



# SDS

## director's report

**A**s I write this, SDS is a whirlwind of activity: classes are wrapping up and more than 30 students are getting ready to graduate (our largest cohort ever, which we will celebrate at our end-of-term party and awards ceremony on April 4); scheduling for next year is being finalized, including our new course, "Queer Youth and Education In and Out of Schools," taught by the wonderful and accomplished Lance McCreedy (Centre for Urban Schooling/Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, OISE); we are about to have our third and largest annual graduate and undergraduate student research colloquium (March 22); we are hosting the first ever Feminist Porn Conference (at which several of our students are presenting on April 6); the Schools Committee is honouring the hard work and dedication of Ontario teachers in queer times ("Giving Credit Where Credit's Due," March 27); the SDS Student Union just held its second very successful spoken word night, *Fleurus II*, and are hard at work getting out the new issue of the *Undergraduate Journal in Sexual Diversity Studies*; and we are thrilled to be hosting the Bonham Centre Awards Inaugural Gala (April 25) honouring Dan Savage (author, media pundit, and journalist), Stephen Lewis (HIV/AIDS Crusader), and Bent on Change (a gay-straight alliance at Toronto's Harbord Collegiate Institute). The Gala will feature emcee Tré Armstrong and a musical performance by Molly Johnson.

Our other big event this spring was hosting "Contemporary Currents in Sexual Diversity Politics: A Symposium in Honour of David Rayside." To mark David's retirement this June, we brought together a number of academics and activists to talk about the role of religion in politics and the need to take religion seriously, about LGBT politics and citizenship rights, about past trends and current challenges in queer activism—in short, the very issues David has been engaged with for nearly 40 years at the University of Toronto. Many speakers noted David's visionary leadership and paid tribute to the kind of home David has helped create here, one that bears the stamp of David's personal and political ideals of equity, diversity, social justice, and inclusion. David has always said that "SDS is the little engine that could." If SDS is the engine, David has been the conductor, the porter, the railroad, the

fuel, the signal operator, the caboose—and the bar car! David has hosted many a great party here at SDS, believing that collegiality, community, and student success are to be celebrated.

David has been a pioneer in the field of sexual diversity studies, contributing to the remarkable shift from social stigma to public visibility and political legitimacy that we have seen in Canada and internationally over the last 40 years. He has worked in community organizations from the first wave of gay liberation, such as *The Body Politic* and the Right to Privacy Committee, and he continues to support LGBT advocacy groups such as EGALE.

David has contributed internationally recognized scholarship on issues of LGBT politics and rights, beginning with his account of the inclusion of sexual orientation in the Ontario Human Rights Code (1987). He published his second and third monographs on LGBT political organizing and issues of citizenship rights, *On the Fringe: Gays and Lesbians in Politics* (1998) and *Queer Inclusions, Continental Divisions: Public Recognition of Sexual Diversity in Canada and the United States* (2008). He also co-edited *Equity and Diversity in Labour* (with Gerald Hunt, 2007). More recently, he has focused on the role of religion in mainstream politics, with a co-edited volume, *Faith, Politics and Sexual Diversity in Canada and the United States* (with Clyde Wilcox, 2011), and the only published research article on Muslim responses to sexuality in the US (2011).

David has proven to be a generous and committed teacher to thousands of graduates and undergraduates since he began teaching at U of T in the Political Science Department in 1974, serving as a wise administrator and a caring, intelligent, and respected mentor. David's retirement represents a huge loss to us in one sense, though only because his presence has been such a tremendous gain. We know that David may be retiring from teaching and administration, but he will continue to be involved in life here at SDS. David, we are tremendously grateful for all you've done.

Scott Rayter  
Acting Director,  
Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies



### Contributors:

Yvonne Palkowski

David Rayside

Scott Rayter

# CENTRE NEWS



## **Frank Peers gives \$50K to establish scholarship**

L-R Profs. Frank Peers, David Rayside, and Brenda Cossman at the symposium in honour of David Rayside on March 1

Two new scholarships have been created to mark Bonham Centre founder David Rayside's official retirement in June 2013. One is to honour the best all-round student graduating with an SDS specialist degree. The other is for a graduating major or specialist who also has an academic or advocacy interest in politics. These new undergraduate awards are the result of a generous endowed gift of \$50,000 from Frank Peers, Professor Emeritus in a Department of Political Science and a colleague of David's for some years. Professor Peers had a distinguished career in leading the development of information programming at CBC Radio before joining the department, teaching Canadian politics, and writing about broadcasting policy. He has created several graduate scholarships in political science, but to honour David's contributions chose to house this award in the Bonham Centre. The establishment of the award was announced at a symposium in honour of David held on March 1, 2013.





