

Academic
Matters



Graduation story



Contours of GENERATION NEXT

We talk about the pending wave of Baby Boom faculty retirements with considerable regularity these days, but we rarely stop to focus on Generation Next: the thirtysomething academics who will have the task of filling the void.

This issue opens the Black Box on the generational shift that is slowly taking root on our campuses.

Academic Matters turns to accomplished economist David K. Foot, author of *Boom, Bust, and Echo*, for a demographic analysis of the shift from Baby Boomers dominating faculty to the Baby Boomers' offspring, the Echo Boom.

Foot tracks the pressures the Baby Boom generation has put on the system—compelling its expansion in the '60s and '70s. He examines the Echo Boom pressures on Canadian universities through record-level student enrolment and the need for a plan to avoid large-scale faculty shortages within this decade.

Minelle Mahtani is a University of Toronto academic experiencing the working life of Generation Next. She talks to other Gen Nex'ers about the stresses they face on the tenure track, including the pressure to publish or perish, attract lucrative research grants, 'go crazy on the conference circuit', teach classrooms of 800, and engage a generation of media-savvy students who expect high tech lectures and instant e-mail responses.

Faculty of all ages face similar pressures after years of cutbacks and growing classroom sizes, but Generation Next faces a unique combination of pressures in the infancy of its academic career.

In this issue we harden the lens on the culture clash between the Baby Boomers and Generation Next with our Point/Counterpoint feature: a two-sided discussion of the values and realities that set the two generations apart, and the commonalities they inevitably share.

Carleton University's Pat Finn draws on deprivation theory to show how hardship shaped two generations of faculty—hardship the new generation of faculty, Generation

We pry open the Black Box on the generational shift taking place on campus

Next, hopefully will never know. Gen Nex'er Jennifer Stewart considers the notion of hardship set out in Finn's article and makes the case for how her generation faces its own challenges and hardships—different from yet no less important than those faced by preceding generations.

We draw on star power from many corners in this edition of *Academic Matters*.

From Generation Next, we feature Giller-nominated author Camilla Gibb, who considers the invasion of new technology and its impact (or non-impact, as the case may be) on the quality of writing in the academy.

In a new feature we call Three Questions, *Academic Matters* turns to a very public intellectual—Michael Ignatieff—who gave up his post at Harvard to return to

Canada and run in this past federal election. He won his seat in Parliament but took a moment to consider the challenges public intellectuals face in the modern era.

Academic Matters pulls from the very best of academic knowledge to bring you serious think pieces, but in every issue we also bring you a lighter moment. This month we turn to a novice professor to give you a "sessional confessional" that reminds us all of those first-year jitters that must be faced when an academic career is launched.

We continue our interplay between Generation Next and Generation Now with an article by David MacGregor, who examines how a wave of faculty retirements will create a knowledge void of lunar magnitude on Canadian campuses. This article makes the case for a reconsideration of how we perceive, value and treat senior faculty.

Focusing on youth, guidance counselor and teacher Janice Fricker draws from her 27-year career to enlighten us on the reasons why high school students sign up for university. Some of those blank faces professors see in the back of the classroom might make sense after reading Fricker's take on the meaning of student choice.

The final word goes to *Academic Matters* Editor-in-Chief Mark Rosenfeld who makes the case that Generation Next has it much tougher than the Baby Boomers, who became faculty in a golden era of expanded government funding. As Rosenfeld reminds us, the future is far more uncertain for the current wave of new professors—pause for thought as both generations navigate changing times and growing pressures. **AM**



La prochaine GÉNÉRATION

Nous parlons très régulièrement ces jours-ci de la fin de la vague de la retraite des professeurs d'université issus du « Baby Boom », mais nous nous arrêtons peu souvent pour songer à la prochaine génération : les professeurs dans la trentaine auront pour tâche de combler le vide.

Cette question ouvre une boîte noire sur la question du changement de génération qui s'effectue sur nos campus.

Academic Matters a fait appel à l'économiste accompli David K. Foot, auteur de *Boom, Bust, et Echo*, pour obtenir une analyse démographique du passage de l'époque où les *Baby Boomers* ont dominé la population professorale à l'arrivée de leurs successeurs, l'écho du *Boom*.

Foot a suivi les effets de la pression imputée au système par la génération des *Baby Boomers*, qui a imposé son expansion au cours des années soixante et soixante-dix. Il étudie la pression exercée par l'écho du *Boom* sur les universités canadiennes par le biais du niveau record des inscriptions d'étudiants et de la nécessité de concevoir un plan pour éviter des manques à grande échelle au niveau du corps professoral au cours de cette décennie.

Minelle Mahtani est un professeur de l'université de Toronto qui traverse la vie au travail de la « génération suivante ». Elle parle aux autres, qui font partie de cette génération, du stress qu'ils subissent au niveau des postes menant à la permanence, incluant l'obligation de publier ou de périr, d'attirer des fonds de recherche importants, « se lancer comme un fou sur le circuit des conférences », enseigner à des classes de 800 étudiants et faire participer une génération d'étudiants très familiers avec les nouvelles technologies de l'information et qui s'attendent à des cours utilisant les technologies de pointe et des réponses instantanées à leurs courriels.

Les professeurs de tous les âges font face aux mêmes pressions suite à des années de coupures et d'accroissement du nombre d'étudiants dans les classes, mais la « génération suivante » doit faire face à un amalgame de pressions dès le début de sa carrière de professeur.

Dans ce numéro, nous ajustons notre lentille sur le conflit culturel entre les *Baby Boomers* et la *génération suivante* au moyen de notre article Point/Contrepoint : une discussion portant sur les deux côtés opposés des réalités et des valeurs qui séparent les deux générations, et les points qu'elles ont inévitablement en commun.

Pat Finn de l'Université Carleton utilise la théorie de la dépossession pour illustrer comment les difficultés ont façonné deux générations de professeurs, des difficultés aux quelles, nous l'espérons, la nouvelle génération de professeur, la génération suivante, n'aura pas à faire face. Jennifer Stewart, de génération suivante, examine la notion de difficulté et des défis posés par les difficultés qui sont différentes, sans pour autant être moins importantes, que celles qu'a rencontré la génération précédente.

Nous puisons nos informations auprès de plusieurs personnes renommées dans ce numéro d'*Academic Matters*.

De la génération suivante, nous mettons en vedette l'auteure Camilla Gibb, nommée pour un prix Giller, qui étudie l'invasion des nouvelles technologies et ses impacts (ou absence d'impact selon le cas) sur la qualité de l'écriture au sein du corps professoral.

Dans une nouvelle rubrique intitulée *Trois questions*, *Academic Matters* se tourne vers un intellectuel très populaire, Michael Ignatieff, qui a laissé son poste à Harvard pour revenir au Canada et se présenter aux dernières élections fédérales. Il a gagné son siège au parlement, mais a quand même pris un moment pour se pencher sur les défis que doivent affronter les intellectuels publics à

l'ère moderne.

Academic Matters puise ses informations aux meilleures sources du savoir académique pour vous apporter des sujets qui portent à réfléchir, mais chaque numéro comporte sa section plus légère. Ce mois-ci, nous avons choisi un professeur débutant qui vous donne une confession sur la session qui nous rappelle à tous l'agitation des premières années lorsqu'on entreprend une carrière de professeur.

Nous poursuivons notre jeu réciproque de la génération suivante et de la génération actuelle par un article écrit par David MacGregor qui étudie comment une vague de retraites de professeurs va créer un vide au niveau de la connaissance d'une magnitude très importante sur les campus canadiens. Cet article justifie une remise en question de notre façon de percevoir, de valoriser et de traiter les professeurs d'université plus âgés.

Se concentrant sur la jeunesse, la conseillère en orientation et professeur Janice Fricker puise dans ses 27 années de carrière pour nous éclairer sur les raisons qui motivent les étudiants du niveau secondaire à s'inscrire à l'université. La lecture du texte de Mme Fricker sur la signification des choix des étudiants pourra donner un sens aux visages vides d'expression des étudiants assis au fond de la classe.

Le mot de la fin revient au rédacteur en chef d'*Academic Matters*, Mark Rosenfeld qui démontre que la génération suivante vit des moments plus difficiles que les *Baby Boomers* qui sont devenus professeurs à une époque où les fonds gouvernementaux étaient en pleine croissance. Comme M. Rosenfeld nous le rappelle, l'avenir est beaucoup plus incertain pour la vague actuelle de nouveaux professeurs—un moment de faire une pause pour réfléchir aux deux générations qui traversent des temps instables et font face à des pressions grandissantes. **AM**

The **BABY BOOMER'S** lingering **echo** **echo** **echo** **echo** **echo**

David K. Foot tracks the Baby Boom's impact on Canada's university system—from an enrolment explosion in the '60s and '70s to mass faculty retirements within this decade

Les changements au niveau des tendances démographiques continuent d'avoir un impact important sur les inscriptions au niveau postsecondaire au Canada. Le cycle croissance aigu associé au « Baby Boom » et les périodes de

baisses rapides observées subséquemment refont surface au nouveau millénaire, car un nombre croissant d'enfants issus de la génération des Baby Boomers de la première décennie est remplacé par des classes plus petites lors de la seconde.

L'imminence des retraites au niveau du corps professoral et la compétition pour les nouveaux emplois engendrée par ces tendances fournissent le cadre contextuel à la prochaine induction de la Génération dans la vie académique.

The dominant force in Canadian demography has been the post-war Baby Boom generation (1947-66).

It could be argued that the Ontario university system grew to accommodate the Baby Boomers—and this generation's impact will be felt for years to come, thanks in part to their offspring, the Echo Boom.

Over the 1950s the early Boomers grew elementary enrolments. Secondary enrolment growth followed with a seven-year lag. The

first Boomer reached age 19 in 1966. For the next 20 years postsecondary enrolments exploded, mostly due to the Boomers, though also due to increasing participation rates.

By the late 1980s and early 1990s postsecondary enrolment growth slowed as the Bust generation of the late 1960s and 1970s made its way through the system.

Continuing increases in postsecondary participation rates ameliorated the impact, but enrolment growth slowed noticeably and some



institutions experienced enrolment declines.

This situation provided the opportunity for deficit-ridden governments to cut funding to postsecondary education in the 1990s. Faculty hiring was halted which, not surprisingly, contributed to rising student-faculty ratios and growing class sizes. By the new millennium, parent, student and faculty concerns were mounting.

However, unlike the 1990s when almost flat enrolment growth enabled institutions to “muddle through”, the new millennium presented postsecondary institutions with a new reality—another wave of enrolment growth.

The children of the Boomers—the Echo Boom (1980-95)—had reached university age and placed considerable pressures on the system, especially in Ontario and Western Canada, which had been population magnets in the post-war era.

The Echo Boom is 15 years long, so the new wave of growth will span a decade to 15 years, and it will impact graduate enrolments into the 2020s.

Recent Statistics Canada population projections confirm these trends.

The medium-term projection, which embodies rising immigration levels, shows the 20-24 year age group growing by 2.3 per cent over

2006-16 and then declining by 9 per cent over the following decade. In Ontario comparable figures are 8.1 per cent and 7.5 per cent respectively.

Along similar lines, Byron Spencer noted in 2002 that, after the impact of the double cohort in Ontario, “enrolment is projected to increase in subsequent years but to remain below the earlier peak before declining somewhat after 2014-15.”

Graduate enrolments and doctoral degrees lag these trends. For example, the peak of the Echo, born in 1991, reaches age 30 in 2021. That means the 30-34 year age group is larger in 2021 than 2016.

Over the next decade Canadian postsecondary institutions can be expected to experience enrolment growth. After that, the boom becomes a bust as the declining births of the 1990s gradually impact enrolments.

