



# SDS

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2014 was quite the year at the Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies. We kicked it off with a sold-out evening honouring Canadian artist Charles Pachter at the University of Toronto Art Centre. Charles has long been a friend to the Bonham Centre, and we were thrilled to be able to celebrate and thank him for his donation of four of his works.

The Bonham Centre Awards Gala (BCAG) in April 2014 paid tribute to the written word. Held at the Great Hall in Hart House, the BCAG honored the work of Edmund White, Patricia Nell-Warren, and Shyam Selvadurai. In addition, playwright Waawaate Fobister was given the IBM Youth Award.

Then, there was the WorldPride Human Rights Conference 2014. Hosted in conjunction with the WorldPride festival in Toronto, the Bonham Centre welcomed over 500 LGBT activists from over 50 countries to engage in a much needed dialogue about global LGBT rights. It was an extraordinary feat – by far the biggest event the Bonham Centre has ever undertaken. And it was a great success. The conference was sold out, the plenary sessions open to the public were packed, the media coverage unprecedented. And even the pride flag draped the entrance to University College. We rallied an army of volunteers to make it happen – from our organizing committee who toiled for over two years to all the folks who volunteered over the three days – the dedication of so many here in Toronto was astonishing.

Our Sexual Representation Collection (SRC), curated by Nicholas Matte, hosted an exhibit called “Archiving Public Sex” in spring 2014 in conjunction with the University of Toronto Art Centre. The exhibit was part of the Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival, the Berkshire Conference on Women’s History and WorldPride – attendance was in the thousands. The exhibit included a standing-room-only public panel, featuring Max Allen, Carey Gray, Lorraine Hewitt, Carlyle Jansen, Carrie Leigh, Jearld Moldenhauer and Morpheous – each of whom have contributed to the SRC collection and the exhibit.

## director’s report

Then of course, there are our students. Our undergraduate and graduate students continue to amaze and inspire. The SDS Student Research Colloquium, held each year in March, features the research of our fourth-year specialists and graduate students. They come from different disciplines, writing about everything from law and education to HIV/AIDS and contemporary popular culture. From “Queer Girl Utopias” and “Transgender Narratives on Youtube” to “Queer Silence in Canadian New Music” and “Compulsory Heterosexuality in The Legend of Korra,” they all continue to produce absolutely cutting-edge scholarship.

In 2014, we also launched our Sex Salon – a speaker series featuring the research of students and faculty on issues of sexual diversity. Organized by our post-doctoral fellow, Mary Bunch, the Sex Salon has quickly become a very popular addition to our programming. Mary – our first post doc – is also teaching a course for our fourth-year undergraduates called “Sex in the Margins” that looks at sexuality and marginalization.

We are also looking to the future. We have just approved a new course on Global Sexual Diversity, which will continue in the theme of the WorldPride Human Rights Conference, exploring questions of LGBTQ and other sexual diversity rights in a global context. Our Steering Committee and the Advisory Committee have also been brainstorming about our strategic plan. What should we look like in five years? More graduate courses and opportunities? Enhancing our research capacities and profile? More service learning for undergraduates and/or graduate students? And what resources will we need to get there? We would love to hear from all of the friends, supporters and alumni of the Bonham Centre about where we should go from here. Drop us an email, a text, a tweet, a Facebook message – even an old fashion letter in the mail. We have built an incredible program with your support – so, help us think about what’s next.

Brenda Cossman  
Director



### Contributors:

Sharon Aschaiek  
Yvonne Palkowski  
Scott Rayter





## Bonham Centre Awards Gala Honours LGBT Voices

BY YVONNE PALKOWSKI

More than 200 supporters of the Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies gathered at Hart House's Great Hall on April 24, 2014 for the annual Bonham Centre Awards Gala, in celebration of *The Power of Word*. Honoured for their contributions to advancing the cause of sexual diversity through writing were authors Waawaate Fobister, Patricia Nell-Warren, Shyam Selvadurai, and Edmund White.