## **Brenda Cossman at the Royal Society of Canada induction of new fellows ceremony.**

Bonham Centre Director and Professor of Law Brenda Cossman was recently honoured with the Ludwik and Estelle Jus Memorial Human Rights Prize from University of Toronto Alumni Association, for her positive and lasting contributions to education and action against discrimination; supporting the University's mission to realize an exemplary degree of equity and diversity; and extending our knowledge as a consequence of our diversity. At the awards reception, University College Principal Donald Ainslie described Brenda as, "a true public intellectual, calling on all of us to broaden our conceptions of equity to recognize the diversity of human experience."

# Thank you

The Bonham Centre would like to thank Craig Henshaw, also known as Lord Morpheus, for his generous donation to the Sexual Representation Collection (SRC) in support of Nicholas Matte's curatorial position. Henshaw is a photographer and active advocate for sexual education, particularly around bondage and BDSM. He has been a strong supporter of SDS and the SRC and has also donated a great deal of archival material so that interested researchers can explore his work. We are thrilled to have received this very generous donation and look forward to using it to further develop the collection. Thank you, Craig!



## A Conversation with Paul Weadick

**D**uring the course of his undergraduate career in Sexuality Diversity Studies, Paul Weadick has not only excelled academically, winning a number of scholarships, he has also demonstrated exemplary leadership within the community, as the co-editor of the SDS undergraduate journal, a contributor to the online blog SexText, and coordinator of SDS movie nights, among other activities.

Prof. Elizabeth Gould, who got to know Weadick in her Queer Musics course and also supervised his independent study, says "Paul is a uniquely gifted student and scholar. Not only did he develop substantive and original ideas in the research he undertook with me, Paul articulated them in his writing and symposium presentation with intelligence as well as playfulness."

On the cusp of his upcoming graduation, we sat down with our star pupil to discuss his SDS experience and find out what's next for him.

### Why did you choose Sexual Diversity Studies?

It's complicated. It was over 8 years ago when I actually applied to university. If I recall correctly, SDS was the main reason I came to U of T. It is also the only reason I finished my undergraduate degree. When I applied to university I didn't know about the program, and I was planning to head to York for a cultural studies program or something like that. Then I stumbled upon SDS, and received a last-minute offer from UofT, and without much debate I accepted. In my mind, SDS was going to be exactly like the scene in Monty Python's *The Meaning of Life* where John Cleese teaches sex ed by having live sex in front of the students. So the program really appealed to me as a 17-year-old sexually confused virgin loner. It also just sounded a lot more exciting than Geology or Statistics... SDS ended up being academically rigorous and interdisciplinary, with a lot of as-of-yet uncharted academic terrain. It really allowed me to follow the subjects that I'm interested in, and feel like I'm doing unique academic work, while also providing a solid background in a number of fields: politics, history, law, literature, theory, equity; the list goes on.



# Congrats

## to our Scholarship and Award Recipients

### **What is the most valuable thing you learned as a student in the Bonham Centre?**

At the Bonham Centre I learned the most basic and important academic skills: how to read, write, and think analytically. More importantly, it has forced me to work through my assumptions about race, class, gender, and sexuality, and question the ways in which society and culture cultivate those assumptions. It has helped me maintain a commitment to social justice and equity and activism.

### **What would you say to prospective students considering Sexual Diversity Studies?**

SDS can be an incredibly warm and welcoming program at a school that sometimes feels enormous, cold, and unforgiving. It took me a few years before I got connected with the community in SDS but it made my experience at U of T monumentally better. SDS people are wonderful and open-minded; that goes for the students, the staff, and the faculty. It is a comfortable environment, but also one that is challenging and engaging. Plus you get to study sex.

### **What do you have to say to your professors and instructors?**

Thank you for both ritualistically crushing my spirit and egging me on? I've had pretty fabulous luck in having professors who are really dedicated to students' learning. It's never fun getting a paper back that's covered head to tail in red ink, but at least you know your prof is making an effort, and you've got room for improvement. Despite totally dreading feedback from Scott Rayter, I could at least comfort myself with the knowledge that it was constructive criticism. I hated getting papers back with no feedback. What good is that? Why even bother handing something in. But maybe that's just me. I'd rather be ripped to shreds than completely ignored. On the other hand, there are great profs like Nick Matte and Liz Gould who are extremely demanding but always full of positive reinforcement. That reinforcement is nice to avoid a total burnout meltdown.

### **What are your future plans?**

Oh please don't ask me that. The future is dark and scary and so many decisions are looming...

