

RAQnews



President's Annual Report 2018

This has been an eventful year for RAQ and its council has accomplished much. One of the results of Council members' activities is a growth in membership as well as a renewed interest in expanding RAQ's presence in both the Queen's community and in the community at large.

The most significant event this year has been the 50% increase in the Provost's Office grant to RAQ and to the Monday Morning Forums, an amount that will allow us to do more for our members – and the university. The very exciting news about our Bursary is that our first Bursary recipient has been named and was presented at the AGM. We hope that members (and others) will continue to donate to the RAQ Bursary so that we can contribute to other students' academic experience for many years beyond our original mandate.

RAQ representatives have had numerous meetings with the university administration to foster our members' interests; for example, we've had several meetings with the VP Finance to discuss the status of our pension and benefits and to advocate for various enhanced services for retirees. The Pension & Benefits Committee continues to work with monitoring pension changes and in advocating for better benefits. To encourage currently retiring Queen's personnel to join our organization, the Membership Committee has also negotiated a presence at meetings of prospective retirees organized by Queen's Human Resources and has produced a promotional brochure to distribute there and elsewhere.

Council has been characterized by energy, enthusiasm, and hard work; members work together, sharing ideas between council meetings and are effective in making RAQ an important resource for Queen's retirees and a valued support for Queen's. The Membership Committee continues to advocate for retiree discounts at various venues and for services from the university. The Communication Committee is always seeking ways to enhance the different ways we have of keeping members up-to-date. Council members Sue Miklas and Cheryl Descent have been engaged in a project to review both our constitution and our policies to develop a handbook for RAQ and to bring our HR policies into line with Queen's Best Practices. Council will be reviewing the constitution in the coming months. The gift of a discarded computer from the Smith School of Business will make RAQ more efficient and our Office Administrator less frustrated. As most of you know, a "discarded" computer from the Business School is close to a "new" one for us.

Among our goals for the coming year are an increase in RAQ membership; improved communication with and advocacy for members; a strengthened relationship with Queen's and other organizations that foster issues important to our members; and increased involvement of members in our community and activities.

Eleanor Rogers, RAQ president

Pension & Benefits Report; UPP Update

Over the last year RAQ has continued to receive briefings on the progress of the University Pension Project (UPP) from Queen's Administrators. During the past year, negotiations of final plan design and governance were assumed by Queen's University, the University of Toronto, and the University of Guelph, represented by administrators from the three on one side of the table, and the three faculty associations and the Steelworkers' Union on the other. This allowed negotiations to proceed rapidly, with the ability of other universities to join later. Before a new Plan can proceed, each participating university must engage in a consent process with its local Plan members, including pensioners. Current employees can consent and pensioners will have the opportunity to object.

The rules for conducting the consent/objection process are set out in the Pension Benefits Act. Information about the proposal and about consent/objection rules must be distributed by each university, with time given for the information to be absorbed and for questions to be answered before the deadline. It is hoped that the information packages may be assembled and approved for distribution in the first quarter of 2019, with 90 days for consent/objection to follow. RAQ will ask for a special open meeting to be held for pensioners, in addition to those held for employees.

How would moving from the QPP to a new UPP affect *us* (that is, retirees currently receiving a Queen's pension)? The UPP Website (<http://www.universitypension.ca>) FAQs gives this answer:

"For anyone who is retired under a current university plan, there would be no impact on the amount of monthly pension due to the transition to a JSPP. Retirees would not be affected by any contribution increases and would receive the same cost-of-living increases after conversion that they would under their current plan."

We interpret this as an assurance that we will continue to have the "no decrease" guarantee and that future increases would continue to be calculated using the same multi-year average of investment returns that Queen's uses for our current pensions. The UPP's negotiated terms on changes of contributions of employees and their universities or cost-of-living increases would apply only to contributions made after the UPP came into effect. Once we changed from being employees receiving salaries to retired pensioners, contributions to our pension accounts ended.

* * *

As those who follow financial news will know, activity in investment markets has been very volatile, especially since the beginning of 2018. For the seven months from September 1st to March 31st, the QPP investment returns have risen by 4.45%. We hope there will be better results in the remaining months of this pension year but there are no guarantees.

* * *

Queen's has been conducting a Benefits Review with representatives of all employee groups. Human Resources has asked RAQ to provide a list of potential retiree benefits beyond those already included. Any such benefits would have to be paid entirely by individual retirees wishing to acquire them. When Queen's invites insurers to bid to become the Queen's Benefits provider, they would be asked to also give prices for optional retiree benefits. We could then compare Queen's prices with those available to RAQ members through RAQ's membership in CURAC.

As always, the Committee welcomes questions and comments from members of RAQ.

*George Brandie (Chair), Chris Chapler, Bill Forbes, Bruce Hutchinson,
Sue Miklas and Joyce Zakos, RAQ pension and benefits committee*

RAQ Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held April 23, 2018, at the University Club. Guests enjoyed a fine lunch and were most fortunate to hear from two thoughtful and inspiring speakers: Katherine Tate, the first recipient of our RAQ Bursary; and Stephanie Simpson, Executive Director of Queen's Human Rights and Equity Offices and the University Advisor on Equity. Members also had an opportunity to thank Barbara Tait, RAQ's office administrator, who retires effective May 1st, and to welcome Cheryl Descent, who will be taking over from Barbara. More on the AGM appears elsewhere in RAQnews.