Increasing participation rates can modify these demographic trends but after the mid-2010s Canadian colleges and universities will be increasingly relying on higher immigration levels, rising participation rates and older students for enrolment growth.

Either way, these student enrolment trends have important implications for the supply of new faculty.

Faculty growth that fails to match student growth inevitably

results in rising student-faculty ratios and is generally reflected in larger class sizes. This has been the recent experience in Canadian postsecondary education.

The entry of the Boomers into postsecondary education in the late 1960s and 1970s precipitated unprecedented requirements for new faculty. A new faculty member recruited in 1970 at age 30 was born in 1940 and reached the normal retirement age of 65 in 2005.

Those who were older or recruited earlier have already passed the traditional retirement age while those recruited over the 1970s to teach the Boomer majority are rapidly approaching retirement.

This is why Canadian faculty are facing a wave of retirements in the new millennium. The timing could not be worse since the retirements occur just when the children of the Boomers are ready for postsecondary education.

Slightly under one-third (30.8 per cent in 2004-05) of full-time Canadian university faculty are 55 or older and can be expected to contemplate retirement over the next decade (2006-15).

While the abolition of mandatory retirement in some provinces (most recently in Ontario) may delay the decision for some, others will choose early retirement for a variety of reasons (stress in the workplace, desire to travel, need for elder care, etc.).

This scenario compounds an already challenging problem for postsecondary education, as new faculty must be hired not only to cover increasing student numbers but also to replace retiring faculty just to maintain current student-faculty ratios.

An almost equal number of faculty (30.4 per cent) are aged 45 to 54 and can be expected to consider retirement in the subsequent decade (2016-25). Since enrolment growth may be slower over this period, this scenario may not pose as big a challenge, although much depends on the decisions that precede it.

Potential solutions to upcoming "the retirement challenge" are many and varied.

An obvious one is to encourage existing faculty to work longer. This strategy requires a number of supporting policies.

Clearly compensation, fringe benefit (especially pension and workers compensation) and employment (e.g. office, library and parking) considerations for senior faculty must be addressed.

Overload teaching rates for senior faculty may have to be increased and additional support (teaching assistants, websites, etc.) may have to be provided in order to make delaying retirement seem more attractive.

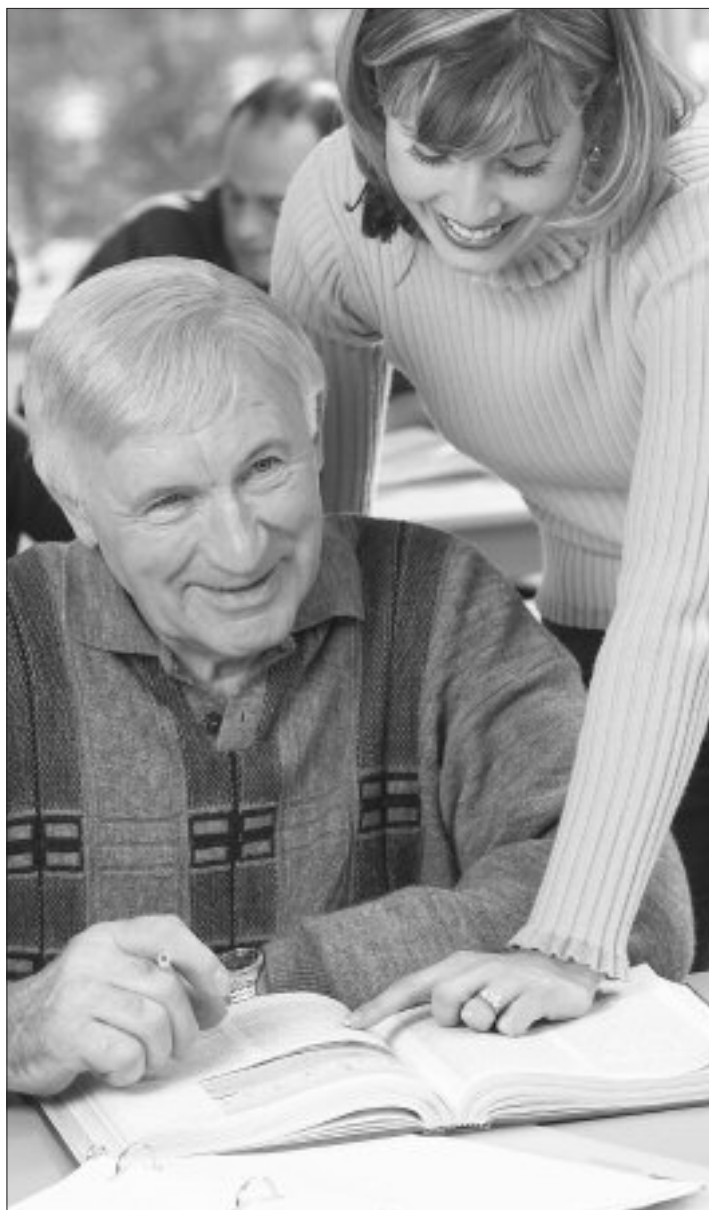
The timing of pending faculty retirements could not be worse

Phased retirement, where senior faculty are encouraged to teach fewer courses for proportionally reduced salary beyond the traditional retirement age, might be an attractive option for some.

While these strategies can go some way to ameliorating the impact of retirements, they are unlikely to significantly reduce the impact of faculty retirements.

The likely consequences of these faculty retirements will be increased class sizes for students and increased workloads for the existing faculty. This can lead to increased stress in the workplace and more concern for work-life balance issues.

Retention of existing faculty becomes more difficult under these conditions, especially since offers for some faculty are likely to come



from the U.S. where the Echo Boom is relatively larger and the growth in enrolments is more pronounced and widespread.

A pro-active approach to workplace issues is essential in postsecondary education over the next decade in order to ensure high rates of retention.

When labour is in short supply, technology is often used as a substitute. In business this can increase quality and efficiency, but in education the implications are not so clear.

If faculty members are expected to use new technology to handle larger classes, they must be trained and supported with computers, software, assistants, classrooms, etc.

Appropriate protocols must be developed and managed. Intellectual copyright issues must be resolved.

Lack of attention to these and similar workplace issues may result in existing faculty departing, which would exacerbate an already challenging situation.

The preferred approach of most institutions is to recruit new, younger faculty.

New faculty are frequently paid less, considered more up to date, can be targeted to designated needs, and may work harder in both

teaching and research as they prepare to climb the academic ladder.

But who are these new recruits, demographically?

Since a necessary qualification for new university (and many college) faculty is a doctorate degree, most new recruits are likely to be in their early 30s. Even in disciplines where average completion times are lower, there is now the desirable (often necessary) requirement for post-doctoral experience and publications.

A 32-year-old faculty member recruited in 2006 was born in 1974. This was after the Baby Boom, when the birth control pill and other factors resulted in fewer births.

Potential new faculty are in relatively short supply.

This is one reason why the number of doctorates earned in Canada peaked in 1996 (when the last Boomer born in 1966 reached age 30) and has since stalled.

The Echo Boomers have just started entering graduate school and will not be graduating in large numbers before the end of the decade. So young new recruits are in limited supply over the remainder of this decade. The same is true in the United States.

This is why entry-level salaries have been increasing noticeably in many disciplines over the past few years.

New faculty are coming from the Baby Bust generation. Consequently, new recruits are not as “cost effective” as they used to be, which can lead to another problem—salary inversion, where assistant professors are paid as much as or more than associate or even full professors.

Potential new faculty are in relatively short supply; **Echo Boomers** won't graduate till the end of the decade.

This can challenge collegiality in a department or faculty. It can certainly make retention of existing faculty more difficult.

The next generation of university faculty will still depend on more senior faculty for promotion.

Understanding the context for all faculty can help them position their teaching, research and service to contribute to collegiality in their work environment and to postsecondary education both now and into the future.

Meanwhile their senior colleagues in academe and government must understand that the context has changed again in postsecondary education and new strategies are necessary to ensure success in the new millennium.

All faculty (especially those under 55) should realize that another change is in the demographic cards a decade from now. They should not be surprised when the inevitable arrives once again. **AM**

David K. Foot is a professor of economics at the University of Toronto. He is the author of the highly acclaimed Boom Bust & Echo book.



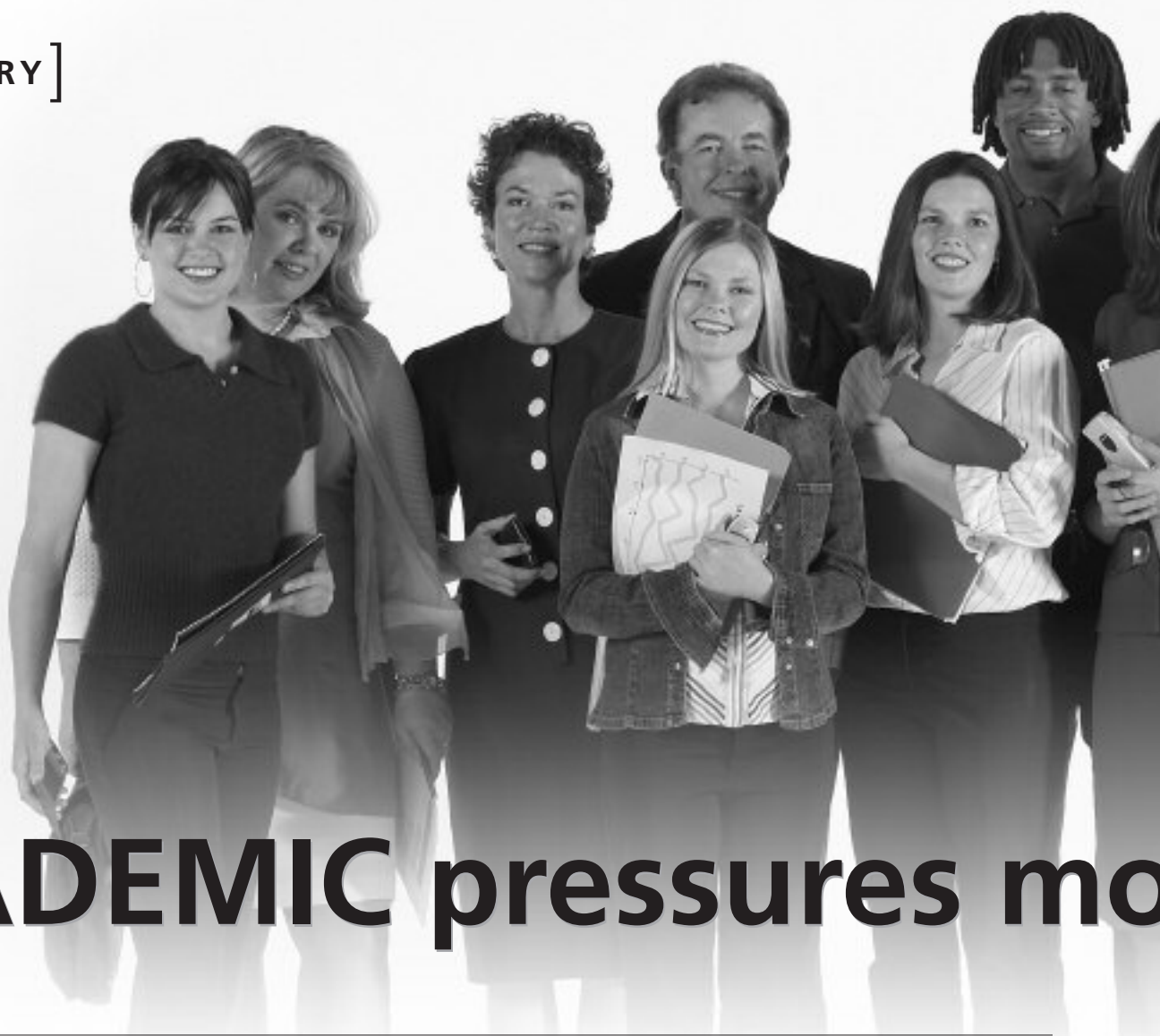
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ACADEMIC pressures mo

Gen Nex'er **Minelle Mahtani** reflects on the changing **academic landscape**, and its effect on new professors

Ce court article étudie l'expérience des nouveaux professeurs employés par les universités ontariennes au cours des cinq dernières années. En se fondant sur les entrevues menées auprès des nouveaux employés, occupant des postes de professeur menant à la permanence, on y discute des défis auxquels font face les nouveaux professeurs, incluant les attentes plus élevées au niveau des fonctions, l'adaptation aux développements technologiques qui permettent la con-

ception de nouveaux outils d'enseignement, l'acquisition de fonds provenant de l'extérieur et l'enseignement à des classes toujours plus nombreuses. On se penche également sur l'écart de génération grandissant entre les professeurs nouvellement engagés et ceux qui sont plus âgés, mieux établis. On se demande finalement comment ces pressions sont vécues par les professeurs féminins nouvellement engagés et les professeurs issus des minorités visibles.