I'm trying to make some baby steps. I really have short-term vision. The idea that I should be forging a career path or becoming a bona fide capitalist adult with a job is very strange to me. In many ways I feel destined for grad school, but the prospect of my student debt continuing to grow has scared me off, at least for now. For the time being, I've got a number of creative projects to work on, most of which have been put on hold during the 7+ years it has taken me to finish my BA. So I'm trying to play and compose music on a regular basis, and I'm sketching out comics and zines, and trying to force myself to write creatively after many, many essays. I have a secret dream of forming a collaborative queer arts collective, since I know so many talented creative people. (Really I just want to participate in the fabulous art that they make). But since there is decidedly little money for starving artists, I will probably try to finagle my way into the non-profit sector and work for a community organization. Or grad school... Or my parent's basement... What was the question?

### **The Patricia and Douglas Dadson Scholarship**

Minnie Kong  
Spencer Sawyer

### **The Sexual Diversity Studies Scholarship**

Jennifer Robertson

### **The Jack Hallam UC 52 Undergraduate Scholarship**

Minnie Kong  
Jordan Lavoie  
Catharine Renner  
Phillip Warner

### **The Pride and Remembrance Association Award**

Erin Fauteux  
Brock Hessel

### **The Emperor Sergio I Apolloni Memorial Scholarship**

Rodney Rousseau

### **The Bonham Scholarship for Study in Issues of Sexuality**

Paul Weadick

### **The Rainbow Triangle Alumni Association Award**

Ricky Rodrigues

### **The LGBTQ Award**

Ariel Leutheusser  
Paloma Lev-Aviv  
Jessica Ng  
Matthew Clifford Rashotte  
Ricky Rodrigues  
Rodney Rousseau

### **LGBTOUT Scholarship**

Erin Fauteux

### **The David Rayside Scholarship in Sexual Diversity Studies**

Kiran Mehdee

### **The Michael Prodanou Bursary in Sexual Diversity Studies**

Brock Hessel

### **The Paul and Jacqui Perron Book Prize for UNI255**

Erin Bertens  
Alexandra Napier

### **The Susan Addario Book Prize for UNI256**

Erin Fauteux  
Elizabeth Horton  
Jade Reid

### **The Maureen FitzGerald Book Prize for UNI377**

Melissa Frederick

A big thanks to Allison Burgess, Anthony Collins, Eva Mandrapilias, Mark Riczu, & Rebecca Thorpe for all their help with these awards!



BONHAM  
CENTRE  
AWARDS  
GALA

Honouring  
**Stephen Lewis**  
**Dan Savage**  
**Bent on Change**

Featuring Emcee **Tré Armstrong**  
and a Musical Performance by  
**Molly Johnson**

Thursday, April 25, 2013  
1 King West, Toronto  
Tickets: \$300  
RSVP by April 18

[www.uc.utoronto.ca/sdsgala2013](http://www.uc.utoronto.ca/sdsgala2013)

# Research & Extracurricular EXCELLENCE

This year, for the second year in a row, SDS specialists have had the chance to design and carry out their own research projects in a fourth-year seminar, Advanced Research in Sexual Diversity Studies (UNI460), taught by Tori Smith. To undertake this work, students must come up with their own methodology, and if they are conducting interviews of any sort, they must follow federal and University guidelines for working with human subjects. Preparing the proposal that will go through the Research Ethics Board presents challenging and exciting opportunities for our students. This year's projects include: how queer homeless youth support themselves and navigate different labour situations; how frequently LGBT characters are featured in Young Adult literature and the ways in which those books are accessible to young people in libraries; how doctors are trained when it comes to trans issues; how straight and gay police officers' attitudes towards gender and sexuality affect their work lives and relationships; and how female readers (including women who are part of alternative sexual communities) have responded to E.L. James' *Fifty Shades of Grey*.

Congratulations to SDS minor student Jessica Ng, who was recently honoured with a University of Toronto Student Engagement in the Arts Award. Jessica is the Assistant Artistic Director of the Hart House Players. She also reviews and selects student productions for honours as an Awards Representative for the U of T Drama Coalition. She has written award-winning plays that have been performed at the U of T Drama Festival and is passionate about developing challenging, socially-significant theatre.

## EVENTS

### FEMINIST PORN CONFERENCE

**Saturday, April 6, 2013**

A conference bringing together academics, cultural critics, sex workers, activists, fans, and producers to explore the intersections between feminism and pornography as well as the emergence of feminist porn as a genre, industry, and movement. The event is part of The Good for Her Feminist Porn Awards, one of the largest gatherings of feminist pornographers in the world.