Sue Miklas, RAQ Vice-President (L) and Stephanie Simpson, Queen's University Advisor on Equity



Katherine Tate, RAQ Bursary Recipient



Eleanor Rogers, RAQ President

RAQ Members Making a Difference: Alzheimer Café in Kingston

My involvement with the Alzheimer Café began in 2015 when a group from St. James' Anglican church in Kingston began to consider what role the church could play in supporting parishioners and the local community who were dealing with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Following a Webinar on the topic and several rounds of discussion a member of the group suggested an "Alzheimer Café". The first such event was developed by a Dutch psychologist, Dr. Bere Miesen, in 1997 to create a social gathering that would support people with dementia and their carers. These soon began to be duplicated in other countries around the world (<https://www.alz.co.uk>).

The mission statement for our outreach program is "...to provide a legitimate, structured support group for care partners, family and friends, and people with Alzheimer's or other forms of memory loss." We adver-

tise the event in the local community, inviting all those who wish to be more aware of or be educated about dementia issues. The Café format involves music, a period for socializing, a speaker and lots of food throughout the two-hour event. We begin with musical entertainment which usually includes a sing-along portion, some social time and then a 20-minute speaker, followed by an opportunity for questions. Speakers have included experts in pharmacy, occupational therapy, the Alzheimer Society activities, care partners of and individuals living with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia.

We have a Steering Committee that meets before a Café and sets out our volunteer roles as greeters, servers, set-up and take down of equipment, food production, and

putting up seasonal decorations. My current role involves general co-ordination of the event, arranging for musical entertainment (a local group, musicians, choirs, etc.) and speakers, as well as advertising. The first Café took place in March 2016 and the second in October of that year. Based on positive feedback and a successful turnout, we have continued to organize these events. Approximately five are now held each year—three in the first part of the year and following a summer break, two in the fall/winter period.

Since my retirement from Queen's University's School of Nursing, I have been involved in a number of community activities, but the Alzheimer Café is a volunteer activity that I have found to be especially valuable for the community, one which is dealing with the growing issue of dementia. On a personal level, it has also been a very rewarding activity and I have learned a lot about dementia and the ways in which I can help to support members of my community who deal with dementia on a daily basis.

For more information on participating in or helping with future Alzheimer Cafés, RAQ members can contact Cathie Perkin directly at catherine@stjameskingston.ca or at (613) 328-6033.

Cathie Perkin, RAQ member

RAQ Members Making a Difference: Keeping a Language Alive

We regularly read in the news about the loss of ecological diversity. Rich and varied ecosystems are being replaced by 'monocultures', devoted to a single species, usually one seen as more economically valuable. It is often only later that we measure the full impact of this change in terms of lost species.

Work is being done to reverse the trend by protecting ecologically fragile areas, by replanting native species, and by the establishment of a clearer and better balance between the natural world and our increasingly technological one. There is hope that we can yet arrive at an acceptable state of affairs.

There is another loss of ecological diversity though that we rarely hear about: the loss of languages. As with environmental loss, language loss is complex and includes loss of speakers and the loss of contexts where the language is used.

The loss of a language has many hidden effects. Along with music and art, language is one of the primary vehicles for maintaining and sharing a culture. In English, think of all the background cultural information carried by apparently simple words like "holidays", "mother-in-law", or "dessert". It is easy to see how the loss of a language often goes hand in hand with the loss of a culture.

Of the 7000 or so known living languages in the world today, it is estimated that around 20% are in trouble. These are languages where the parents may speak a heritage language but they are not necessarily transmitting it to their children. There are also 13% that are in more serious trouble as the adults of childrearing age no longer speak the language and are not capable of transmitting it directly to their children. Without sustained intergenerational transmission, these languages face a demographic inevitability as speakers grow older and the generations pass.

Most of the indigenous languages in Canada are in serious trouble. There are fewer and fewer first-language speakers and most children are not learning their languages. One of these languages is Kanyen'kéha (pronounced 'gan-yan-geh-ha') or Mohawk. Kanyen'kéha is one of the Iroquoian languages originally spoken in the area around the Great Lakes. There were several migrations in the 17th and 18th centuries as European religious and political conflicts manifested themselves in North America. Later, with the American Revolution, the ancestors of the local Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte were dislocated and were granted land via Treaty 3½, also known as the Simcoe Deed of 1793.

At Tyendinaga, Tsi Tyónnheht Onkwawén:na Language and Cultural Centre has partnered with Queen's to offer four university-level courses that will complete a new Certificate in Mohawk Language and Culture.



Storytime at Kawenna'ón:we Immersion Program

...continued on page 12

RAQ AGM Guest Speaker

Stephanie Simpson's Talk: "Are Things Getting Better? Reflections on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Queen's."