The academic landscape has changed dramatically since the days when baby boomer professors entered the job market, where jobs were seemingly plentiful and classes were smaller.

I was talking recently with a colleague, a tenured professor from the baby boom generation, who put it this way: "When I was hired, the job was nowhere near as stressful as it must be now for new professors."

Ask any Gen Nex'er and you'll find these pressures begin well before one starts as a faculty member.

"The pressures begin while you're in grad school," one newly hired tenure track professor told me.

"The market is so much more competitive now than ever before that just to get your job, you need to not only have your PhD but several



Count on Generation Next

good publications to get hired. The pool is so chock full of great candidates that you've got to be coming out of the gate at full speed already."

Even when you are offered the job, it is no longer enough for a new faculty member to simply publish. A newly minted tenure track professor at a research intensive university must also actively demonstrate a sustained commitment to acquire large grants.

"The biggest pressure I feel is trying to get funding for my research from outside sources," a new faculty member admits. "There's just not enough resources at my university and I need to get those big grants to conduct my research."

At the same time, new faculty are expected to contribute to service by sitting on committees, and a few media appearances don't hurt either.

"This really accelerates the stress level," another tenure track professor confides. "I spend a lot of time performing to these increasing expectations. Trying to publish everything I write. Going crazy on the conference circuit. Making sure I get high teaching scores. I never feel like I can quite keep up and I'm working at least 70 hours a week."

The combination of pending baby boom faculty retirements and ongoing pressures from the double cohort is leading to a surge in hiring, resulting in a growing generational gap between the older, more established professors and new hires.

"This can make your integration more difficult if you're a new professor," says Sara-Jane Finlay, who is in charge of Faculty Renewal at University of Toronto. "There can be a significant cultural gap between the professors who were hired in the 1960s and the profes-

sors who are hired now."

That generational gap is also gendered. Women make up about 30 per cent of new faculty hires in Ontario universities.

"This has been great for female students," a new female hire told me. "There are more of us around to act as role models and as mentors, and it has meant that studying women is now considered an area of legitimate knowledge for research in the social sciences."

It also draws attention to the challenge of balancing home and work life, a divide which is increasingly blurred for Generation Next.

Women faculty must reconcile the design of the tenure track with the desire to have a family.

"I want to have kids but I'm constantly thinking, how can I negotiate this with my tenure timeline?" a new female hire wonders.

Another new female tenure track professor explains:

"I want a family as well as my career. I think a lot of the older generation of women professors did not want to or felt that they couldn't have kids because of the masculine culture of the university. And a lot of the male professors had wives who were stay at home moms who could look after the kids.

"I think some older professors expect that we should wait until we get tenure to have kids. But often that's too late."

Women faculty members also juggle the pressures of childrearing which remains predominantly their responsibility.

"That track to tenure is precisely when people want to have families. The pressure is immense on faculty to get tenure, and that's

exactly the time frame when many of our hires want to start raising kids. We have to take that into consideration,” Sara-Jane Finlay says.

More women in the academic workforce has meant an increase in spousal hires as well.

Gone are the days when the male academic was hired and his wife either stayed at home and/or worked part-time outside of the university. More women are pursuing graduate work, and many romantic relationships are forged during graduate school in which both partners are pursuing a career in the academy.

Couples want to stay together, and so when they go on the job market, both hope that the university will hire their partner.

“There’s more recognition that the university is hiring a whole person, not just an academic,” says Sara-Jane Finlay. “There are two people involved in taking a job and it’s two people that make that job successful.”

The pressures are even higher for visible minority faculty members of Generation Next.

Growing racial, ethnic and religious diversity on Ontario campuses has meant that at large, urban universities, approximately half the students identify as a member of a visible minority group. And while this diversity is growing, the face of faculty members has not dramatically changed.

“We’re making an effort to diversify our faculty in order to mirror the diversity of our student body, but it’s a process,” The U of T’s Sara-Jane Finlay says. “We are hiring more women than ever before, but we have a long way to go to ensure our faculty is truly representative of our student body.”

What this means for visible minority professors is that they are asked to mentor and support more visible minority students.

“I am constantly approached by minority students who say they feel more comfortable talking to me than the other [white] professors,” says one new, visible minority tenure track hire.

“I don’t mind doing this, but when you have 30 or 40 kids who feel this way, it does take away from my other obligations and responsibilities, and leaves me with even less time for writing.”

This has implications for visible minority professors who say they experience higher stress levels. Some studies show that it results in more obstacles to acquiring tenure.

Perhaps due to increased pressures, many new faculty tell me they regularly consider exiting the academy in favour of a dual or tri-career trajectory. Some are considering this option because they feel that their salaries are too low.

“The amount we make is not proportional to the expertise we have—and so I have to augment my own salary by doing consulting on the side,” a tenure track professor says.

One of the most substantial changes is the increase in the student population. Universities are bigger, period. Given the double cohort and cutbacks in funding, classrooms have more than doubled in size. Most new professors are expected to teach at least one large class. In the past, large may have meant over 60. Now, it can mean 800.

Technological changes also alter teaching methods. Students are media savvy and expect newly hired, young professors to be also. Audio-visual materials are a must. Many new professors rely on Web CT, Blackboard or other computer programmes to ensure that students can discuss issues from class online.

“Technology has really changed things for me as a teacher,” a tenure track professor says. “The internet is great, as it gives me

access to all sorts of images and video I can download and use in my lectures. But it also means that an awful lot of time is spent technifying lecture materials.”

E-mail has also altered the experience of Generation Next. Many new professors told me that they spend at least three hours a day on e-mail corresponding with faculty, staff, and in particular, students.

“E-mail has really intensified the expectations of students,” a new faculty member explains. “It also depersonalizes the student/teacher relationship. It dehumanizes it. Ninety per cent of my interactions with students are on e-mail.”

Students no longer only ask questions of a professor during office hours. Instead, students expect e-mail responses to their questions almost instantaneously.

New faculty respond in a variety of ways to these expectations. Some hold “e-mail office hours” and go on “IM” or Instant Messenger to respond to questions during a particular time frame. Others notify students that they only check their e-mail infrequently.

“I get at least 100 e-mails from my students a day,” a new hire commented.

Several professors critique what they called a shift towards a “Club Med” education at the university.

“Students come to class with a consumerist attitude,” a tenure track professor observes. “They shop and drop classes as they please, and there’s pressure on us as faculty members to continually entertain them.”

Many new professors explain they see their universities moving towards this consumer model, where the priority is to captivate undergraduates.

“We’re to cater to first- and second-year students in particular at my university, for fear that they will leave the university and try on another for size. If they leave, it impacts the university’s reputation and its chances for funding. So I feel increased pressure to ensure that my students stay in my class and don’t go somewhere else.”

Due to decreasing resources, teaching assistant support is on the decline.

“I know years ago senior professors had several TAs to help teach a course. Now I’m lucky if I get a TA for a class of 70. It means a lot more marking for me and then I also have to keep on top of my research, too.”

Despite the increased workloads, higher stress levels, and more grading, many new faculty members emphasize that they feel very fortunate to have their jobs.

“I love the intellectual freedom,” one tenure track professor says. “There’s a lot of flexibility and autonomy, too.”

However, the university will have to take into consideration the challenges facing new faculty so that they are not lost to private industry, where they may well seek out other, more attractive employment opportunities.

“I can feel the burnout factor and it’s only been two years,” confesses one new faculty member.

Another confides: “I’m continually feeling like I’m behind. We really need to be given the time and space to develop our courses and devote more time to offering a solid education with solid teaching for our students. That’s the whole point of university, isn’t it?” **AM**

The pressure is even greater for visible minority faculty

Dr. Minelle Mahtani is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and the Program in Journalism at the University of Toronto.

Michael Ignatieff on academics in public life

The newly elected MP and former Harvard academic star took time out on the campaign trail to share with *Academic Matters* his thoughts on the challenges facing public intellectuals

Michael Ignatieff was Carr Professor of Human Rights Practice and Director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard University before his election to the Canadian Parliament this year. His most recent publications include *Lesser Evil: Political Ethics in the Age of Terror* (2004); *Charlie Johnson in the Flames* (2003) and *Empire Lite: Nation Building in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan* (2003).

Q What do you think is the greatest challenge facing academics today?

A Ignatieff: The greatest challenge is to avoid becoming the prisoner of intellectual fashions. It is amazingly hard—I've found—to think an honest and independent thought in modern academic life. So the challenge is to safeguard and defend intellectual freedom both for yourself and for your students.

Q Do you think academics have a responsibility to become public intellectuals?

A Ignatieff: Academics should stick to what they know best, i.e. the body of knowledge they can genuinely claim to have mastered. It is this knowledge that gives them whatever authority they may have. If this knowledge is useful to public debate and policy formulation, they should share it with their fellow citizens in any public forum that actually allows them to present ideas in their integrity.

Q What dangers, if any, are there when academics do become public intellectuals?

A Ignatieff: I'm uneasy about the authority of public intellectuals. What do they actually know anything about? If they do know something real, if their authority is based on genuine expertise, they can play a useful role in public debate. But if they become all purpose experts, they quickly become clowns and entertainers. Believe me, I've been there!