ABOVE Patricia Nell-Warren and Peter Waite

IBM Youth Award recipient Waawaate Fobister is an award-winning actor and playwright. In 2009, his production of *Agokwe: Gay Love on the Rez* — a one-person play which he wrote and starred in — won six Dora Awards. He is also a choreographer, dancer, and producer.

Patricia Nell-Warren is an author and activist whose bestselling gay novels include *The Front Runner*, *Harlan's Race*, and *Billy's Boy*.

Shyam Selvadurai's award-winning novels provide a unique gay voice in South Asian fiction and have been published in the US, the UK and India, and published in translation in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Turkey, and Israel. His latest novel, *The Hungry Ghosts*, was published in April 2013 in Canada, India, and Sri Lanka.

Edmund White is the author of several books on same-sex love, including *The Joy of Gay Sex* and memoirs *Inside a Pearl*, *My Lives*, and *City Boy*. His many novels include the autobiographical *A Boy's Own Story* and most recently, *Jack Holmes & His Friend*. White has been influential as a literary and cultural critic, particularly on same-sex love and sexuality.

The 2014 event was made possible thanks to the generous support of presenting sponsor, RBC Royal Bank.

The 2015 Bonham Centre Awards Gala in celebration of LGBT athletes will be held on April 23; visit [uc.utoronto.ca/bcag2015](http://uc.utoronto.ca/bcag2015) for more information.

## GOING GLOBAL

Linda Schuyler's Gift Supports Sexual Diversity in an International Context

BY SHARON ASCHAEK

Celebrating diversity has been a defining theme of many of the television shows developed by seasoned producer, U of T alumna and Bonham Centre Award winner Linda Schuyler. Now, she wants to expand that celebration through a generous gift to the institution that first sparked her interest in the TV industry.

The co-creator of the award-winning *Degrassi* franchise, which includes five dramatic series following the lives and common problems of teenagers, has donated \$1 million to the University of Toronto's Boundless campaign.

Giving back to her alma mater became a priority for Schuyler last year after she and her husband sold their production company, Epitome Pictures. The funds have been allocated in a way that reflects her commitment to respecting individual differences, particularly sexual orientation – a subject often addressed in the pioneering youth culture programming she produced over the last 35 years.

"I hope the gift will help enrich students' lives by exposing them to more diversity," says Schuyler, an Order of Canada and Order of Ontario member, and recipient of an Academy Achievement Award from the Gemini Awards. "Improving understanding and acceptance of individual differences



makes it possible to raise a generation of much more compassionate people."

The Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies at University College has received \$225,000. A total of \$175,000 will create a Global Education Fund to support the introduction of new courses focusing on sexual diversity in an international context. As well, an endowment of \$50,000 will establish the Linda Schuyler Student Award, to provide the centre's first international research opportunities. Recipients will be able to use the funds to attend conferences or conduct fieldwork abroad.

The balance of the funds will go towards renovating Innis College Town Hall (\$550,000), a prime film screening space that serves Cinema Studies students and hosts local film events, and the Media Commons (\$225,000), the university's repository of archival and contemporary audio-visual research resources.

## ARTIST CHARLES PACTER HONoured AT NAMESAKE FUND LAUNCH

On January 30, 2014, the Bonham Centre hosted *An Evening in Honour of Charles Pachter*, in recognition of the iconic Canadian artist's legacy of support for the LGBTQ community, University College, and sexual diversity issues. Proceeds from the event went to the newly created Charles Pachter Program Fund in support of innovative courses in Sexual Diversity Studies.



L-R: Charles Pachter and Mark Bonham



# STUDENT SUCCESS

## A Conversation with Marie Laing

BY SCOTT RAYTER



Marie Laing is in her last year of study at University College, completing a major in Sexual Diversity Studies and minors in Philosophy and Music History & Culture. She currently serves as President of the Sexual Diversity Studies Student Union, an organization which aims to enrich the academic and social lives of SDS undergraduates.