I am the University Advisor on Equity. I am the University Advisor on Equity.

This is a mantra I still find myself repeating in the few spare moments I have these days since taking this new position. It's been three months now and I should probably just get on with it, I know. But I find myself repeating the words in part because I can't believe my good luck – how tremendously fortunate I am to have found work in an area that I am deeply passionate about; to be compensated for service to my community and the chance to grow intellectually and spiritually in my field of interest. It's a dream job and I am grateful for the opportunity to work with an outstanding Human Rights and Equity Office team.

I repeat the obvious, that I am the University Advisor on Equity, to remind myself also of the great responsibility I have to the communities I serve. That I am privileged now to sit at tables and be part of conversations that are not open to everyone. That it is my job to ensure that people who have been marginalized are heard and, when I am the only one able to do so, to speak with both authority and humility on behalf of those who will themselves not have the opportunity to speak.

RAQ was extremely fortunate to have Stephanie Simpson, University Advisor on Equity at Queen's, as our Guest Speaker at the AGM in April. Ms Simpson's candid and thought-provoking talk, and the ensuing discussion, provided a stark picture and honest assessment of the current state of equity, diversity and inclusion at Queen's, and the many challenges still ahead for the university. With Ms Simpson's permission, we have reproduced her talk here.

Lastly, I repeat the obvious because my path towards this field was not obvious. Seeing myself as the University Advisor on Equity is like looking at myself through the other side of a mirror. It's a little weird. This is me but a different me. A me that 30 years ago I didn't know was possible. Thirty years ago, on the other side of the mirror, I was an undergraduate at Queen's University. I had grown up in Mississauga and had come here with intentions of training to be a high school teacher. I was an English/History medial. I had made it into the very competitive Concurrent Education program. I was doing fine academically. And, by and large, I was miserable. It would be hard

for me to put my finger on exactly why. To say that it was because I had experienced overt incidents of racism at Queen's and in Kingston was part of the story. However, it couldn't have been the whole story as this was not the first time in my life that I had experienced such things (yes, racism happens in Toronto). No, I think that what most deeply affected me was a profound

...continued on page 14

A photograph of Stephanie Simpson, a Black woman with short dark hair, smiling. She is wearing a black turtleneck sweater. The background is a colorful, abstract mural with various figures and patterns in shades of red, orange, yellow, and purple.

Stephanie Simpson, Queen's University
Advisor on Equity

RAQ Bursary Update

RAQ is thrilled to introduce Katherine Tate, the recipient of our first RAQ Bursary. Katherine joined us at the AGM and following are her own words on the impact the bursary will have on her studies:

"I am interested in social justice. The discourses which shape our social world influence who has power and who does not, and that directly affects the challenges that individuals face just to survive.

After I graduate I intend to pursue a Master's Degree in social work.

This award has helped to ease my transition to full-time studies as a mature student. It has allowed me to focus on academics rather than worrying about my employment.

Thank you very much for your support. This award has reduced my worries about finances so that I could focus on my academics.

As a mature student, I understand the desire to make sure that money that is donated goes where it will make a difference. This money has helped me to pursue my dream of a university degree and I intend to "pay it forward" to help other students do the same."

Katherine Tate, RAQ bursary recipient



(L to R): Diane Duttie, Katherine Tate, Eleanor Rogers

Please Consider Making a Donation to the RAQ Bursary

Looking for one thing sometimes leads to finding another. In the fall of 2014 a chance inquiry into how other CURAC member associations handled newsletter distribution by then-RAQnews-editor Diane Duttie morphed into a discussion of how to increase financial support for students at member universities. Diane thought "Why not us?" and RAQ Council supported the idea. Over 2015-2016, a small committee (Diane, George Brandie, Bruce Hutchinson and Patrick Oosthuizen) worked with Queen's Advancement office to create the RAQ Bursary – just in time for Queen's 175th Anniversary celebrations.

Today, the RAQ Bursary has surpassed its initial fundraising goal of \$12,500 (enough to make 5 awards of \$2,500 over the next 5 years) and is now actively soliciting donations to enable RAQ to extend the Bursary beyond 2022. To achieve this goal, we need to maintain a minimum account balance of \$2,500. Please consider making the RAQ Bursary one of your charitable causes, if you are able, so that we can ensure a lasting contribution to Queen's and its students. **To make a donation, visit the RAQ website and follow the links:** <http://www.queensu.ca/retirees/about-raq/raq-bursary>

Thank you for helping a student have the invaluable gift of education.

Some Past RAQ Activities: Lunchtime Guest Series

RAQ's Lunchtime Guest Series is a popular new collection of speakers from the broader Queen's community on varied topics in an informal lunch-hour setting. Recent talks since the last edition of RAQNews have been on topics as diverse as healthcare in Canada to trekking around Iceland.

On Thursday, February 15, Dr. George Brandie spoke on *"Travels in Iceland"*. Since his retirement from Chemical Engineering, he has been active in RAQ and in the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada. He visited western and southern Iceland in 2015 and used remarkable pictures and stories from that tour to illustrate highlights of travel in Iceland.