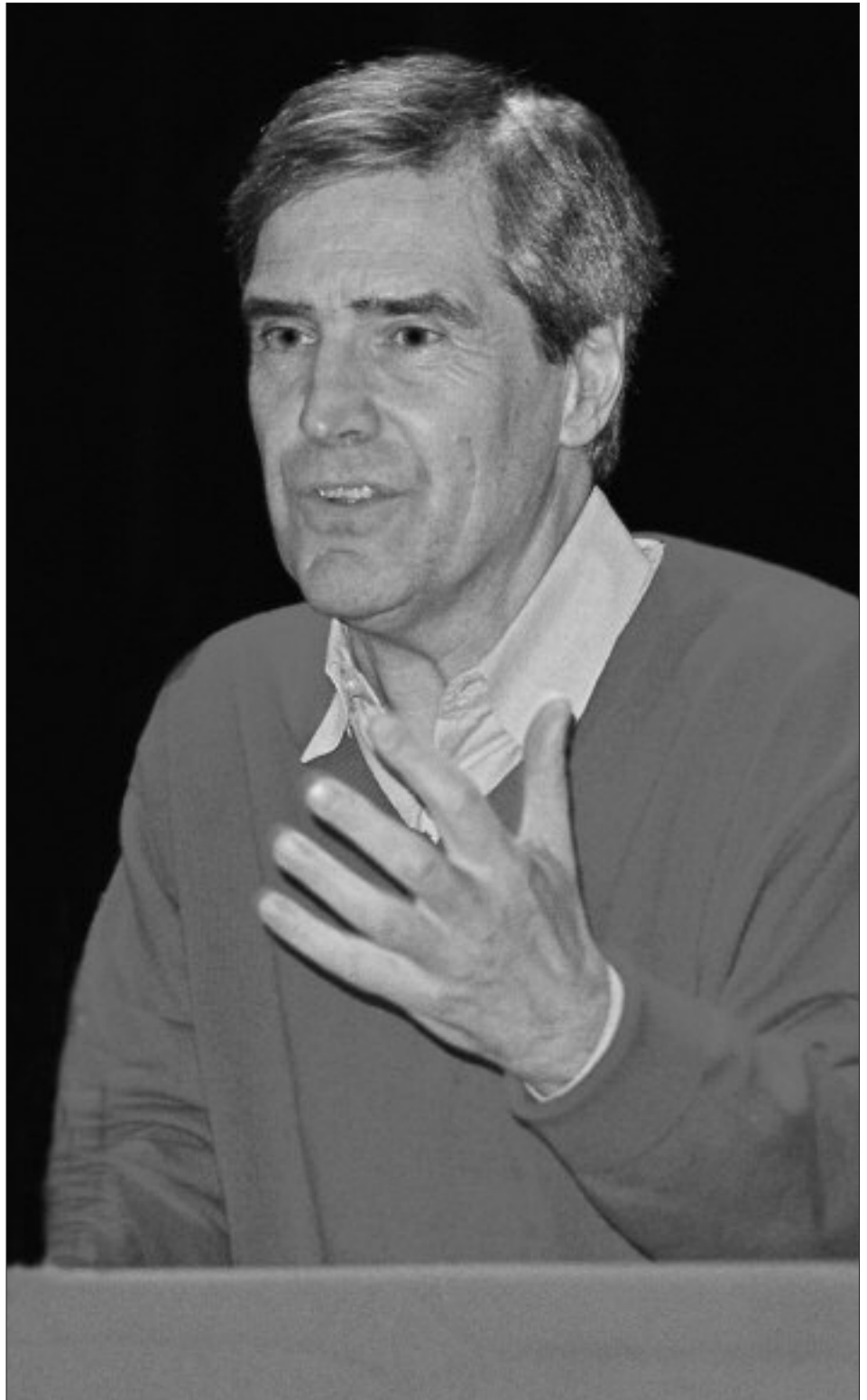


Photo Credit: Neil Ward

4ever human

How a Giller-nominated author sees the next generation of writers

New technology might create a culture of 'LOLs' and other grammatical babble, but U of T writer-in-residence Camilla Gibb is touched by the human element that underlies her students' writing

I'm the type of writer who needs vast, empty stretches of time in order to write.

There's only one problem: I don't think I've had any of those since the internet became an indispensable part of my life.

I've had to create the right conditions through exiling myself to some improbable location—a cabin in the woods of New Hampshire, a windy barren rock in the Aegean, even a trailer parked in a field in Eastern Ontario. Places beyond technology.

I'm now trying to create the right conditions closer to home; resolving to go without e-mail and internet access in the office I've recently been granted as the new writer-in-residence at the University of Toronto.

The manuscript I'm working on in that office looks much the same as those I worked on in exile. Pockmarked with question marks. Notes in the margins that read: Google it, check Babbelfish, ask Jeeves.

Which begs the question: can I complete anything anymore without access to the internet? I could, I would argue, if I were asking different questions.

In a sense, the internet allows me to be more imaginative—it frees me to travel into obscure or alien territory and ask more esoteric questions than I might otherwise because I know that somewhere within easy

reach lie answers.

Is it cheap or lazy of me to rely on the internet as my primary research tool? Not any more so, I would argue, than using a keyboard in place of a pen.

A more important question perhaps, is whether exposure to the internet has affected my writing stylistically. Again I would say no, because although it's hard to remember a time before the internet, I learned to write long before it came into existence.

When usage became widely available in the mid-1990s I was in my twenties, which made me, now 37, not a child of the first internet generation, but a young adult. But

The upside of the internet is its inherent democracy; the downside is a whole litany of evils

how did it affect the writing of those who were children? Those who are now our undergraduates, students who have used the internet to research and write every under-

graduate essay and assignment they've ever done, not to mention the years of school work before that?

The upside of the internet, of course, is its inherent democracy—the accessibility to and availability of information and the freedom for anyone to speak.

The downside is a whole litany of obvious evils, not least of which is how easily it lends itself to plagiarism, and how it gives the illusion of equal authority to material, whether drawn from legitimate archives, or of dubious provenance, validity, or merit.

Among the most frequently cited evils though, are ones I consider debatable.



Photo by Kevin Kelly

Take the premise that the internet has changed the way we research and process information. We no longer immerse ourselves in long, linear arguments; this line of thinking, but accumulate knowledge haphazardly, moving from hyperlink to hyperlink, scanning a chain of text, ads and images, dividing our attention between multiple and split screens and animated and static images and text.

It's no wonder your children are on Ritalin, these critics say.

Scanning, furthermore, doesn't allow us to retain information in the same way. Nor are the bulk of our hours in front of the screen primarily research-oriented—we view the computer as a glorified television.

I actually look at it quite differently. I'm all for lateral thinking, all for the postmodern hodgepodge and collision of diverse and divergent opinions the internet offers, and intrigued by the strange wormholes in cyberspace that lead you places you never knew existed or expected to go.

But that's because I'm a fiction writer. First of all, I take very little literally; as "fact." And secondly, in a sense, the way we navigate cyberspace is similar to how a writer's brain works—picking up clues as we meander, seeking unexpected connections between disparate entities or phenomena and exploring the relationships between them. The hope, in the end, is that the fiction we create will say something about human experience. And I want to stress the human. And the experience.

This is why. In the creative writing class I teach I began by asking each of my students to identify the source of inspiration for the story they are working on. Not one of them said the internet. Not one of them said the television, or a movie, or music, for that matter, either.

A family photograph, an ancestor's diary, a place they once visited, a stranger who left an impression, an anecdote they overheard, the memory of someone lost, a missing piece of family history, a broken heart, a desire, a dream—these are the sources of inspiration for a generation of students raised with the internet.

It is beyond reassuring; it is touching.

But how do they handle those stories? Does having grown up with access to the internet affect style or the way they use language? Are they capable of linear storytelling? Do they possess the concentration to follow something through to a conclusion?



Can they write fluidly, or does their prose leap from thought to thought, image to image?

Do they use lists and bullet points, write phonetically, fail to capitalize, or punctuate their prose with windings and 4evers!!! and LOLs?

Every one of these students, in fact every one of the much larger number of students who applied to the course, could be said to be aspiring to, achieving, or to some degree approximating a story with a conventional narrative structure.

Beginning, middle and end. Action, dialogue and exposition. Indented paragraphs

and well-established form and a desire to replicate and perpetuate that form despite the option of quicker, easier modes of expression.

If I pressed for a reason, I would have to defer to Freud. We are still introduced to reading through books. As children, we associate books with mums and dads and bedtime stories. As long as that remains true, as long as the parents in this equation are not replaced by technological proxies, we can hope to produce readers and writers.

We will lose a majority of future readers and many future writers to quicker forms of entertainment along the way.

But if this generation is anything to go on, those who choose to write will continue on the tradition of literary fiction—aided by internet research, certainly, as is my own writing, but not radically altered in content, form or intent.

Our stories, passed from generation to generation, are the way we understand ourselves and our histories; they connect us through time and across space. The arrival of the internet appears not to have broken that continuity by prompting a radical departure from established form.

More subtle changes may be in evidence; stylistic and thematic changes that are not yet loudly manifest. Presumably these will continue to develop and become more visible in future, and those that prove meaningful and effective will stick.

And that is called evolution. **AM**

An ancestor's diary, a place they once visited, a stranger who left an impression—these are the sources of inspiration for a generation of students raised with the internet

and dialogue in quotes. Full sentences containing subjects and verbs (unlike mine here! LOL).

One student did preface his piece with a fictitious e-mail exchange. A couple of well-known authors tried this in the '90s, which proved, in my opinion, a rather painful experiment resulting in prose that felt acutely self-conscious and contrived.

Perhaps these writers were anticipating that the internet would have a much bigger impact on the way we communicate our stories. Perhaps we all were.

The work my students are doing though, would suggest that there is a recognition of different writing styles and an ability to discern between them in order to make appropriate choices dependent on context.

It also suggests a certain respect for a long

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So much for "THE SENILITY GANG"

David MacGregor examines how a wave of faculty retirements will create a knowledge void of lunar magnitude

In the 1990s, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration forgot how to get to the moon. Key NASA scientists from the Apollo project had retired, taking their wealth of knowledge and experience with them—including the secret to getting to the moon.

In Canada, 40 per cent of federal Information Technology senior managers are poised to retire, leaving in their wake a knowledge void—for they possess fundamental hardware, software and telecommunications skills required by a range of government agencies.

Canadian universities are set to suffer a similar fate. About 12,000 Canadian professors—a third of full-time academics—will celebrate their 65th birthday by 2011. What does this mean?

Management consultant David DeLong points to interaction between the “three Rs”—retirement, recruitment and retention—that affect the loss of vital workplace intellectual capital. An additional term may throw light on this turbulent period of potential lost knowledge in 21st Century higher education: age diversity.

Retirement

At least since Stephen Leacock penned “The Senility Gang”, a story about his 1935 ejection from McGill, universities have relied on mandatory retirement. Never evenly enforced, compulsory retirement evaporated in Quebec and Manitoba in the 1980s and is only now being phased out in Ontario.

A pernicious form of ageism drives mandatory retirement, arbitrarily separating old from young academics. Many veteran professors are bewildered and discouraged by the imminent prospect of unwanted retirement. Retirees complain of being treated as non-persons.

That could change with the ending of mandatory retirement in Ontario.

Administrators fret that ending manda-

tory retirement will encourage white-haired scholars to stay forever. But academics over 65 make up less than four per cent of faculty on campuses without mandatory retirement. The proportion is similar in American postsecondary institutions.

Mandatory retirement or not, most university teachers quit before hitting age 64. Indeed, the average retirement age for academics is between 62 and 63—only one year more than workers in other sectors. In essence, Canada is poised to lose a generation of knowledge to upcoming faculty retirements.

Recruitment

It has been estimated that, on top of retiree replacements, more than 10,000 new positions are required to make Ontario a leader in high quality education.

The province’s student-faculty ratio is 24:1, the worst in Canada, compared to 15:1 in high-rated North American postsecondary institutions.

Graduate schools produce only a small fraction of PhDs that will be required to replace retirements and bring down that student-faculty ratio. Private industry and government offer salaries and working conditions that may lure some academics away from the university setting. Replacing retiring faculty may not be so easy.

Retention

Universities have to attract new faculty but they also face the challenge of retaining those already in the ranks.

Beginning pay for faculty

has soared while mid-career academics suffer salary compression. Administrators must address the issue of underpaid mid-career faculty burdened with spiraling course loads.

With ballooning expectations for tenure-related service and publication, younger and mid-career scholars also suffer a lack of integration in their personal and professional lives.

Administrators should develop concrete policies to retain and benefit from older faculty, whose knowledge will be pivotal for growth and innovation.

Veteran academics can crack the mould of antiquated practices and push for program



improvements, including undergraduate teaching.

Senior professors are also needed to mentor newly hired faculty. Already established as scholars and researchers, veteran professors may be able to devote more time to university service, coaching early career academics, and advising graduate students.

Age Diversity

The University of Lethbridge is preparing to give Professor Ian Whishaw, Royal Society Fellow and Board of Governors Chair in Neuroscience—a pink slip. The good professor just celebrated his 65th birthday.