### What made you interested in doing the SDS degree?

The SDS program was actually a big part of why I wanted to come to the University of Toronto. As a queer woman, I wanted to see myself reflected in the classroom. SDS is a space where you can make connections between your lived experiences and your academic work, which I've found very valuable.

### What are some of the things you've learned or that have been important to you about being involved in SDS? What made you want to run for president?

The most important things SDS has taught me are twofold: always think critically and listen carefully to what your colleagues have to say. The incredible insights and intelligence of my classmates is what spurred my interest in the Union — I wanted to help make the undergraduate SDS community even more vibrant and engaging. SDS is a fairly small program, and getting to know your classmates really improves your learning both inside and beyond the classroom.

### What are your plans after graduation?

Enjoying the summer sun! And maybe going to grad school a little further down the line.

### What advice would you give to incoming students?

Don't be afraid to speak up and ask questions in class! You might be tempted to think that your opinion doesn't matter, or that you'll be disrupting the class by offering a different perspective on the material. But in my experience, everyone learns the most when there's a wealth of voices contributing to class discussion. Also, get involved in your academic community. Whether it's through running for an elected position on your course union, your college council, the Arts & Science Student Union, or the Governing Council, volunteering with the Sexual Education Centre, or starting your own club... there are lots of ways to be active in campus life!

## MICHAEL LYNCH GRANT IN QUEER HISTORY

The Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies is pleased to announce the winner of the 2014-15 Michael Lynch Grant in Queer History. The \$1,500 grant is open to individuals, groups, and organizations, and is awarded to a project that contributes to an understanding of the historical development of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans\* sexualities, identities, politics, and communities in Canada.

The Lynch Grant is intended to encourage history research endeavours and projects designed to transmit knowledge about queer history to a broad audience. Projects may take the form of workshops, conferences, oral history compilations, art exhibits, video presentations, academic articles, popular pamphlets, or books. Alternative formats are encouraged and welcomed. Priority is given to projects that reflect the diversity that characterizes the queer historical experience.

The grant for 2014-15 has been awarded to Anna Malkin of Victoria, B.C., for her project "The Queer Story Archive", a growing collection of filmed interviews and texts of life-history experiences and stories told from a queer-positive perspective. This impressive archive may be viewed at the website: [Onmyplanet.ca](http://Onmyplanet.ca)

## Thank You for your support!

The following donors generously supported the Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies between November 1, 2013 and December 31, 2014.

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# WORLDPRIDE HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE 2014 REDUX

**F**or three incredible days in June 2014, over 500 LGBTQ activists from 52 countries gathered in Toronto for the WorldPride Human Rights Conference 2014. Hosted by the Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies at the University of Toronto, the Conference was an opportunity to share stories, build strategies and engage in a much needed dialogue about LGBTQ human rights.

There were over 60 panels, on issues ranging from religion, homelessness, disability rights, state violence, youth violence, and trans activism, to name but a few. The three “Pathbreaker” plenary sessions, attended by over 2,000 people, featured some extraordinary global leaders in LGBT rights:

- Johanna Sigurðardóttir, who in 2009 became Iceland’s first female prime minister and the first world’s openly lesbian head of state
- Edith Windsor, whose activism led to the U.S. Supreme Court to declare the federal Defence of Marriage Act unconstitutional in 2013
- Dr. Frank Mugisha, a prominent LGBT activist in Uganda, a country which recently adopted harsh new laws against homosexuality
- Monica Mbaru, a senior judge and long-time activist in Kenya



L-R: Panelists Frank Mugisha, Richard Lusimbo, Monica Mbaru, and moderator Piya Chattopahyay of CBC Radio

- Masha Gessen, Russia’s most prominent LGBT activist and a vocal opponent of President Vladimir Putin, whose government has recently enacted a number of anti-gay measures
- Tamara Adrian, a law professor and prominent advocate for transgender rights in Venezuela.