Our March 20 guest was Dr. Duncan Sinclair, former Dean of Medicine and Vice-Principal (Health Sciences) at Queen's and a major leader of healthcare reform in Canada. He led a lively discussion on *"Our Healthcare System?"*. Pointing out that we really do not have a healthcare 'system,' he introduced a plethora of issues and ideas drawn

from his experience and reflections on the current state of health care. One observation: care is woefully inadequate in areas of prevention and in long term management, and rural and remote areas suffer particularly.



On Thursday April 26, Dr. Mike Condra, retired Director of Health, Counselling and Disability

Services at Queen's, spoke on *"Mental Health for Postsecondary Students—Why the Concern?"*. Mike is very familiar to the Queen's Community for his decades of caring, compassionate service that was particularly devoted to mental health. He is a leader in mental health awareness and education and a tireless advocate in matters involving mental health and well-being. Mike gave reassurance that overall student mental health appeared to be no worse at the present time than in the recent past, but underlined the importance of early recognition and treatment for those suffering from serious pathologies and emphasized the importance of compassionate caring by all people involved with students undergoing stress.



Sandra Olney, RAQ events coordinator

The RAQ Lunchtime Series aims to take advantage of the extensive knowledge and expertise found among us. Please contact Sandra Olney (sandra.olney@queensu.ca) with your ideas and suggestions for future topics or speakers. Look for the Lunchtime Guest Series to resume in September, 2018. You need not be a member of the University Club (or RAQ) to attend – so plan to bring a friend and join us for a sandwich lunch and discussion of an interesting topic.

RAQ Welcomes New Members

Habiba Allidina (Human Resources) and Sultan Allidina; Diane Batchelor (School of Nursing); Mary Ann Emmons (ITServices); Carol Kavanaugh (Faculty of Arts and Science); Deborah Stirton-Massey (Department of History); George M. Merry (Medicine); Ainslie Thomson (University Libraries); Carol Wallace (School of Graduate Studies); Tracy Ware (Department of English); John and Marilyn Whiteley (U of Manitoba).

Some Past RAQ Activities: Monday Morning Forums

Where and How We Age in Ontario in 2018

On an icy Monday February morning, a relatively small but hardy group of Queen's Retirees gathered at the University Club to listen to a thought-provoking lecture by Dr. Mark H. Lachman. Dr. Lachman, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geriatric Psychiatry at the University of Toronto and an Ontario Coroner, was returning to Queen's to share his experience and expertise on aging and his observations on the challenges facing our rapidly growing "senior" population. His presentation was followed by a lively question and answer session. Dr. Lachman engaged the audience with a series of stories and anecdotes, accompanied by facts and statistics, to convey his messages about vulnerability.

He talked about the danger of fraud faced by a significant segment of our population, quoting a Toronto detective describing the internet as "the portal to Hell for older people". He cautioned that elderly people, many unfamiliar with complex privacy settings, are targeted through personal profiles posted on various websites, such as Ancestry and Facebook – retired university professors in particular being vulnerable to be contacted through their LinkedIn profiles – and persuaded with compelling, but fraudulent, stories that convince the listener to transfer funds to, for example, help a relative in trouble.

He spoke about protecting oneself from dementia through means that help promote good physical health as well, namely not smoking, eating and sleeping well, getting exercise and maintaining an active social life, adding good genes are very helpful (much of our future is a matter of chance). Evidence shows that brain training exercises are not transferable to other aspects of life, one may become a Sudoku expert, but that will not protect cognitive functioning as our brains and bodies age.

Dr. Lachmann also expressed concern that there are few organized formal support networks and services in Ontario for the aged and an increasing number of people, commonly but not exclusively immigrant women, are living

Jo-Anne Brady reports on a selection of this past winter's Monday Morning Forum talks. Jo-Anne has a committed interest in equitable access to healthcare in Ontario and in particular the social determinants influencing healthy populations, including education. Jo-Anne has been an avid volunteer with KCHC Pathways to Education since its Kingston inception in 2010 and also volunteers with the Southern Frontenac Community Services Corporation. Most recently, she has been appointed as a member of the South East Local Health Integration Network (SELHIN) Board of Directors. Jo-Anne is keen to participate with RAQ whenever she can find the time, and has enthusiastically attended several speaking events sponsored for RAQ members.

alone, in poverty, lacking adequate nourishment, isolated and terrified to go out. Our health care "system" is not presenting a solution and community social service organizations are striving to pick up the slack. He personally feels some optimism that the reorganization of health care in 2017 (Bill 41) may provide some solutions through providing a continuum of health and living support from acute hospital treatment to community and home care. We can only hope that his optimism is well founded and Ontario will be able to effectively deliver seamless care in what is a staggeringly complex environment of multiple health-service providers and a vast array of "stakeholders" including patients of all ages.