Modernist contempt for elder knowledge is an aberration.

For the Greeks, philosophers almost by

definition were older men.

Aged women served in high ceremonial roles, such as priestesses.

Abbesses like Saint Hilda, who died at age 66 in 680, ran the monasteries that nourished Christian thought. Methodist founder John Wesley admitted to feeling old at age 86.

Sofonisba Anguissola, counted among the most accomplished artists of the 17th century, painted her last self-portrait at age 78; she lived to 92.

Innovation and creativity are not found only among the young.

There are two forms of creativity, argues David Galenson, belonging to very different points of the life cycle.

Conceptual innovators turn things upside down in their youth, while experimental

innovators produce their greatest work after extended periods of trial and error.

Piet Mondrian painted his masterpiece, *Broadway Boogie-Woogie*, at age 71. American writer Elizabeth Bishop published her much-anthologized *One Art* at age 65. Architect Frank Lloyd Wright designed his most famous building, *Fallingwater*, when he was 70 years old.

A critical mass of senior academics will challenge ageist stereotypes in the future. But university administrators should take the lead in creating what age-wave theorist Ken Dychtwald calls a “culture that honours experience”.

A first step should be to eliminate mandatory retirement immediately—as the University of Toronto, Lakehead University and Wilfrid Laurier University have done — rather than force more academics into unwanted retirement.

Administrators should reach out to those already retired, increasing pay and benefits for part-time teaching and finding ways to draw from the considerable resource pool offered by emeritus faculty.

Senior scholar/retiree research centres pioneered in Canada by the University of Toronto suggests a valuable route for other universities to follow.

Retirement as sudden withdrawal is grossly oversold. Disappearance of workplace social connections and routines is often devastating, both for the retiree and the university.

New configurations should be available for faculty, including temporary leave programs, early retirement with an opportunity to re-enter the workplace; and flexible retirement with reduced workloads and service responsibilities. Preserving older scholars’ organizational knowledge involves promoting awareness of exclusionary behaviour. Academic discourse frequently contains ageist language and clouded thinking that alienates older faculty. Administrators need to be sensitive to generational differences and motivational needs of veteran scholars.

University campuses, like other enterprises in our ageing society, will soon feature a larger proportion of veteran workers. Although the transition involves serious challenges, everyone will benefit from restoration of the full range human endeavour to the pursuit of knowledge. **AM**

David MacGregor is professor of Sociology at King's University College at the University of Western Ontario.

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Sessional confessional:

A NOVICE PROFESSOR TELLS ALL



ments that the students have taken to guessing at who I might be married to on faculty. How sad they would be to find out that my love life is non-existent, that in fact my whole life has been reduced to planning their weekly three-hour lectures.

I now consider vacuuming and emptying the dishwasher leisure-time pursuits.

I order pizza (again) on the night before the big lecture. The delivery guy (it's a small town) asks if my job is "still busy".

"Ah, yeah, still busy," I answer.

Half-way through the term, petrified of student disapproval and its impact on the

I carry out my own
teaching evaluation, to burn
over the gas stove

possibility of future contracts, I carry out my own informal teaching evaluation. One I can take home and burn over the gas stove if they hate me.

Surprisingly they don't seem to hate me.

One, however, suggests it would be nice to have more colour pictures in the presentations. I am still lecturing on the 1910s.

I see with a flash of clarity why maybe I can do this job, after all. It is not that I know a whole bunch of anything, really, or even—*really*—how the light bulb works.

I do, however, have some sense of the larger picture that my students—who are downloading music while I still buy CDs, and who might actually understand how their MP3 players work—do not.

Tonight I will take it easy on myself—maybe empty the dishwasher *and* vacuum all in one night. **AM**

Professor Me's pseudonym was requested by the writer—a real-life professor seeking tenure who would like to leave his/her name out of future party line discussions to protect future job prospects.

By Professor Me

This is it, I tell myself.

Grad school several years behind me now—the pain of comps and the agony of dissertation finally begin to fade—I am heading into the interview lecture for my first real job.

Well, it's a contract for now, but it could, as they say, lead to more.

Inexplicably, I have committed myself to talk about the history of electricity, the telephone and all manner of other technological innovations whose workings I've never fully understood.

As I finish a comment about Graham Bell, from the corner of my eye, I see a hand go up. Omigod, a question.

Someone has a question and it is going to be about technology and I am going to be revealed for the complete fraud that I am.

How can I tell these students that I really know nothing more about this subject

than exactly what is written on the 10 pieces of paper I have in front of me?

"Um, didn't they all have party lines back then?" this student wonders.

Party lines? My anxiety settles somewhat. Popping into my mind is a sudden image of my younger self and cousin, stifling giggles with our hands as we listen to the neighbour lady running through a list of groceries with her husband.

I improvise something to this effect and, miraculously, laughing erupts in the court of my classroom. Self-deprecating humour will beat out pure knowledge and elaborate pedagogy every time.

It seems to work, because six months later I find myself—*Professor Me*—standing in front of these same students, now my own class.

It's not a big place, where I've landed.

I hear via colleagues in other depart-

The generatio

PATRICIA A. FINN CALLS ON THE BABY BOOMERS TO PASS ON KNOWLEDGE FROM HARD-FOUGHT BATTLES TO A LESS EXPERIENCED GENERATION NEXT

Over the past 30 years I've worked for three distinct groups of academic staff members: those hired after World War II; the baby boom generation; and generation next.

Reference Group Theory, a concept designed to explain generational differences based on background reference points, is useful in looking at the differences between these cohorts.

For faculty hired after the war, higher education was often only obtainable because of their war service. Many would, otherwise, never have aspired to—let alone attained—a university education.

Not only were their lives interrupted by the war, but this generation spent their formative years growing up in the Great Depression.

These employees brought a wealth of experience to their careers and a desire to make improvements and extend their hard won achievements to others—especially making higher education attainable for those who would not, normally, be able to afford it.

Their reference points shaped how they conducted themselves and enriched their contribution as academics.

The baby boomers grew up in a period of relative peace and prosperity compared to their parents but it was also a time of the cold war, Sputnik and the Cuban crisis.

Nevertheless, they experienced less deprivation than their senior colleagues.

Those who started work before 1968 will remember having to cope with medical and dental bills in the absence of any insurance schemes. Women will remember having no

provision for maternity leave, not being able to have a credit card in their own name or being able to take out a mortgage.

Great strides were made obtaining medical insurance and greater equality for women. This group, also at pains to ensure that fair and equitable systems be put in place, had their salaries limited or frozen during three periods of “restraint” (Anti Inflation Legislation, 1975; Inflation Restraint, 1982; and Social Contract, 1994). They also saw mortgage rates rise above 20 per cent.

With less experience of deprivation, generation next also has very little experience of the battles over fair and equitable systems.

They have no recollection of a time when universal health insurance and extended health and dental plans did not exist. They enjoy mortgage rates that have fallen back to levels not seen since the 1950s.

While they benefit from earlier generations' concern that higher education be more accessible, they are more likely to have gone lock-step through school to university to an academic appointment and often start out with a high debt load.

Their career emphasis is more attuned to their standing within their discipline and less geared toward making the institution where their employment is situated a better place to work.

Increased pressure and pace of work militates against involvement in collegial governance and association work.

It is essential that junior colleagues be informed about what has been achieved, how it was achieved and why.



As systems and procedures are entrusted to their hands, the importance of a collegial form of governance needs to be inculcated.

Our successors must fully understand that improvements are not gained in a straight upward linear progression; that hard won benefits may be lost; and, that sacrifices are sometimes required.

As far as possible, institutional memory must be made accessible to allow this new generation of academics to build on past attainments and continue to make improvements that they, and future generations of academics, can be proud of. That is the challenge of this generation as they pass the knowledge from hard-fought battles onto generation next. **AM**

Patricia A. Finn, LL.M. has been the Executive Director of the Carleton University Academic Staff Association since 1976 and has worked at Carleton University since 1967.

nal divide



JENNIFER STEWART LAYS OUT THE CHALLENGES AHEAD FOR A MORE DIVERSE AND MOBILE GENERATION NEXT, AS THEY FACE NEW AND MORE INDIVIDUAL BATTLES WITHIN ACADEME

Canada's Gen Nex'ers are more diverse and mobile than any generation of faculty who have preceded them in academe.

These distinguishing characteristics combine to shape the goals of Gen Nex'ers and, in turn, influence the types of battles they are willing to engage in. They may also yield welcome new results on campus.

For instance, at the same time as the diversity of new hires has increased, so has the diversity of the student body. These two changes should complement each other and allow for a more fulfilling university experience for both students and faculty.

There is greater potential that students will find role models among faculty and be encouraged to higher achievements.

Diversity in the classroom can create a more rewarding teaching experience in both seminars and lectures. New hires can contribute new ideas in research, in pedagogy

and program development.

An increase in diversity also presents new challenges.

Previous cohorts who have been more homogenous in characteristics and lifestyle were more able to organize themselves to fight for a common goal.

It is less likely Gen Nex'ers will cohere on broad social issues because with diversity comes a greater variety of goals or aspirations.

The battles this cohort fights are on an individual level, and they differ from battles previous generations faced.

Gen Nex'ers are more inclined to press institutions to accept individual views and practices as valid. Over time this may result in large social changes, but the incremental changes go unnoticed.

One battle Gen Nex'ers face that is getting noticed, however, is their increased demand for a "balanced life" where "work" does not equal "life".

How the balance is achieved will, of course, vary across new hires.

The increased presence of women in academia, the desire by men to participate in child rearing, and the increase in dual-earner families may lead to new battles around family policies such as child care and parental leave.

But, characteristic of Gen Nex'ers, these battles are likely to be fought on an

individual basis.

One of the key reasons behind the focus on individual battles is the new mobility of Gen Nex'ers. New hires view changing jobs as an acceptable and easy route to career advancement.

Finding a new position is easier with the emergence of many job posting websites. With e-mail and other web services it is easier to maintain collaborative projects when changing jobs.

Gen Nexers' ability to switch positions is likely to decrease an individual faculty member's willingness to battle an institution.

It is also likely to decrease their loyalty and commitment to the university. When unhappy at a university or faced with a better prospect, the new cohort can easily move on.

Will universities respond to this believable threat by offering more desirable packages to new hires? Rather than staging a battle, will new hires 'vote with their feet' and affect policy in this manner?

The world has changed, the labour market has changed, and gender roles have changed. And, so too, has academia. **AM**

Jennifer Stewart is an assistant professor in the School of Public Policy and Administration at Carleton University.

The lure of a UNIVERSITY education:

Reflections from a high school guidance counselor

By Janice Fricker



In my 27-year career as a teacher and guidance counselor, I have learned a lot about why young people choose to go to university.

The obvious and simple answer is this: They want good lives—interesting, meaningful careers, with good salaries and life-long security.

Most, but not all, students who go to university truly believe that university is the only guaranteed path to a secure future. They have been told this by parents, the media, by teachers, and by the culture as a whole.

Whether or not this is true, whether or not the activities required to obtain a university degree are suited to their interests and personalities are questions largely unasked by the 17- and 18-year-olds who go off to university in pursuit of the good life.

It seems to me that the young people who decide to go to university do so: a) because they can and they have to, or b) because they want to.

Obviously, few enter university without the academic skills to do so.

The applicants are, for the most part, those who have played the academic game well, have memorized, problem-solved, direction-followed, and essay-written well enough to earn the grades required to pursue a degree at university.

They can enter university, so they feel they must, especially when encouraged to follow a family history of university education or when encouraged to be one of the first in a family to succeed on that path.

Most are going to university for the same reason that they went to school, because it is encouraged and expected. But few at 17 or 18 really know what they are doing or why.