For more information, please visit  
[www.thefeministpornbook.com/conference/](http://www.thefeministpornbook.com/conference/)

### BONHAM CENTRE AWARDS GALA

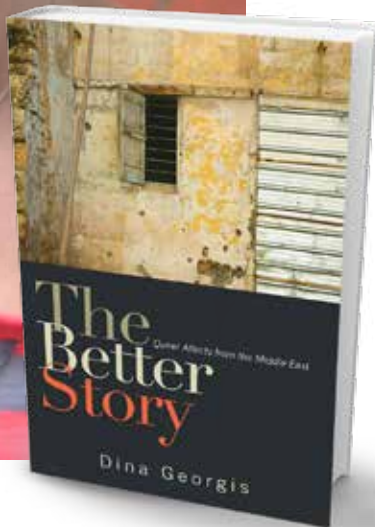
**Thursday, April 25, 2013**

### PRIDE PUB

**Thursday, June 20, 2013**

4:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. in the Hart House Quad

Join us for the annual launch of the Pride season at U of T. Open to all students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends. Hosted by the Sexual & Gender Diversity Office and Hart House



# OFFICE HOURS

## with Prof. Dina Georgis

to the narratives and stories we tell about ourselves, our experiences, and our individual and collective histories. I posit that every story is the better story, which is to say it's the best possible story we have come up with to make sense of the events that change us, emotionally and intellectually. So for me, this view always begs the question: is there a better than the better story?

My hope is that "the better story" as a method of inquiry offers an emotional lens to think about postcolonial history and subjectivity. I turn to aesthetic texts about or from the Middle East that tell stories grappling with the painful complexities of our postcolonial present in the age of terror. Some of the aesthetic texts I've chosen represent postcolonial masculinities, others represent queer bodies. Stories, as I see it, link us to the queer forgotten spaces of these subjectivities and the collective strategies and histories they produce.

In my book, the definition of queer references sexual affect, not social sexual identity. Queer affects, I argue, are our desires in excess of what we think we want and think we care about, or in excess of what's socially sanctioned. When they appear, they threaten the normative or stable ties to each other and the collective logic. In this way, they threaten how we understand our social identities. The central argument of the book is that queer affects have transformative potential because they wake us up from the banality of our ideological beliefs and our investments in some of our political values. Because queer affects undo us in ways that make us more aware of our dependencies on the other, they create space for new meanings, new relationalities, and sometimes new political futures.

### Who is the intended audience?

Well, it is a theoretical book, so it's written for academics. But I think my book is accessible enough for young scholars and complex enough for seasoned scholars. At least, this is my hope. More specifically, it will interest psychoanalytic scholars since that is my fundamental theoretical framework. More specifically, it is written for folks interested in feminist, postcolonial and queer theory. Since it challenges some of the epistemologies and valorized logics of all these fields, I'm excited (daunted) to find out how my book gets taken up.

### What is your next project?

My next project still thinking with traumatic histories but this time I'm looking at the "aesthetic archive" of a group of post-war generation Lebanese artists. All children when the civil war in Lebanon broke out, these artists are interested in the questions of memory, representation and politics. Though not an obvious feature, their work archives loss and in so doing performs the task of working through painful childhood memories. Consistent to all of them is a preoccupation with the dilemmas of narrativizing the war. For me, they and offer interesting clues on what might be needed for the work of political repairation.

**D**ina Georgis is an Assistant Professor at the Women and Gender Studies Institute at the University of Toronto. An expert in the fields of postcolonial, diaspora, and queer studies, Georgis draws on theories of trauma, affect, and mourning to consider how political cultures are responses to historic loss. She recently published *The Better Story: Queer Affects from the Middle East* (SUNY, 2013) a conversation among postcolonial studies, queer theory, and psychoanalysis.

### How did you become interested in postcolonial, diaspora, and queer studies?

I guess you can say I had a late start with my engagement with these fields of study. Detached from my own postcolonial and diasporic history, as a young scholar I was more interested in Hegel, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche than Foucault, Said, and Spivak!! Interestingly, all that changed with my first queer experience. It's actually hard for me to separate becoming queer from becoming curious about postcoloniality, displacement and diaspora. My queerness politicized me for sure. But I think the change happened at a deeper level. Sexual experience opens you and gets you in touch with disassociated parts of yourself. I grew up in Lebanon and was a child when the civil war broke out. That civil war was a postcolonial nightmare in that the legacies of colonialism (and older conflicts) played themselves out brutally. When my family fled the war, it became an unspoken rule not talk about it. Since my family is of Iraqi descent and therefore had no family ties in Lebanon, it was easier to "forget" the past. I did not think about the war, literally for over a decade. So my interests in postcolonial, diaspora, and queer studies is not merely identitarian but a personal journey of working through traumatic experience.

### What is your new book about, in layperson's terms?

My book tries to think about how surviving trauma is deeply connected



"It was a relief to know that all the work I have done within the Sexual Diversity Studies program and all my volunteer work outside of SDS was worthy of recognition. These awards made a difference not only in terms of finance but in terms of my level of self-confidence."

BROCK HESSEL

Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies, 2014

# BOUNDLESS **IMPACT**

## WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

To make a donation, or to discuss a planned gift to support the Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies and its students, contact:

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