Here’s nothing like a provocative piece of art to get people talking, whether it’s an unsettling photo, a challenging play or a compelling painting. With the launch of the Arts and Social Work Research Initiative, the Faculty of Social Work will employ all of these media to share scholarly activity with the community, encourage dialogue on important issues and promote social change.

“More and more of our faculty and students have been making use of the arts in their projects recently, and we wanted to build on the momentum and create a catalyst for this kind of activity,” says Professor Adrienne Chambon, who founded the new initiative along with Professors Ernie Lightman and Izumi Sakamoto. This is the first time a school of social work has formalized the trend to incorporate an arts-based approach in research. “It’s a trend not only in social work, but also in the health sciences,” says Chambon. “Now it’s trickling down to the social sciences, and we’re establishing the Faculty as a leader in this emerging area.”

The initiative will bring together social work faculty members, students, community partners, alumni, artists and scholars from other disciplines to share in arts-related research projects, conferences and seminars. Though it has only been a few months since the official launch, it has already attracted significant interest from all of these groups.

Chambon says the appeal of art lies in its accessibility and ability to transcend the academic world. When researchers present their findings in journals, they reach a very narrow audience. Yet when research participants share their emotions and beliefs through a photograph or a poem, or when researchers translate their work into an image or a drama, the potential audience is unlimited. Art is uniquely suited to communicating research in social work, which often deals with painful or challenging aspects of life. “Art is a rich way for dealing with these experiences,” she says. “It makes them real. It can be very evocative and can galvanize people, making them feel much more connected to the issues.”

Three faculty members have already received funding for major arts-based research projects and several new collaborations with community partners are in the works. “We are giving visibility to something that many scholars and practitioners are already doing individually,” says Chambon. “Now it’s becoming a movement.”

continued on page 3
A panel representing internationally-educated social workers, employers, professional regulatory bodies and researchers will address such questions as:

● What barriers do these social workers face? What resources are available to help them?
● Will recent provincial government initiatives such as the Fair Access to Trades and Professions Act help?

PLEASE NOTE:
Annual General Meeting of Members 5:30 p.m.
Open to all. For further information and to RSVP please contact: fund.fsw@utoronto.ca or call 416-978-4437

In Memoriam: Dr. Beverley Antle

Dr. Beverley Antle, a tireless advocate for the social work profession and a respected researcher in pediatric health care and rehabilitation, died at age 47 in a car accident on Nov 11, 2006. Beverley was an adjunct associate professor at the Faculty of Social Work, where she taught courses on health, illness and disability, and integration of research and practice. She also supervised student practicum placements, supervised student theses and presented as a guest speaker in many classes. "Dr. Antle was a highly respected academic and researcher; an outstanding teacher, and a dear friend to many of us in the Faculty of Social Work and the profession," said Dean Cheryl Regehr.

As the Hospital for Sick Children, she was an academic and clinical specialist in the Department of Social Work and served as director of the Phenyketonuria (a chronic genetic disorder) Program in the Division of Clinical and Metabolic Genetics. As the first social scientist to hold a leadership position in metabolic genetics in Canada, Beverley developed innovative psychosocial interventions to enhance the quality of life of children with chronic health conditions and their families.

Beverley was also the president of the Ontario Association of Social Workers (OASW). To honour Beverley, the OASW has established a scholarship in her name at the Faculty of Social Work. For further information or to donate, please contact:

The Beverley Antle OASW Scholarship
Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto
246 Bloor Street West, Toronto, ON, M5S 1A1
Phone: 416-978-4337  Email: fund.fsw@utoronto.ca

Research Funding and Award Highlights

● The following faculty members recently received grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and the Social Work Education and Research Funding and Award Highlights

First MSW Career Fair a Resounding Success

On March 22 the Faculty of Social Work held its first Career Fair for Master of Social Work students. Over 50 representatives from approximately 30 community agencies attended, reflecting all four specializations in the MSW program: Children and their Families, Diversity and Social Justice, Mental Health and Health, and Social Work in Gerontology. The fair attracted 150 first- and second-year MSW students.

"It was an ideal opportunity for students to begin networking with key social work professionals, from executive directors to professional leaders of social work departments," says Cheryl Miriti, MSW Students Co-ordinator. "It was also an opportunity for agencies to network among each other and get updated on the things they’re doing in the field. Last but not least, it was a really nice way of bringing the community and the Faculty together for a day and strengthening that important relationship."

While most of the agencies at the Career Fair were from Toronto and the surrounding area, several international agencies were also in attendance. Each one of them indicated that they would return for next year’s fair. “Our plan is for it to be even bigger and better next year,” says Miriti.

Interested in Reconnecting with the Faculty?