I have read that a significant percentage

of those who enter year one of university exit before year three and that the majority of those who remain change their majors or programs at least once.

Why? Clearly the majority of young adults entering university do not know what they are doing or why.

In my opinion there are four types of students heading off to university. They can be distinguished by the answers they give to their guidance counsellor's questions: What would you like to do after high school? What would you like to study?

The first type of student responds that they want to go to university, but they don't know why. This student is not able to identify an area of interest and will usually decide to study in an area that is least difficult for them.

Often this type of student will not read beyond that required for homework and will not be creatively engaged in extracurricular activities.

They are going because they can get the grades required and they have been told they have to go to university in order to "get a good job".

They ask which area has "guaranteed

Students who know what they want and why are less common

jobs" in the future. Some in this category go to university simply because they don't know what else to do and "it beats working".

The second type of student responds that they want to go to university to study in a certain program, but when asked why, their

answers typically are: "It makes good money"; "There are lots of jobs"; "My parents want me to".

In many ways they are like the less-certain students.

They are not connecting to a passion or an interest; they are doing what they are supposed to do and they also want guarantees.

Often these students will state that they are going to be doctors, engineers, accountants, computer programmers, lawyers, forensic scientists, etc. simply because they know these careers exist and they believe that they guarantee a "good life".

Less common than the types already mentioned are the students who know what they want to study and why.

These students have a genuine interest in a particular career and know that university is a necessary step on the way to achieving success in that career.

They will often pursue volunteer activities related to the career of their choice. Their extracurricular activities will reflect their interests. They will attempt to acquire part-time jobs and co-op placements related to their chosen career.

When asked why they want to study in the field they have chosen, they have confident and realistic answers that show they have considered their interests and strengths in the decision-making process.

Rarest of all are the students who go to university for the pursuit of knowledge, the love of learning.

Generally they find the intellectual challenge of academic activities rewarding in and of itself.

Yes, they may have thoughts of applying their knowledge and skills in a particular career, but they have the flexibility of



thought to know that there are many career paths open to them.

They don't believe in guarantees, and they trust that time and experience will be the best guides in their decision-making process.

Often these students will not make a definite career choice until third or fourth year

university, even later.

Sometimes they will choose careers for which a university education was not a requirement, but they don't feel bitter about the time and money they spent acquiring their degree. They feel their lives were enriched from their experiences in "the ivy tower".

Regrettably, we ask our young people to declare their decisions about major life choices at a time when they are extremely vulnerable.

Adolescence is, as we know, a time of many changes and stresses. At 17 or 18, most young people do not have a deep self-knowledge or a wealth of experience, and yet we ask them to declare, not just what they will do next, but what they will do, and, even worse, what they will be.

As a society, we give the strong message that first-class citizens go to university, second-class citizens go to college, and the leftovers do something else.

We do not teach them the enormous value of labour and skilled trades. We do not teach them that there are no guarantees. We

do not show them that a good life comes from following genuine interests and learning from experience.

We give them the impression that an action has value only if it can translate, sooner or later, into dollars, and we tell them the biggest bucks go to university grads.

Universities cannot give the vast majority of students what they and their families want—a guarantee of interesting, meaningful, high-paying careers with life-long security.

I believe we all need to work to create a new definition of the word university.

Instead of the current definition, "a place where the best students go to get the best jobs", let's help our students recognize university as "the next step in lifelong learning, nothing more, nothing less." **AM**

Janice Fricker has taught grades 7-OAC at eight schools during her twenty-seven year career. She is currently Curriculum Leader of Student Services at Jarvis Collegiate Institute in Toronto.



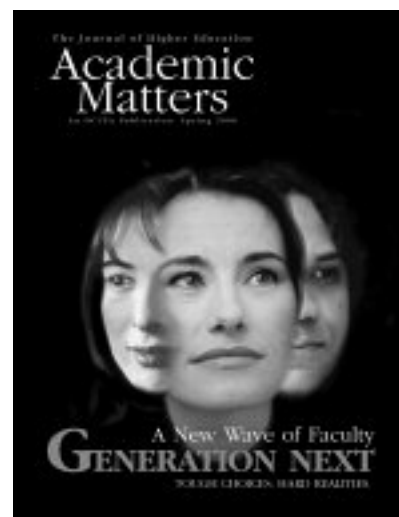
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The Changing Face OF UNIVERSITIES

What is the state of higher education, and where is it headed?

These two recently-published anthologies, both arising from University of Toronto conferences (one in 2002, the other at the end of 2004) offer some stimulating responses to these questions.

The collections have the strengths and weaknesses of most conference proceedings. The contributions range from personal reflections, to provocative think pieces, to reports on or syntheses of the authors' current work.

They appear to contain relatively little new empirical research, though good conference proceedings can and should inspire such inquiry. There is an overlap and repetition of themes between and, periodically,

Even hard-nosed economists believe substantial government funding is critical to postsecondary education

within the anthologies, and several individuals have contributed to both collections.

Overall, they present an enormous amount of useful information, a variety of perspectives, and an excellent opportunity to reflect on the condition of the university both locally and abroad.

Most of the essays in the two books fall within one of the following four themes: the economic and social role of higher education (including the importance of research), access and student assistance policies, governance of universities, and international perspectives and trends.

Higher education matters immensely in the new "knowledge economy", both in the developing and developed worlds. The evidence assembled in support of this argument is compelling. Postsecondary education con-

tributes to economic growth *and* to the vibrancy of communities through the production of skilled graduates, research, and cultural development.

Calvin R. Stiller reports on a study of 76 firms which found that "5 per cent of their

total sales depended on academic research...and that 15 per cent of new products and 11 per cent of new processes could not have been developed without academic research."

Though the methodologies measuring corporate rates of return of investment in research are imperfect, the results are indisputably positive for both privately and publicly funded research programs.

James Millway compares Canada's "prosperity index" with that of the United States and finds the former wanting. Years of education is the surest predictor of personal income, and "Canada's under-performance in educational attainment, mainly at postsecondary levels, translates into a negative impact on GDP per capita of \$907 per capita."

Only 31 per cent of Ontario managers held

a university degree in 1996, vs 46 per cent in the U.S., and a significant gap remained at the turn of the millennium. Canada lags, as well, with respect to the proportion of the population with a graduate degree. This, too, has serious economic consequences.

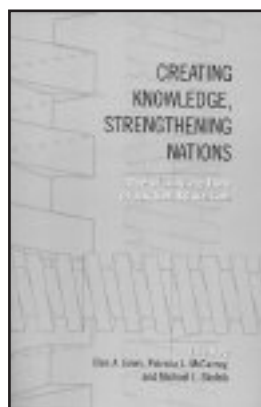
Abdullah S. Daar and Peter R. Singer stress the economic and social importance of research in geonomics and biotechnology which requires partnerships between universities and industry.

Similarly John R. Evans enthusiastically endorses the commercialization of university research, holding up the MaRS (Medical and Related Sciences Discovery District) project in Toronto as a sterling example of what can be accomplished through university, corporate, and hospital collaborations.

These authors are confident that the legitimate concerns around ethics and conflict of interest arising from such partnerships can be adequately addressed through the creation and enforcement of rigorous and transparent business-university protocols. They would undoubtedly agree that notorious controversies, such as that involving medical researcher Nancy Olivieri, the Hospital for Sick Children and the University of Toronto, damage the prospects for healthy collaboration among universities, the health sector, and other industries.

The link between educational and eco-

REVIEWED BY Paul Axelrod



***Creating Knowledge, Strengthening Nations: The Changing Role of Higher Education*, edited by Glen A. Jones, Patricia L. McCarney and Michael L. Skolnik (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 298 pp.**

conomic growth is more complex than many realize, and David A. Wolfe (who contributes to both anthologies) critically analyzes the process. Corporations can only make good use of academic research if they cultivate their own “learning cultures”, enabling them to “effectively capture and deploy knowledge acquired from external sources.” Regional “clusters” which integrate academic, business and cultural sectors are the most likely to thrive economically.

Wolfe’s articles and those of Patricia L. McCarney, Shirley Neuman and co-authors Meric S. Gerlter and Tara Vinodrai cite the influential book by Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002), which argued that economically successful communities are dependent on an ethos of tolerance, diversity, and cultural vitality. Talented people are drawn to such environments, including those which welcome gays and “bohemian lifestyles”.

And as Neuman and David Dyzenhaus argue, such contemporary realities provide a forceful case for public (and private) investment in the humanities, the social sciences, and culture at large, as well as in the fields of science, technology, and health—the latter of which currently attracts the lion’s share of government and corporate funding.

Reading the texts’ chapters in this complementary way may encourage others, as it has me, to look beyond what has become a predictable and repetitious debate between proponents and opponents of ‘commercialization’ in higher education.

Communities, including businesses, require flourishing postsecondary educational institutions to realize their developmental potential, and universities and colleges depend upon successful economies to generate resources to support the broad range of academic activities in which they are engaged.

The philosopher, the physicist and the financier have a collective stake in and critical contribution to make to the cultivation of healthy and sustainable environments.

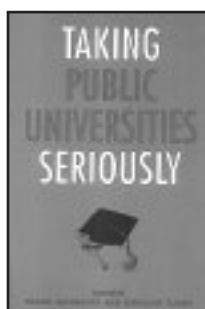
Government policy, university planning, and corporate giving should flow, more than has recently been the case, from this perspective.

Postsecondary educational institutions, and the communities in which they are embedded, will prosper best in an atmosphere of cultural inventiveness, economic and scientific innovation, creative and civil discourse, and civic responsibility.

How should higher education be funded and sustained?

While the proportion of university income covered by public funds has diminished in Canada in recent years—compounded dramatically by the federal transfer payment cuts of the mid-1990s—the contributors to these anthologies, including the hard-nosed economists among them, believe that substantial government funding is criti-

REVIEWED BY Paul Axelrod



Taking Public Universities Seriously, edited by Frank Iacobucci and Carolyn Tuohy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 614 pp.

cal to the future of postsecondary education.

Notwithstanding the insatiable fiscal needs of public health care, higher education, for reasons highlighted above, cannot be allowed to fall off the priority list, and a host of new federal and provincial program initiatives from the late-1990s to the present are a signal that this message has not been entirely lost on policy makers.

With respect to the share of higher educational costs that students (and their families) should bear, *Taking Public Universities Seriously* assembles a group of researchers who unabashedly promote higher tuition fees and Income Contingency Repayment Financing Plans as the wave of the future. Ross Finnie,

Even Melissa S. Williams, the one dissident voice among the contributors on this subject, acknowledges that accelerating tuition fees in Canada and elsewhere has not diminished either participation rates in general or access to universities by lower income students. Indeed, fee increases in some jurisdictions have raised participation rates since, with more income, institutions have been able to educate more students.

For several authors, the experiences of Australia, New Zealand, Sweden and England offer a mix of good and bad examples with respect to the implementation and workability of ICRFPs.

However compelling the economic case for such a system in Canada, it is likely to prove politically unpalatable if students from middle-class families, who are far from affluent, face huge loans that must be repaid in total in the years following graduation.

They could be confronted with mortgage-like debts without the benefit, or even the likely prospect, of owning homes.

Voters are unlikely to be impressed by such scenarios, and the same might be said of the federal government.

An income contingency plan proposed by former Human Resources Development Minister Lloyd Axworthy was rejected by his cabinet colleagues in the mid-1990s.

Instead, the federal government, as David M. Cameron reports in *Taking Public Universities Seriously*, hastily instituted the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation in 2000, which is based on “front-end” rather than “back-end” financial support for needy students.