The conference was a labour of love. It was over 2 years in the making, and we simply could not have done it but for the incredible support of our sponsors, our conference organizing committee and advisory committee, our volunteers and of course, all of our incredible speakers, who traveled from around the world.

Friendships were formed, networks and alliances were built, as we move forward in the global struggle for LGBT human rights. While it is impossible to capture the excitement and energy of the 3 days in Toronto in June, please visit the website at [wphrc14.com](http://wphrc14.com).



(L-R) Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne and her partner, Jane Rounthwaite; Ontario Lieutenant-Governor David Onley and his wife, Ruth; Bonham Centre Director Brenda Cossman; consultant and activist Doug Kerr

## THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS’S RECEPTION

The Lieutenant Governor David Onley and his wife Ruth Ann Onley welcomed the delegates for a celebration in the Lieutenant Governor’s suite at Queen’s Park at the end of the WorldPride Human Rights conference. Newly elected Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne and her partner Jane Rounthwaite were in attendance. Both the Honorable David Onley and Premier Kathleen Wynne addressed the gathering, and spoke of the achievements and challenges ahead for LGBT rights at home and abroad. The Lieutenant Governor also remarked on the importance of allies across equity seeking groups. The excitement, inspiration and sheer pride was an extraordinary finale to an extraordinary three days.

# OFFICE HOURS

## with Prof. Lance McCready

**L**ance T. McCready, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Urban Education and Head of the Centre for Urban Schooling in the department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto (OISE/UT). He is an interdisciplinary social scientist whose research and writing focuses on race, masculinities, and well-being in urban communities and schools.

### How did you become interested in urban youth issues?

I grew up in working-class neighbourhoods in Flatbush and Harlem in New York City, but longed to live on a farm because I thought it would be more tranquil and socially less complicated than everyday life in New York. I wanted to escape the race- and gender-based violence I witnessed on a daily basis in my neighbourhood, on the subway, and in school. At the same time, my parents had lots of friends who were activists and grassroots organizers, some of whom focused on social justice issues for children, youth, and families such as fair housing, affirmative action hiring, and access to education. During university, I took a course on multicultural education, and after I graduated I worked as an afterschool program coordinator for the Hetrick Martin Institute for the Protection of Lesbian and Gay Youth. These experiences and more during and after graduate school fuel my interests in urban youth issues.

### You talk a lot about “making space” for diverse masculinities in urban education. Can you please describe what this means?

The notion of “making space” is meant to capture the social, cultural, geographical, and psychological dynamics of a strategy students can employ to respond to and/or cope with their marginalization. In my book *Making Space for Diverse Masculinities*, I describe the ways gay and gender non-conforming Black male students respond to their marginalization in an urban high school where academic and extra-curricular programs and activities are divided by race, class, and gender.

### What are the main challenges facing queer Black urban youth today?

One of the challenges facing Black queer youth in Toronto is how to get their education, health, and well-being needs met in the diverse-divided social geography of the city. In order to develop self-acceptance, and gain access to programs and services that affirm the intersections of their ethnocultural, class, sexuality and race identities, they often have to lead a double-life: one in their lower income, less central, heteronormative ethnocultural communities, and one downtown in more gay-positive, predominantly White, middle class communities. This strategy works for getting a range of needs met, but can cause stress and anxiety related to keeping secrets from family members, travelling long distances between, for example, the Jane and Finch neighbourhood in northwest Toronto and the gay village downtown.

### What do you enjoy most about your work?

I enjoy it all really: research, teaching, and service. There just isn’t enough time in the day!