The Alumni Association is currently enrolling new board members to get involved in various initiatives as well as Alumni and Faculty liaison. For more information, please contact us at alumni.fsw@utoronto.ca or 416-978-4437.

Message from the Dean

T he Faculty of Social Work is committed to staying ahead of the curve when it comes to advances in research and practice. We are not only for excellence in traditional scholarship and teaching, but also for innovation in research dissemination, community partnerships and international collaborations.

In this issue of Reach we highlight the new Arts and Social Work Research Initiative, a project that is breaking new ground through its unique approach to transferring research findings out of the academic world and into the wider community. This interdisciplinary initiative reinforces the Faculty’s ongoing efforts to make social work research relevant and accessible to the people it affects most directly—those who are part of vulnerable communities in our society.

To stay connected to the many communities we serve, we rely in large part on our dedicated faculty members and their wide-ranging research interests. They are constantly forging new research alliances, pursuing new areas of inquiry and taking a fresh perspective on longstanding social problems. This summer the Faculty of Social Work will welcome four new faculty members, and I am delighted to introduce you to them in these pages. We also present an overview of the leading-edge HIV prevention research of Professor Peter Newman, a faculty member who takes a truly global approach to his work.

Tomorrow’s social work leaders — our PhD students — also help sustain the depth and breadth of the Faculty’s research program. These diverse individuals and their committed supervisors play a crucial role in building knowledge that will inform the profession’s critical practice in the future. We are excited by the many strengths our PhD students will bring to the next generation of social work education, research and practice, and we are proud to profile several imminent graduates on page 7.

We also highlight several alumni and friends in this issue who help the Faculty maintain its place as an innovator in the field. Whether they choose to profile several eminent graduates on page 7.

* The U of T Faculty of Social Work respects your privacy. We do not rent, sell or trade our mailing lists. Even if you choose to receive Reach, you may notify us at any time to change your preference.

** Illustration: Philippe Beha / i2iArt inc.
The following three arts-based research projects by members of the Faculty of Social Work were primarily funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Expanding Social Work Knowledge Through the Arts
Professor Adrienne Chambon
(Visual Art, Multimedia Installations, Film and Poetry)
From 14th-century Italian frescos to contemporary multimedia installations, Professor Adrienne Chambon's research aims to open up a conversation between art from diverse genres and social work. "The principles used in the arts for knowledge creation and transmission can be transposed to social work," says Chambon, whose recent project was called "The hermeneutics of arts practices for social work." She launched the project – which expands social work knowledge by exploring works of art and art writing – after a period of drawing on the arts in both her writing and teaching.

"The artworks I selected to study are complex and inspiring," she says. "The Italian fresco called The Effects of Good and Bad Government on the City and on the Countryside, for example, raises questions about the changes in notions of public space and the space between bodies. Then there is a parallel to the frescos in a photo-video installation called Every Building on 100 West Hastings Street by Canadian artist Stan Douglas, which deals with the abandoned and deserted spaces – and thus people – in the city of Vancouver."

Chambon also examined works by Toronto-based artist Vera Frankel, who uses a mix of realism and fiction in web-based and multi-media installations. "Frankel raises questions about memory, migration and the problematic aspects of institutions." In addition to focusing on single artworks and artists, Chambon's research brought together a combination of contemporary film, installation and artists, Chambon's research brought together a combination of contemporary film, installation and a detailed workbook to facilitate debate and community can access, adapt and use it. There will also be available online, so that anyone in the community can access, adapt and use it. There will also be a detailed workbook to facilitate debate and analysis of the issues. "The play was based solely on the transcripts of a judicial inquiry during the Margaret Thatcher era. "As I sat in the audience, I had a flash of insight that this kind of political theatre could be very effective for communicating our research on welfare and workfare in Ontario," she says. "I saw that it could make the transition from academic research to real-world relevance."

On arriving home again Lightman shared his inspiration with his research team on the "Social Assistance in the New Economy" program, which has been examining welfare reform in Canada – particularly in Ontario and Toronto – for the past several years. Soon after, he applied for and received a special grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for novel and innovative methods of disseminating research findings.

"Once the project had a green light, Lightman set himself to dramatization. Since 2002, he has been conducting annual in-depth interviews with approximately 100 people who have been on social assistance about their experiences in negotiating the welfare system. The play will bring these real voices to the stage."

"Art has a playful aspect to it. If we're just interviewing someone and asking them questions after questions, it can be a bit boring and limiting. But art creates space to explore alternative answers to difficult questions. It allowed the women to express not just their marginalization, but also their hopes and visions for the future. Some of the images are depressing, but some are uplifting and inspiring."