The program appears popular politically and, notwithstanding its own complexities, is easier to explain to the public than

Income-contingent loans would likely prove ‘politically unpalatable’ if the middle class faced huge loans

H. Lorne Carmichael, Nicholas Barr and co-authors Benjamin Alarie and David Duff contend that ICRFPs, which require that graduates repay student loans in accordance with their post-university employment income, offer the best means of reconciling the growing expenses of higher education with the need for equity and affordability.

Opponents of this system should read and address the arguments presented in these articles, including the sometimes complex formulae prescribed by the authors.

income contingency repayment systems. The debate over how higher education will eventually be funded in Canada is far from settled, but the above authors have much to contribute to the discussion.

And how should higher education be governed?

Two issues dominate the discussion of this issue: consideration of the virtues of “buffer” bodies and performance indicator systems.

Lorne Sossin and Jane Gaskell see value in the kind of arm’s length co-ordinating

agency, situated between universities and government, which was abolished in Ontario by the Mike Harris Conservatives soon after they were elected in 1995.

For Gaskell, such a body could generate and assemble research badly needed to inform policy making, and for Sossin, “[b]uffers can shield government from the distorting effects of being required to intervene directly in disparate institutions, while at the same time shielding universities from governmental meddling.”

Opponents would contend that such agencies merely extend external control over universities and establish costly bureaucracies—bureaucracies that might develop a new regime of performance indicators, which is exactly what the proposed Ontario Quality Council on Higher Education (recommended by the Rae Commission) is intended to do.

Though she notes that “public evaluation of performance is here to stay [and] is embedded in the political vocabulary,” Janice Gross Stein questions the value and workability of most such systems.

Stein’s citation of Deborah Stone is worth reiterating: “Once a phenomenon has been converted into a quantitative measure,

it can be added, multiplied, divided, or subtracted, even though these operations have no meaning in reality. Numbers provide the comforting illusion that incommensurables can be weighed against each other, because arithmetic always ‘works’...Numbers force a common denominator when there is none.”

Andrew Green and Edward Iacobucci believe that market-based benchmarks should be set for university performance, while Dan Lang, who usefully reviews performance indicator systems in many jurisdictions, argues that a limited benchmarking system, with well-defined parameters, can produce positive results.

In commentaries available only on the web, Ian D. Clark and Lorna Marsden support sensible accountability processes while disparaging invasive, politically driven reporting requirements which consume resources and further erode university autonomy.

It would appear, nevertheless, that a new regulatory framework is on the horizon, at least in Ontario.

These trends, and those discussed earlier, can be found in university systems throughout the world.

Ruth Hayhoe and Qiang Zha compare

the postsecondary educational growth strategies being used by Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, all of whom appear almost desperate to increase enrolments beyond the unprecedented levels they have already reached.

Eva Egron-Polak distinguishes conceptually between ‘globalization’ and ‘internationalization’ in which universities in developed countries are increasingly engaged.

The former envisions the developing world as a potentially profitable venue for the extension of a university’s “brand”. The latter stresses the cultural and moral value of educational exchange. However, the lines between these two frameworks are not always easily drawn. There is, then, much to ponder—and more than I’ve been able to report—in these two collections. They merit careful, and critical, reading. They offer insights into the dynamics of postsecondary educational communities already embarked on a voyage to an uncertain destination. Enjoy the ride. **AM**

Paul Axelrod is dean of the Faculty of Education, York University

LETTER TO THE EDITOR]

Abandon Maclean’s rankings

According to Ann Dowsett Johnston’s article in the inaugural issue of *Academic Matters*, Maclean’s ranking parameters—with low reliability and validity on a demonstrated multitude of dimensions—were derived originally from “seasoned academics”.

However, as with a set of journalistic clichés, a set of uninterpretable indices (such as those underlying the financially driven rankings exercises) has no constructive use.

Students and parents do not and cannot act upon these parameters. Nor have rankings correlated with student satisfaction indices.

For example, Dowsett Johnston claims students favour library resources at schools with better libraries, but the data show stu-

dents are not satisfied with library resources generally. Moreover, students at several schools with relatively strong library resources have not expressed high satisfaction with them.

Of course, we support the goals of better funding and other improvements. But the public needs to know that university experience cannot be calibrated totally within the idiom of *Consumer Reports*.

Rankings mirror resources and budgets. There are few significant or interpretable differences between Canadian schools. Rank-based data cannot reliably reflect the magnitude or meaning of differences, nor can we conceive of “seasoned academics” endorsing (with a straight face) such indices

as assessing educational effectiveness.

The moral issue we identified previously was not the health of the education system or the country, but rather the consequences of ranking exercises for the personal and academic welfare of students.

If Maclean’s wants to truly help parents and students, through its power as a national magazine, it should abandon misleading, financially driven, and unreliable exercises based on contrived construction of rankings and melodramatic references to winners and losers. **AM**

Stewart Page, Ph.D., is University Professor of Psychology, University of Windsor; Kenneth M. Cramer, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Psychology, University of Windsor.

Surviving Life AS A NEW PROFESSOR

In *Life on the Tenure Track: Lessons from the First Year*, Jim Lang takes his readers on an insight-filled tour of the life of a newly appointed assistant professor.

Written with honesty and humour, and imbued with the wisdom of hindsight, the book offers new faculty a guide to surviving the first year on the job.

That said, this is no conventional manual. Lang's 'lessons' are offered in the form of an engaging narrative of his own experiences as an assistant professor of English at a small Liberal Arts College in New England.

From the anxieties of the first day of class to the potentially treacherous terrain of department politics, Lang addresses the full range of first-year professor concerns.

Many aspects of this story will resonate with readers who have already been through, or are currently enduring, the fabled first year. The desperate and often unsuccessful struggle to carve out time for one's own research; the difficulties of settling in to a new place; the elation of a good class; and the dull disappointment that stems from student disinterest.

Lang's reflections on teaching—whether on the gender dynamics of the classroom or the challenge of getting students to speak—contain a wealth of useful advice.

His appointment to a small, teaching-oriented liberal arts college does, however, have its peculiarities. Many departments in research universities place little emphasis on pedagogy and instead expect new faculty to focus their energies on research and publication.

While Lang deals at some length with the imperative to "publish or perish", in his case the pressure to publish seems to be largely self-generated.

His experiences as a teacher, moreover, will not speak to everyone.

Lang's perceptive discussions of pedagogy focus on the interactive classroom. That is fine and well for a class of 14 students, but

when you confront a class of 130—as I did in my second year on the tenure track—it is quite a different matter.

There, interactive generally means multi-media and, for those of us who have succumbed to the allures of modern technology, PowerPoint.

While PowerPoint proves relatively easy to master, classroom technology is not. Inexplicably but seemingly inevitably, I plug my computer into the classroom data projector only to be greeted by an error message instead of my meticulously prepared presentation.

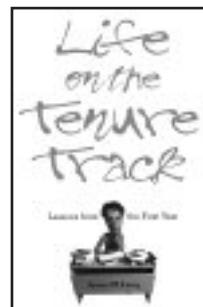
This is a book about the
long shadow cast by the
tenure process. It is
also a book about
the deep satisfaction
derived from the job.

In Lang's account, there are no failed PowerPoint presentations, there are only failed lesson plans.

Among the most insightful sections of the book are those which are devoted to departmental service.

Meetings seem to be a ubiquitous part of life on the tenure-track; one that proves particularly trying for those of us coming to our

REVIEWED BY Rebecca Manley



Life on the Tenure Track: Lessons from the First Year, by Jim Lang, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 208pp.

first positions from the retrospectively blissful—because unscheduled—routines of graduate student life.

Recounting his experiences drafting a job ad with the entire department (a one-hour affair), he reflects: "while part of me is glad that we all have an equal voice in such matters, part of me wishes that this were a business and somebody would just make the decisions for us... Does everything have to be so democratic?"

Democracy is indeed a mixed blessing for those of us lucky enough to land jobs in departments in which our voices as junior faculty count.

While I appreciate the opportunity to help shape my department, the time commitments constitute a drain on my capacity to write.

This is one of several insights that will be of interest not only to new appointments but also to senior faculty and administrators, for whom the book offers a glimpse into life on the other side.

This is a book about the long shadow cast by the tenure process, about the difficulties of negotiating departmental divisions, and about the power imbalance between even the most well-meaning of senior faculty and their junior colleagues.

It is also a book about the deep satisfaction derived from the job.

Lang offers a portrait of life on the tenure track that is at once realistic and hopeful—these are the musings of someone who remains deeply committed to his chosen career.

Whether in the pleasures or in the frustrations, faculty at all levels will recognize their own experiences somewhere in this short, perceptive, and ultimately entertaining account of academic life. **AM**

Rebecca Manley is a tenure-track assistant professor of history at Queen's University.

Mothers' experiences BALANCING FAMILY AND ACADEMIC CAREER

I am a female professor at a business school in Canada. I have tenure and have been promoted to the level of full professor. I have a child and a husband who is also a full-time academic.

I have done numerous studies in the area of work and family in Canada.

My background is in applied and social science and as such I am comfortable with (and prefer) assertions and arguments that are backed up with solid numbers.

The title of this book, *Parenting and Professing*, led me to believe that it would deal with men and women who were trying to combine being a professor and being a parent.

Similarly, the fact that the book was an edited collection of essays written "by academics from a variety of disciplines" suggested to me that the book would offer a balanced view of academic work and parenting backed with sound data.

This book was not at all what I expected.

First of all, it is not about parents, it is about mothers.

Nothing wrong with a book focusing on the challenges female academics face balancing work and family—but the author needs to be honest with respect to the subject matter.

Second, it is not solely about combining being a professor with having children as one third of the essays are written by graduate students who speak about combining academic study with parenting of young children.

Graduate students face a very different set of issues from someone who is in an employment relationship.

Third, the majority of academics who contributed to this volume (71%) are professors within Faculties of Art. The majority of this group teaches literature.

Their work expectations and experiences are likely very similar.

This limits the generalizability of their experiences to women within comparable fields.

Only 6 essays are written by female scientists or social scientists.

Fourth, while the volume purports to talk about positive experiences with respect to balance, the focus tends to be more on the challenges and problems women in academia face with respect to balance than the benefits and opportunities such work offers.

Fifth, the book offers little to no concrete, quantitative evidence for any of the challenges that they say that mothers who work in academic positions face (i.e. problems getting tenure, taking time off, getting promoted).

"Academia is a 'greedy' profession"

The book would be more persuasive and relevant to those dealing with such issues if such evidence was forthcoming. Unfortunately it is my experience that many senior decision makers are not motivated to make change based on anecdotal evidence.

Sixth, the book deals with the experiences of female academics and graduate students with children in the United States. Many of the problems mentioned by those south of the border as an impediment to the combination of academic work and parenting in this book (i.e. lack of maternity leave and any kind of financial assistance for health care issues) have less relevance to those of us fortunate enough to live in Canada.

Finally, I was stricken by the narcissistic nature of the discourse.

According to the authors of these essays, female academics have problems with work-life balance because the culture within their institution is non-supportive.

Hile Basset states that the academic career is not family friendly because professors are expected to put work first and family second and work long hours to show commitment.

She contends that problems occur because female academics work for institutions that either have not implemented

family friendly policies or have policies that people are afraid to use.

She notes that academia is a "greedy" profession that expects a lot of those who take such jobs.

Guess what? There is nothing unique about female academics with respect to any of these issues or universities as employers with respect to any of these issues.

Our data indicated that the majority of managers and professionals in Canada and elsewhere also face these kinds of pressures. They cannot, however, get tenure (and hence job security).

Nor do they have the same resources we do to deal with such issues—the high work time and work location flexibility that our data (and my own experiences) indicate is part of the typical academic job in Canada.

So, you probably think from the above discussion that I did not like this book? That I cannot recommend it to others. Actually, far from it.

I found the stories in this book very interesting, compelling and wonderfully written.