Dr. Lachmann pointed to a couple of examples of models that truly integrate care for the aging:

- PACE – The Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly, begun in San Francisco (<http://pacepartners.net/what-is-pace/>)
- O'Connor House in Toronto (<http://www.woodgreen.com/ServiceDetail.aspx?id=265>)

...continued on page 11

Announcements & Upcoming Events

Barbara Tait is retiring from the Office Administrator post for health reasons. We're all grateful for the work she's done for RAQ, sometimes when she's in great pain, and for her ability to keep up with so many varied



Cheryl Descent (L) and Barbara Tait at the AGM

tasks. Her ability to get contributions from various parts of the university is remarkable – especially her dealing with the Campus Bookstore. The April AGM was the last meeting she attended, and I know you all join me in wishing her well.

We're fortunate that Cheryl Descent (formerly known as Cheryl Gross) has taken over as Office Administrator as of May 1. Cheryl arrived at Queen's in 1986 working for the Department of Athletics, initially as its Sports Information Officer for nine seasons, followed by seven more years coordinating the Intramural Sports Program. In 2002 Cheryl joined the CEC as coordinator of the Volunteer Patient Program before retiring in 2015. In 2017, Cheryl joined the RAQ Council. Cheryl holds a Master's degree in Physical Education, Sports Communication concentration from the University of Iowa and a BSc in Physical Education from Springfield College, Massachusetts. She will be a great resource for all of us.

Eleanor Rogers, RAQ president

Heads up re our upcoming tour of the Innovation and Wellness Centre at Queen's

We hope to arrange a RAQ tour of the Innovation and Wellness Centre (see architect's rendering lower right) in September and will keep members posted with regard to a date and other details as the information becomes available.

The Innovation Centre will host expanded engineering facilities, experiential learning spaces, and state-of-the-art interdisciplinary research laboratories.

The Wellness Centre will provide facilities for the spectrum of wellness services including health and sexual assault counselling, and mental-health-related services.

The co-location of innovation and wellness services, a recommendation of the Principal's Commission on Mental Health, will blend academic, recreational and other student life activities, and will emphasize the important relationships that connect mental health, physical well-being, and academic success.

Please Join Us June 18th for the Elbow Lake Picnic!

The annual RAQ picnic will be held on Monday, June 18 at the Elbow Lake Environmental Education Centre at the main pavilion. Outside the pavilion there are picnic tables, a large patio, and a wonderful view of Elbow Lake, which is only meters away. The site is very user-friendly for attendees who have mobility issues. Look for the registration form and further information about the picnic from RAQ.



Continued from page 9

Overall Dr. Lachmann concluded his lecture on an uplifting note by saying we are 15-20-30 years behind where we need to be to support aging, but “it’s certainly changing for the better”. RAQ members interested in the topic of aging and dying well may also be interested in reading Being Mortal, by Atul Gawande (Doubleday Canada, 2014).

* * *

The Crisis of Inequality

The 91st Monday Morning Forum in March hosted Dr. John R. Allen speaking gravely about The Crisis of Inequality from an economic perspective. Dr. Allen is Vice-President Emeritus and Professor of Economics Emeritus of the University of Regina, and perhaps best known at Queen’s through his active involvement with the Queen’s Institute of Intergovernmental Affairs, serving as Associate Director and Interim Director. He was appointed a Fellow of the Institute in 2010.

Dr. Allen is convinced that a crisis in inequality exists and is not being well addressed. Presenting evidence of increasing inequality in all of the World’s advanced economies, Dr. Allen cautioned that economic inequality is damaging to social cohesion and undermines democratic process. Data cited from the United States in particular, demonstrates that over 80% of households have experienced flat or declining incomes from 2005 and the top 0.01% of earners double their income every 4.8 years ... “the higher the rate of income you enjoy, the more rapidly your income outpaces the rest.” He referenced the observation of Louis Brandeis, associate justice on the Supreme Court of the United States from 1916 to 1939, that democracy is incompatible with great wealth concentrated among a few.

Dr. Allen focused on three primary causes of inequality: Technological Change, Globalization, and Institutional Changes – including what governments have and have not done. The problems we face today stem back to decisions made, or not made, in previous decades, at least in part dating back to the Bretton Woods international monetary conference at the conclusion of World War II and the evolution of open markets and global trade in the years hence. Allen argues that more has to be done to assist

those who lose as a result of globalization and technological change, that we need more active government, and that the financial sector in particular has to be re-regulated. The top one-percenters are identified as mostly male, well-educated and hard-working; Dr. Allen argues that they are the problem and must be part of the solution.

In his closing comments, Dr. Allen cited a reference by Walter Scheidel, (The Europe Center, Stanford University) ... “*Inequality never dies peacefully*” (<https://medium.com/freeman-sogli-institute-for-international-studies/inequality-never-dies-peacefully-525cec52b14f>)

and wryly concluded with a chilling portent “where there is revolution, there is hope” ... perhaps we can hope to look forward to a more peaceful solution?

