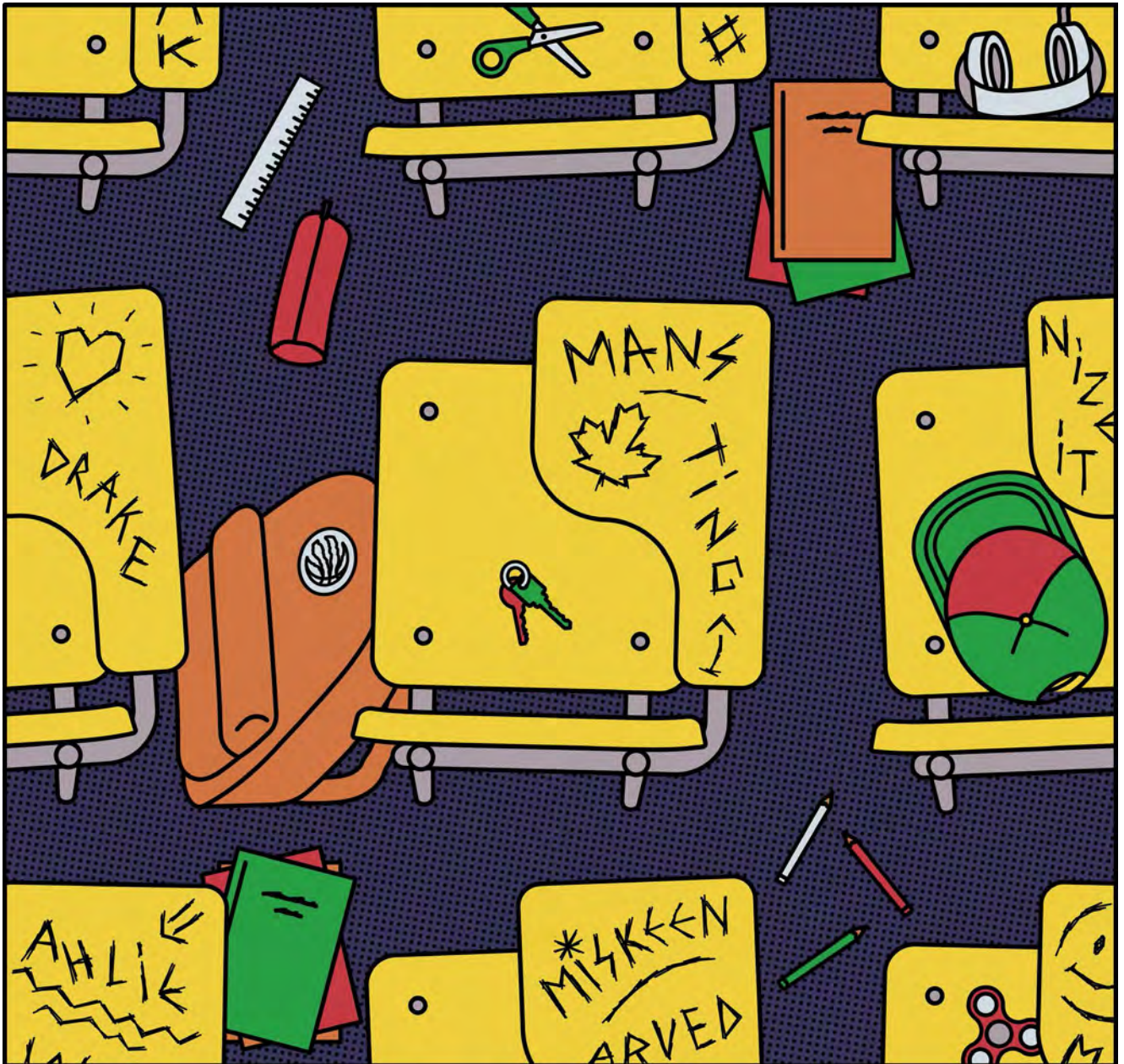
Visit landmark.utoronto.ca to learn more about how to support the Landmark project.

↑
Sustainable
U of T

Indigenous and native plant species make up almost all of the proposed plantings.

A proposed geothermal field under King’s College Circle would help heat the surrounding buildings and save about 15,000 tonnes of greenhouse-gas emissions annually.

Do You Know Toronto Slang?
Youth are drawing from several
languages spoken by the city's immigrants
to create a novel form of English



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALBERT TERCERO; (RIGHT) BY DAVID SPARSHOT

Paris, New York or Toronto. What is emerging from these cities, usually from working-class neighbourhoods, he says, are “multi-ethnolects” – dialects of the local language that include words from multiple ethnic groups.

Denis has been studying the Toronto version of this phenomenon – Multicultural Toronto English – since 2015, and has become an expert in what’s popularly known as “Toronto slang.”

He says *mans* is the best-known example of Toronto slang, thanks in part to a Drake appearance on *Saturday Night Live* in 2016. In a sketch called “Black Jeopardy,” the Toronto-born musician says, “It’s really good to be here, dawg. I couldn’t take the TTC but *mans* made it over anyway.”

Where *mans* came from is a bit of a mystery: Denis says it has no direct analog in other languages spoken in Toronto. The earliest mention he could find was in the online *Urban Dictionary*, in 2006 (where it appears as *manz*); it doesn’t show up on Twitter until 2010. In an academic paper published in 2016, Denis writes that the most obvious theory is that the word came from London’s *man*, but he argues this is unlikely. Because London and Toronto have large Jamaican communities who use similar versions of Jamaican Creole, it’s quite possible *mans/man* evolved in each city independently, but from the same Caribbean language.