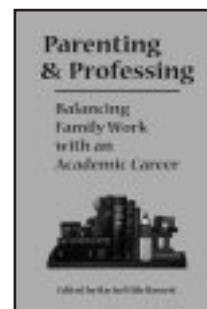
The one advantage of having a group of women with degrees in literature contributing their stories to a volume such as this is that they paint beautiful pictures with words.

I particularly liked the stories with a positive and/or humorous spin such as the ones by Loretta Holloway ("Today she's just a mamma"), Michelle Franci-Donnay ("Elemental MoThEr") and Heather Bouwman ("Great expectations: An academic's crash course in parenting").

So, if you have an afternoon free and you want to put your own life into perspective—this is the book for you.

If, however, you expect that this book will further your ability to do research in this area, I would recommend you look elsewhere. **AM**

Reviewed by Linda Duxbury



Parenting and Professing: Balancing Family Work with an Academic Career, edited by Rachael Hile Bassett (Vanderbilt University Press, July 2005) 280 pp.

Linda Duxbury, PhD., is a professor at the Sprott School of Business, Carleton University.

Corporate restructuring A THREAT TO WOMEN'S ADVANCES IN ACADEME

As someone who came quite late to the academy I have always found the organization of work in universities to be a little strange.

The first time I walked into a classroom at the University of Regina, with no teaching experience and no graduate degree, no one supervised what I was doing.

If I hadn't asked for some help I would have been on my own. No one even observed the two undergraduate political science courses I was teaching. I was frankly perplexed how any operation could run with such a high premium on individualism.

More than 10 years later and now working full-time at Ryerson University, I have a better idea but still think of the academy as pretty close to the opposite of how feminists might organize an institution.

So it was with more than considerable interest that I picked up *Inside Corporate U: Women in the Academy Speak Out* edited by Marilee Reimer.

In the best feminist fashion, Reimer starts with her experience of Treasury Board attempting to stop the publication of her article assessing a universal job evaluation system being proposed by Treasury Board.

The article had been peer reviewed and accepted for publication but was delayed three years because the object of the study objected.

I began to wonder whether the suppression of critical and feminist research was a common occurrence in the university and wondered if the changes within the financial organization of universities were affecting the support and recognition of feminist researchers in the academy.

This collection of essays only partly answers the question.

It is well known and cited here that education is the one location in society where women's advancement has been stellar.

Yet the appointment of women academics is lagging behind according to Reimer. While advancement had been impressive it

appears to be slowing down.

One of the reasons is that full-time male professors are being replaced by part-time and contract faculty, mostly women. So it is the restructuring of corporate U that slows down the advancement of women—just like in society as a whole.

Dorothy Smith sets the context in her opening essay.

"Ironically, as women were gaining ground in these institutions with varying degrees of success, the independence of

Women studies programs do not appeal to corporate Canada

these institutions from the rule of capital was being progressively undermined."

She points to the attack of right-wing think tanks on the legitimacy of "liberal" academy but argues that changes in accountability that affect the work of academics may be more effective than the direct attacks.

There follow numerous examples of the increasing influence of corporations and the corporate agenda on the independence of universities but most of the articles see an indirect impact on women through restructuring.

One of the direct effects, argues Reimer in her own essay, is the disadvantaging of women's studies programs that don't hold much appeal for corporate Canada.

When universities are more concerned with outside funding—whether corporate or government research funding—the needs of the university community itself, including the students, take a back seat.

Women's studies got established in Canada because feminist scholars or students set up the courses. They were tremendously popular. In today's university environment described in *Corporate U*, it's hard to imagine a repeat of that innovative process.

Reviewed by Judy Rebick



Inside Corporate U: Women in the Academy Speak Out, edited by Marilee Reimer, Sumach Press, 2004, 312 pp.

One of the more interesting essays in the collection is a critical look at equity programs, by Diane Meaghan.

She fears that equity programs established in response to feminist analyses of the chilly climate on campuses towards women and people of colour are now being turned against women's studies. They are characterized as being discriminatory against men or certain religions.

Her personal story here is fairly harrowing.

Another outstanding essay is a feminist

critique of intellectual property rights by Claire Polster who argues that the privatization of knowledge through Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is threatening the feminist project by removing vital knowledge from the commons.

The essays in *Corporate U* form a persuasive argument that the advances feminists have made in the academy are seriously threatened by the corporate restructuring going on in academe.

Nevertheless there is cause for hope.

Claire Polster talks about the importance of resisting IPR.

Others show that universities can resist the incursion of corporate values and structures—and many do.

It seems clear to me that feminists should join the student and faculty movement against the incursion of the corporate agenda into the universities. *Corporate U* is an important contribution to the discussion. **AM**

Judy Rebick is the Sam Gindin Chair in Social Justice and Democracy at Ryerson University and a long-time feminist. Most recently she is the author of Ten Thousand Roses: The Making of a Feminist Revolution (Penguin 2005).



A compendium of unusual and interesting research findings unearthed by Canadian researchers.

Feel like an imposter? You're not alone: Diane Zorn, a Philosophy professor at York University, says it is common for university faculty to suffer from what she terms "imposter phenomenon". Imposter phenomenon is "an internal experience of intellectual phoniness common among high-achieving people." In her research, Zorn came across a professor two years from retirement who still "lived in fear that a student or colleague would discover she didn't know what she was talking about."

Discovery of 'mammoth' proportions: Woolly mammoths may have gone out with the Ice Age, but a McMaster University geneticist has extracted DNA from a well-preserved mammoth specimen that could tell us a lot about this extinct creature. Hendrik Poinar is working with genome researchers from Penn State University and the American Museum of Natural History to map the DNA he extracted—a project that will take about a year yet could yield the story of a lifetime. "To acquire the genome of an extinct species is a rare feat," Poinar told the Hamilton Spectator (December 19, 2005). "With this level of genetic data we can begin to look at genes to determine what makes a mammoth a mammoth. ... more importantly, our discovery means that recreating extinct hybrid animals is theoretically possible."

Is a cigar just a cigar? Women's attitudes toward math can be influenced by even a brief exposure to feminine words such as lipstick, pink, and purse, concludes a study conducted by social psychologists Jennifer Steele (York University) and Nalini Ambady (Tufts University). Undergraduate students who were subjected to computerized flashes of feminine words for less than a second expressed a greater interest in the Arts over Mathematics. Yet those primed with male terms such as football, cigar, and tough expressed an equal preference for Arts and Math.

Mouse diet the next great fad? Mice may be suckers for cheese, but a group of Ottawa researchers have discovered a gene that keeps the annoying rodents slim and healthy. Mice who lack a gene called p107 are thinner than normal mice because, without the gene, any excess food they eat is turned into heat. Dr. Michael Rudnicki, director of molecular medicine at the Ottawa Health Research Institute, says his team of scientists is considering ways of using the discovery to help humans treat obesity.

Mirror, mirror on the wall ... Who is the fairest of them all? According to a new strength training study, men's body image is easily improved if they feel more muscular, if they notice their pants are looser, or if they simply look in the mirror and like what they see. Perception is everything. Not so for women. Kathleen Martin Ginis, associate professor of kinesiology at McMaster University, says women need to be convinced with hard, cold facts: they need to know how much weight they lost and how much muscle they gained before they start to feel better about their body image.

That old familiar tune: Can't get that song out of your head? Queen's University researchers say there may be such a thing as "musical memory" that makes a song linger in patients suffering memory loss—even those with advanced Alzheimer's disease. Jacalyn Duffin, from the History of Medicine, and Lola Cuddy, from Psychology, studied an 84-year-old woman with severe Alzheimer's disease and discovered she could sing a familiar tune without error, despite severe problems with memory, language, and cognition. The researchers conclude Alzheimer's may not go after the brain region that stores musical abilities.

E-mail your research findings to mrosenfeld@ocufa.on.ca.



Generation Next faces TOUGHER REALITY THAN BOOMERS

Governments have a penchant for speaking in superlatives.

The Ontario Liberal government has billed its cumulative five-year \$6.2 billion investment in post-secondary education as “historic ... the largest in 40 years”.

Similarly, its Conservative predecessor flagged the SuperBuild funding program as “the largest public capital investment in Ontario’s colleges and universities” in more than three decades.

For both governments, the intention was to signal a return to a dramatic and welcomed period of government-assisted growth in Ontario’s universities and colleges.

The conventional wisdom has been to view the current expansion of higher education in Ontario as comparable to the 1960s. But is it truly the case? Are faculty now being hired by universities faced with the same opportunities and conditions as the Baby Boomers recruited 40 years ago?

A little history is instructive.

The 1960s and early 1970s witnessed unprecedented growth.

Between 1960 and 1975, full-time university enrolment quintupled.

Faculty hiring tracked the increase in enrolment, with the number of full-time university teachers increasing almost five-fold during the period.

This hiring was underpinned by a dramatic growth in operating funds provided through government grants and fees.

University operating expenditures were 12 times greater in 1975 than 15 years earlier. Provincial operating grants were almost 25 times greater and accounted for more than 70 per cent of university operating revenue.

Public spending during these years was not accompanied by extensive government control, as Paul Axelrod noted in *Scholars and Dollars*, his now classic study of the period.

Nor were there many constraints on the hiring of faculty.

The need for university teachers was acute

and the law of supply and demand ruled.

Appointment procedures were often *ad hoc* and tenure-track staff could be hired without a doctorate or publishing record in hand.

Significant numbers were imported from the United States and Britain and the process continued as newly-hired faculty drew on their international recruiting networks.

The presence of these increasing numbers of new recruits also affected the make-up of Ontario’s professoriate. Almost 60 per cent were in their 30s or younger in 1970. And they were predominantly white and male.

Fast forward to the present.

The Ontario government’s promised 35 per cent increase in higher education operating grants over the next five years will allow universities to ramp up faculty hiring.

And over the past five years, the number of full-time faculty at Ontario universities increased by approximately 10 per cent after a 15 per cent decline in the previous decade.

But context is everything.

Unlike the 1960s, faculty hiring has lagged far behind the growth in enrolment. The average student-faculty ratio in Ontario universities—24:1—is double what it was in the 1960s and early 1970s.

This ratio also masks a reality faced by both recently hired and long-serving faculty—the penchant for corralling students into increasingly larger classes.

As Michael Doucet has written in a recent study of Ontario universities’ standing in the annual *Maclean’s* university rankings survey, about half of first- and second-year students at comprehensive and medical/doc-

torial universities are in classes of at least 100. The percentage of upper year undergraduate students in classes of more than 100 has also grown over the past few years.

There is no master plan in the works to address this situation.

It is estimated that Ontario universities would need to hire 11,000 faculty by the end of the decade to accommodate impending large-scale retirements, enrolment growth, and to reduce the student-faculty ratio by one-third.

Based on current information, government projections do not envision anywhere near that number being hired, nor is the magnitude of public funding—now less than 50 per cent of university operating income—adequate to make that happen.

The erratic flow of public funding has also made the rational planning of university hiring much more difficult.

Unlike the past, the hiring of tenure-track faculty is more rigorous and time-consuming. It is not the “just-in-time” process that some government officials envision. It is also more sensitive to equity concerns than in the previous era.

At the same time, the reliance on seasonal and part-time faculty as a stop-gap strategy of coping with funding cuts and planning uncertainties is more pronounced.

In many ways, the 1960s was a golden period in the province’s history of higher education.

We have moved on. Generation Next—entering an academy where faculty are more diverse and older than those encountered by Baby Boomers hired many decades ago—face a world that is more demanding and uncertain.

Government support for higher education will not return us to the heady days of the past. The question now becomes—will it take us to a more optimistic future? **AM**

Mark Rosenfeld is Editor-in-Chief of Academic Matters and Associate Executive Director of OCUFA.