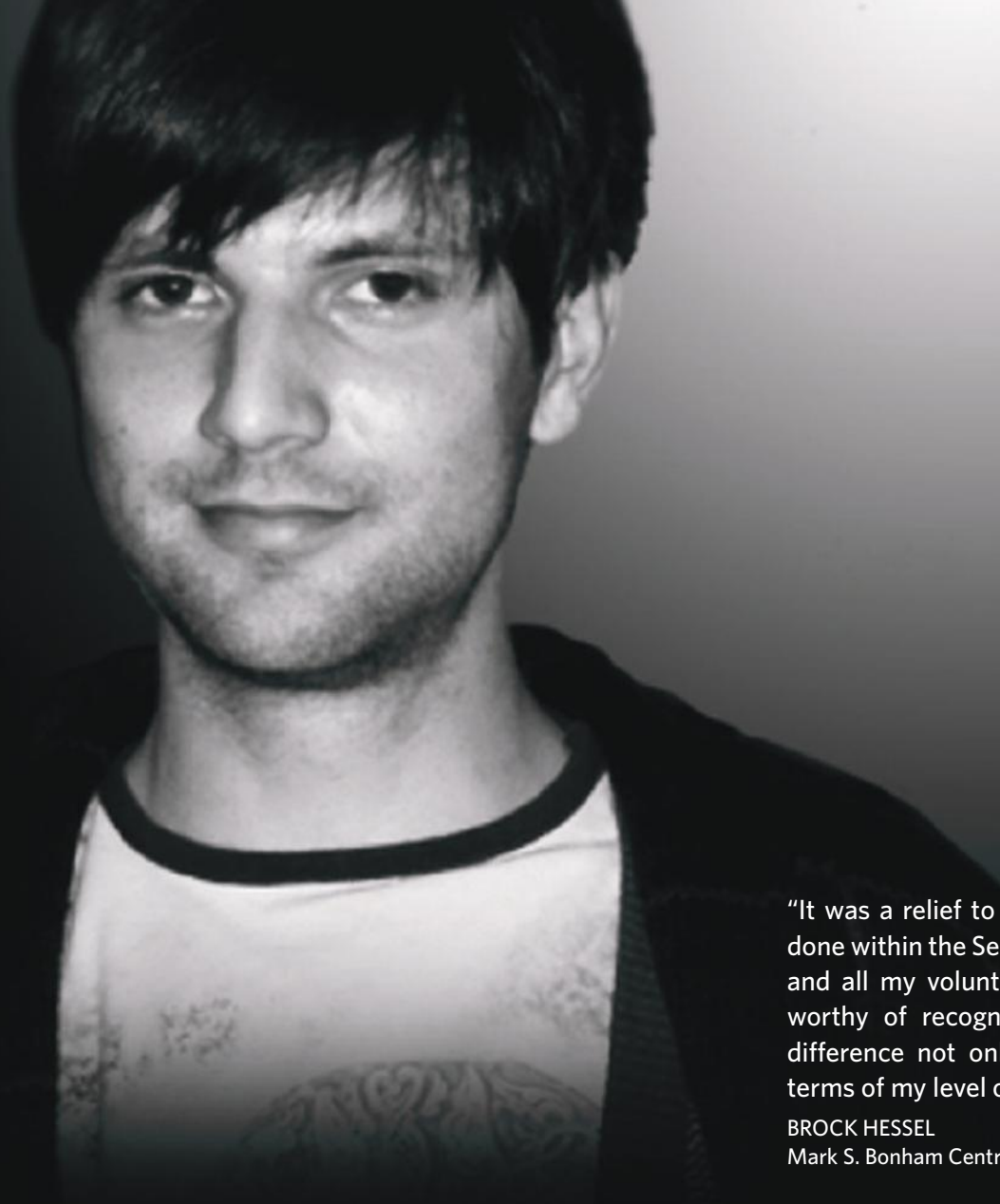
### What is the hardest thing about your work?

The sheer volume of social justice issues facing Black queer youth and the amount of research, organizing, and education it takes to build the capacity of schools, workplaces, primary care facilities, etc. to meet their needs.

### How has your involvement with the Bonham Centre affected your work?

The Bonham Centre has greatly enhanced my teaching and service





"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**

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