Dr. Allen recommended several good reads on the subject of economic inequality:

- Joseph Stiglitz, chief economist Roosevelt Institute, Rewrite the Rules (<http://rooseveltinstitute.org/rewrite-rules/>) argues in part that the financial sector in the U.S. is under-regulated and subject to abuse and that the systematic undermining of trade unions has altered the balance of power from workers to management
- Thomas Piketty, Capital in the Twenty-First Century, argues capitalism will always create inequality, (Harvard University Press 2014)
- Jane Mayer, Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right, (Penguin Random House 2017)

Jo-Anne Brady, RAQ member

Watch for announcements of the 2018-19 Monday Morning Forum this fall.

Are you a RAQ member with an interesting project? Please tell us about it, so that we can consider sharing it with others in a future RAQnews publication. Send an email to RAQ@queensu.ca. We’d love to hear from you.

Continued from page 5

Today, there are seven Kanyen'kehá:ka communities spread across Ontario, Quebec and New York State: Six Nations, Tyendinaga and Wáhta, all in Ontario, Akwesasne in Ontario, Québec and New York State, Kahnawà:ke and Kanesatà:ke in Québec, and Ganienke which was established in New York State during the 1970's. Mohawk remained the dominant language of these communities into the 20th century, at which point for a variety of reasons, including residential schools and forced adoptions, it began serious decline in every instance. It is difficult to determine precisely the number of remaining speakers, but current estimates put the number between 1000 and 1500.

Community leaders recognized the problem as it was developing and early language efforts began at Six Nations almost 50 years ago. The community identified that the language was in decline and night classes started along with efforts to have Mohawk included in school curricula. Communities across the Mohawk Nation followed a similar pattern, beginning with individual classes and then adding other more effective methods of creating speakers.

Primary Immersion schools were started in many communities in the 1970's and 1980's. These were generally parent-led initiatives with community support that focused on cultural education in the language, but weren't always long lasting or very effective in transmitting the language. In the 1990's, communities shifted

their focus to creating adult speakers through full-time immersion programs. These programs have met with success and continue to develop as they create speakers. There have been four full-time adult immersion programs offered over the past two decades: Onkwawén:na Kentyóhkwa - Six Nations (1999); Shatiwennakarátats - Tyendinaga (2004-2016); Ratiwennahní:rats - Kahnawà:ke (2002); and the Akwesasne Cultural Restoration Program (2014).

As part of the efforts at Tyendinaga, Tsi Tyónnheht Onkwawén:na Language and Cultural Centre has partnered with Queen's to offer four university-level courses that will complete the Certificate in Mohawk Language and Culture. These will be offered in the community starting in the fall of 2018, concurrent with two courses already taught on the Queen's campus.

One of the challenges in teaching Kanyen'kéha stems from its structure. Unlike English, which has mostly simple words (think "cat", "run", "often") joined together in sometimes complex sentences, Kanyen'kéha is a 'polysynthetic' language, which means that it makes sometimes very complex words by combining many smaller parts which are themselves not words. It is often difficult for speakers of English to manipulate the many parts and pieces that must go together to make a

continued on page 13



Students having fun with the feather dance

Continued from page 12

complete word. Consider the relatively simple Mohawk word "yenskehkhonnyonni:re'." Its English meaning is somewhat more complex: "I am going to go there to cook things for her again." With this complexity, it is also difficult to produce language teaching software, especially for verbs, since the number of possible combinations is vast and can't reasonably be assembled by hand. As a result, most current software is relatively primitive.

This is where another facet of a university comes into play. A university is (or should be) a place where people who might never have worked together have the possibility of collaborating to develop something that individually they might not have been capable of producing. This particular story begins in the mid-1980's, when a computer scientist (Michael Levison) in the now School of Computing, and a linguist (Greg Lessard) in French Studies, began to develop software (ivi/Vinci, later VinciLingua) capable of generating language from a grammar. Output can be written text, spoken utterances, or images and may be quite complex. The software has been used in a variety of venues, including the teaching of French in Continuing and Distance Studies at Queen's. The story continues when in 2017, as part of its initiative to produce new courses, the Tyendinaga community engaged a Mohawk teacher from Queen's (Nathan Brinklow) and Greg Lessard (now a Queen's retiree) to produce language-teaching materials in Mohawk using VinciLingua. These materials will support teachers by providing practice and supplementary instruction that a classroom teacher simply doesn't have time to provide in the limited hours available.

This work in common has been going on for almost a year and is beginning to bear fruit. We are looking forward to seeing it in action.

All this also illustrates a point important to RAQ. As Queen's retirees, we have the luxury of a pension, the skills developed over our working life, and the time to make a contribution. All that's needed is the opportunity and the will.

Nathan Brinklow (Thanyehténhas), Queen's, and Greg Lessard, RAQ council member



Nathan baking banana bread with students in Kanyen'kéha

Nathan Brinklow (Thanyehténhas) is an adjunct instructor in Mohawk Language and Culture in Languages Literatures and Cultures at Queen's. Greg Lessard is an emeritus professor at Queen's and RAQ Council member. Greg continues to work in the School of Computing with Michael Levison on natural language generation and language teaching.