In four years, Denis has documented dozens of Toronto slang words and phrases, which he tracks through conversations with people he recruits for his research. He also uses YouTube, which includes videos of people talking *about* Toronto slang.

Many words come from Jamaican patois. But Somali and Arabic are also big influences, says Denis. From Somali, Toronto slang draws *wallahi*, meaning “I swear,” as in “Wallahi, *mans* didn’t take your phone.” Arabic gives us *miskeen*, a pathetic person or situation.

Derek Denis remembers the exact moment, in 2015, when he learned the word *mans*. A professor of language studies at U of T Mississauga, Denis was speaking with students about the word *man* being used in the place of “I,” which researchers had begun hearing in immigrant neighbourhoods of London, England.

A young woman raised her hand: “But we have something just like that here.” The student sent Denis messages she had received from friends. Sure enough, there was *mans* being used for “I,” as in, “*Mans* has work in the morning, how about you?”

Denis was floored – as a biologist might be after seeing a newly discovered species of bird for the first time. The reason, as he explains, is that pronouns, linguistically, are like concrete. They hardly ever change. As other words move fluidly in and out of style, “I” and “you” and their cousins remain constant. This use of *mans* (like *man* in England) was completely new – and, in the history of the English language, quite rare. “Pronouns tend to be one of the most stable aspects of the grammar, so this was really cool to me,” he says.

As a linguistics researcher, Denis had become interested in what happens to the English language when immigrants from a wide variety of backgrounds come together in one place, such as London,



A CONCISE GUIDE TO TORONTO SLANG

Mans I, we, me, us, them – but also a general plural noun. Influence from Jamaican patois and London but homegrown in Toronto.

Ting Woman, thing, casual relationship. From Jamaican patois but a homegrown Toronto meaning.

Ahlie “Eh” or “right.” A confirmational word. From patois.

Wallahi I swear to God. Literally “by God.” From Somali (borrowed into Somali from Arabic).

Bucktee General pejorative. From Somali word for drug addict (but derogatory, like “crackhead”).

Nize it Shut up. A clipping of “recognize.” (“Recognize you’re out of line and shut up.”)

Borrowings from these three cultures are so prevalent in Toronto slang partly because the city is home to many immigrants from these places. But there’s more to it than that, says Denis.

Word choices reveal more about us than simply what we’re trying to say. Our style of speaking, our pronunciation and the word variants we use – our “idiolect” – reflect elements of our background and how we want the world to see us. “There’s an aspect of Jamaican culture that’s cool,” says Denis. “So, taking words from that culture is also seen as cool.”

It can be controversial, too. Drake, for one, has been the target of criticism for using certain words (originating in the Jamaican or Somalian communities, for example) that some argue he doesn’t have an authentic claim to because he is not from these communities himself. Denis says he plans to explore this question of “cultural appropriation” in the next phase of his research.

Denis’s interest in Toronto slang stems partly from the fact that he grew up in Scarborough, Ontario, where many of the borrowed words originate. But he also wants to document a new dialect spoken by young people – especially those who are immigrants or the children of immigrants – so they’re not labelled as having a language deficiency. (According to Denis, this has occurred in the U.S. in the Black, Mexican-American and Indigenous Hawaiian communities.) “These kids are simply speaking the dialect they learned,” he says. “There’s nothing cognitively wrong with them.”

Although multi-ethnolects have emerged in several cities, Toronto slang is uniquely Canadian, says Denis, reflecting our own cultural makeup. “We pride ourselves on being a multicultural society, and this is the linguistic result of that,” he says. “I think it’s something to be proud of.” —**Scott Anderson**

The Use of AI in Immigration Decisions

U of T's Petra Molnar examines how machine learning could infringe on the human rights of migrants



Petra Molnar, interim director of the Faculty of Law's International Human Rights Program, recently investigated how AI is being used in Canada's immigration decisions. In a report she co-wrote with Lex Gill for the human rights program and U of T's Citizen Lab, Molnar warns that governments' use of AI in immigration threatens to exacerbate the vulnerability of migrants.

How is Canada using AI in immigration decisions?

There are two pilot projects underway: one uses AI to help assess temporary residence visa applications from India and China and the other uses AI to triage simple applications. The Canada Border Services Agency has also been testing a potential AI lie detector airport kiosk, which is used rather than an officer to determine if someone is telling the truth before being processed for further screening. There are similar AI lie detectors currently used in the European Union. We do not yet have data on exactly how the pilot projects are working but are hoping to monitor them to make sure they comply with Canada's human rights obligations.

Do you see benefits to using AI in immigration?

It could allow simple applications to be automated, leaving more time and human resources for complex applications.

What are the biggest risks?

When states experiment with new technologies, they can infringe on fundamental human rights such as the right to life, liberty and security, like when an algorithm determines whether someone should be placed in immigration detention as was done at the U.S.-Mexico border. Data breaches are also a significant concern. What if repressive governments obtain sensitive data about people seeking asylum in another country? Bias is also a risk. AI has a record of discriminating on the grounds of race and gender.

←

Back Story

Molnar's family is from Czechoslovakia, although she has been in Canada for more than 20 years.

Quote

"I got into immigration law because of my heritage and wanting to understand how power operates in society and how laws can be used in good but also nefarious ways."

Where are you taking this research from here?

I have been splitting my time between Toronto and the University of Cambridge, doing a global assessment of migration management technology and trying to understand how international human rights laws could regulate this tech. Almost every day there is a new story about the use of technology to increase security or surveillance or about the ways groups are being targeted. I hope to continue this work and spark further conversations about the importance of human rights at the centre of technological development. —Tara Deschamps

PHOTOGRAPH BY NARISA LADAK



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