Continued from page 6

sense of isolation as one of very few racialized and black students to attend the school, as well as the sense and the observation that my experiences and the experiences of people from communities like mine did not matter here. And that, in fact, at a place like Queen's the very presence of people like myself was vulnerable to attack.

To put things into context, my arrival at Queen's followed an unprecedented wave of unrest re: human rights, equity and inclusion. Some of you may remember the tumultuous late 80s and 90s. Highly publicized incidents of racialized professors being harassed by students, people of African and Indigenous ancestry being mocked, physical and verbal attacks on members of the LGBTQ community, misogynistic and pro-rape signs in residences windows, and let's not

On the surface, equity-seeking community members are greater in numbers than they ever have been, and because of this alone we are starting to see more diversity of thought and activity on the campus. Has the *experience* of being here changed? I'm not sure.

forget the overt presence of white supremacist groups in the community and on campus itself.

These are examples of situations that made it to the media. They certainly are not inclusive of all of the everyday ways in which people are pushed to the side and told that they don't belong – Indigenous students denied services because they don't look Indigenous enough; people with disabilities trapped in buildings with no accessible detours or emergency routes; International students recruited to come to Queen's then told to be silent in class because their international

knowledge is irrelevant here; departments where women professionals and scholars never seemed quite able to meet the bar for recruitment or promotion. I could go on.

To our credit, Queen's was one of very few universities at the time to tackle the issue of inequality at post-secondary institutions head on. The early 90s for example saw the creation of a Principal's task force on race and race relations and the release of a report with a comprehensive set of recommendations on how to address racism in all areas of the university. Because of that report, released in 1991, my graduating class was the first generation of students to have the services of a Human Rights Office (the office I now lead) on Queen's campus.

This was a new era on campus. Change was in the air. There was hard work ahead to be done, but something was getting done. The beginnings of a "rights culture" in Canada, which had been reinvigorated by the coming into force of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was making its way, in a substantive manner, to university campuses. People became increasingly aware of their responsibilities and the fact that we all had a role to play in making things better. And things did get better. The language of equity and human rights was being used. There were offices to which people could confidentially bring their complaints. New courses addressing equity were being taught. Employment equity became a key priority for the university and newly unionized faculty.

Unfortunately, this wasn't the end of the University's concerns with respect to equity and human rights. Others wiser than myself had warned that it wouldn't be. Approximately ten years later, another important moment in the institution's history with respect to equity. Several racialized and Indigenous faculty resign from the University citing a hostile working climate. And another report was written.

A few years later, post 9-11, Muslim students and faculty are targeted in a series of hateful incidents including vandalism (evidence of arson) in their office and prayer space. Another set of campus-wide consultations took place. And another report was written. Not long afterwards, a faculty member was pushed off the sidewalk by students and subjected to racial taunts. And another set of campus-wide consultations take place. And another report was written. Very recently, Queen's students held an off-campus party at which their fellow students saw their ethnicities stereotyped and trivialized. And to this our racialized and Indigenous students said "No more reports". Something needs to happen now. Racism cannot wait. Inequity at Queen's for historically underrepresented and marginalized group must be a priority. And the University listened.

...continued on page 15

Continued from page 14

I am pleased to say that tremendous efforts are presently being made to ensure that history does not repeat itself and that there are no more reports responding to incidents of hate, systemic discrimination, and an unwelcoming climate at Queen's. As you may know, last year the Principal struck a Principal's Implementation Committee on Racism, Diversity and Inclusion (PICRDI) which focused exclusively on the actions needed to ensure that the recommendations of past reports were finally implemented.

<http://www.queensu.ca/principal/prorities/committee-on-racism-diversity-inclusion>

As a result of the PICRDI's work, "inclusion" is now formally part of the Deputy Provost's role on campus and responsibility for institutional change with respect to equity issues now rests in that portfolio. The senior administration has earmarked \$3 million to fund equity initiatives over the next 3 years. Like the faculty recruitment process, all staff hiring at Queen's must now involve equity and implicit bias awareness training for committee members. All academic units are now responsible for setting equity goals within their units through the use of our award winning Diversity and Equity Assessment and Planning (DEAP) Tool. There are new bursaries and awards available for equity-seeking students. These are just a few examples of the wonderful new things that are happening.

**It's a job that rests with all of us
— Making urgent and real the
fundamental aim of every equity
and human rights system in the
world: that everyone in the com-
munity be able to participate ful-
ly. That everyone experience a
sense of belonging.**

So when people ask me what it's like to do this work, to be the University Advisor on Equity, I can say, truly, that in my more than 30 years on this campus, there has never been a better time for equity and inclusion at Queen's than right now. And, again, I feel very fortunate to be part of this time. We have always had a remarkably active and engaged student body as well as staff and faculty members who have pushed for change. The difference now is that we also have an engaged senior leadership that is setting the tone, modelling change, properly resourcing the changes that need to be made, and applying an equity lens to all university operations. Equity, human rights, and reconciliation for Indigenous peoples are no longer expected to be accomplished once the "real work of the university" is done. Equity IS part of our core mission. And that is a huge shift in our institutional mentality that was not present a decade ago.

Yet, when asked if things are getting better... that's a different question, isn't it? It is too broad a question. Yes, as I've just outlined things are obviously better from a systems perspective. But I believe the answer to the question can only come from equity-seeking communities themselves.

On the surface, equity-seeking community members are greater in numbers than they ever have been, and because of this alone we are starting to see more diversity of thought and activity on the campus. Has the *experience* of being here changed? I'm not sure.

Recently I was speaking on a panel and there met a student who was in the concurrent education program. I was anxious to hear about what it was like to be a racialized student at Queen's today. She told our audience that her four years here had been a long and difficult road. That she was the only one. She spoke of lack of support. Racism she experienced in her practicum school. How much she was looking forward to leaving Queen's.

It gave me goosebumps. It saddened and frustrated me. It felt as though I was listening to my own story. 30 years later, looking at her, I was looking at me on the other side of the mirror, wondering when things would change and knowing that this was my job. It's a job that rests with all of us. Making urgent and real the fundamental aim of every equity and human rights system in the world: that everyone in the community be able to participate fully. That everyone experience a sense of belonging.

Stephanie Simpson, University Advisor on Equity

Selected Notes from University Senate 2017-18

Among the new academic programs approved: PhD in Health Quality (Nursing); PhD in Global Development Studies: MSc and PhD in Translational Medicine; MM in Artificial Intelligence (Smith School of Business), and a Graduate Diploma in Pharmaceutical and Health Care Management and Innovation (Nursing). Admission was temporarily suspended for a two year period to the Graduate Diploma in Pain Care (Nursing). A number of new undergraduate certificates were approved, including: French for Professionals; Mohawk Language and Culture; Mining Technologies; Urban Planning Studies; Global Action and Engagement; and Indigenous Languages and Cultures.

Winners of the annual Prizes for Excellence in Research were: Dr. Pascale Champagne, Civil Engineering; Dr. Liying Cheng, Education; Dr. Cathleen Crudden, Chemistry; Dr. Sam McKegney, English Language and Literature; Dr. Denis O'Donnell, Medicine. Dr. R. Ascough was named a 2018 3M National Teaching Fellow. Senate approved the Distinguished University Professors Program: <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/committees/academic-development-committee/distinguished-university-professors-program>

Preliminary full-time enrolment for 2017-18 was 23,696. The complete report is at: <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/116994/2017%20Enrolment%20Report.pdf?handle=B22121E8275444C69DE4D949FCF67D90>

Queen's had over 42,000 applications for a September 2018 program start. The short-term enrolment planning report is at: <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/125520/SEMG%20Short%20term%20Enrolment%20targets.pdf?handle=B88F3B71DAD84EBC9990B695F773F5E8>

The Agnes Etherington Art Centre received a donation of 23 stone-cut and stencil prints from communities in Nunavik from Margaret McGowan (Artsci '78). The donor has also created two bequests that will provide funds for a research studentship

in Indigenous art and for children and youth to participate in programs at the Art Centre. The prints should be on display sometime in 2019.

The annual report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Task Force noted that progress has been made on all 25 recommendations, including: Queen's joining the Pathways for Indigenous Learners collective to develop pathway programming and support services for Indigenous students, and expansion of the

Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre increasing capacity for ceremonies, a gathering area, study areas, and workshops.

Dr. D. Walker and Senator B. Crow have been appointed co-chairs of a working group to implement the recommendations made by the Commission on the Future of Public Policy at Queen's.

A team of Master of Planning students won the first Mayor's Innovation Challenge. The students will receive internships from the City, a \$10,000 budget and support from City staff to help implement their project to develop a multi-season cycling network in Kingston.

Queen's Aboriginal Council reported that it has worked on the development of a partnership with the School of Graduate Studies on research with Indigenous peoples, and on the installation of the first "Queen's Remembers" plinth that focuses on the history of the land on which the university sits.

A motion to remove the singing of God Save the Queen from the Queen's convocation program format was placed before Senate and defeated on a tied vote.

Queen's Aboriginal Access to Engineering (AAE) initiative, part of Queen's Engineering Outreach, has received \$230,000 federal funding to enhance outreach activities directed at Indigenous youth and STEM programming visits to local schools and First Nations communities.

Patrick H. Oosthuizen, RAQ Senate observer



RAQnews is published three times a year by the RAQ Communications Committee. Editor: Elaine McDougall. Proofreaders: George Brandie and Jane Emrich. Images and photographs used by permission of: George Brandie, Mardy Hewitt, Elaine McDougall, Sandra Olney, Queen's University (© Queen's University), Peter Schaub, Stephanie Simpson, Duncan Sinclair, Tsi Tyónnheht Onkwawén:na, and Creative Commons. Contributors as noted. Website: <http://www.queensu.ca/retirees/>. Webmaster: Don Robinson; Assistant Webmaster: Marianne Lamb. Addresses: RAQ, Mackintosh-Corry Hall, Room A412, Queen's University, Kingston, ON K7L 3N6. (613) 533-6986. RAQ@queensu.ca.