"The arts component of the research project allowed women to take part who otherwise might not have because of language barriers or unease in traditional discussion groups. "The women all had different capacities and comfort levels, so there were different kinds of participation – both behind-the-scenes and in front of the camera."

The artwork from the project has been exhibited at the Faculty of Social Work and Metro Hall in Toronto.
Better Services for Children at Risk
New database will revolutionize child welfare research in Canada

The Mentoring Relationship: Sharing the Rewards
Husband and wife team pass on their experience to new graduates

Children at risk of maltreatment will ultimately have better life chances thanks to a new child welfare database currently under development at the Faculty of Social Work.

The Children’s Services Database will allow researchers to monitor exactly what happens to children after they come in contact with the child welfare system, and then use this knowledge to help determine which policies and practices are more likely to result in better outcomes for children. It is the first project of its kind in Ontario, bringing together data from the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto and the Catholic Children’s Aid Society to form a single, powerful source of information for researchers, practitioners and policy-makers.

“We’ll be tracking kids in the child welfare system over time, looking at issues such as their length of stay in foster care, the types of placements they go to and how a placement affects the likelihood of adoption, the number of incidents of re-abuse and the rates of family reunification,” says Professor Atom Smolinsky, the scientific director of the database and the director of the Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit. “This is the first time we’ll be able to look in a true, longitudinal way at what’s happening after children enter the system,” says Smolinsky.

The new database will strengthen the Faculty’s national position as a leading repository of child welfare data. In 1998, U of T social work faculty members led the first Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, which examined the number and characteristics of children reported for maltreatment. “This new database will enable us to link original maltreatment reports to what happens next to the children in the system,” says Smolinsky. The Faculty is one of five Canadian organizations comprising the Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare, which will help disseminate the research findings generated by the database.

For more than two decades of acting as career mentors to each other in the mental health field, Lisa Freud-Goldman and Stuart Goldman are now sharing their rich professional experience with the next generation of social workers.

The couple joined the Faculty of Social Work Mentorship Program four years ago and have found great satisfaction in their roles as advisors and mentoring boards for students and new graduates. While the players are different, it’s a relationship they’ve both very familiar with because they’ve been providing that same kind of support to each other since they were newly married and launching their careers.

“We’ve always worked together like a team,” says Stuart. “It’s wonderful to be able to discuss difficult clients or issues with somebody who understands.” He and Lisa were acquaintances in high school and distinctly remember having a conversation about their common ambition to become social workers. It wasn’t until several years after graduation, however, that they reconnected following a chance meeting and picked up that same topic: “You could say social work brought us together,” says Lisa.

They both completed their Master of Social Work degrees at the Faculty – Stuart graduated in 1990 and Lisa in 1991 – then went on to work with people with serious mental illness in residential and institutional settings. Stuart is now manager of the Assertive Community Treatment Team, the Addiction Program, the Day Treatment Program, a Geriatric Outreaches Team, and the Mental Health and Junior Treatment and Support Service at North York General Hospital.

After 12 years as a case manager at the Queen Street Mental Health Centre, among other positions, Lisa moved into private practice four years ago as a psychotherapist, consultant and trainer in Critical Incident Stress Management. Stuart works alongside her on the weekends, which has only reinforced their mutually supportive professional relationship. “Lisa is a very skilled therapist, and I learn a lot from her in that respect,” he says. Lisa, on the other hand, says she benefits from Stuart’s expertise in organizational and systems issues.

When Lisa was building her private practice, she sought advice from another family member and graduate of the Faculty, Bill Stern, who also happened to be a psychotherapist. “As soon as Bill asked me about getting involved, I immediately said yes because he’s been my mentor,” says Lisa. Stuart also agreed, because he wanted to give something back to the place that gave him his start. In addition to helping students plot their career path, Lisa and Stuart look for opportunities to share some of the insight they’ve gained into the profession as a whole. One piece of wisdom they both try to impart is that working with people with serious mental illness is a valuable, though challenging, experience. While acknowledging that it’s not glamorous work, Stuart strives to help students see just how crucial it is. “Some young social workers have this idea that upon graduation they’re going to work in a nice office and see highly insightful, motivated clients, but for most that’s unrealistic. Social work most are in social welfare, in working with the disadvantaged. Some of the most important social work is still with those groups.”

Whether he’s changing students’ perspectives along the way, the Goldmans understand the value of talking things out with someone who understands, and they want to pass it on. “When a student says to me, ‘You’ve given me something to think about’, that’s my best reward,” says Lisa.

MR. AND MRS. LI SHUN XING: A GIFT FOR CANADA’S CHILDREN AND CANADA’S FUTURE

The Children’s Services Database was made possible by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Li Shun Xing. Mr. Li attributes their decision to contribute to this unique initiative to their strong belief in the importance of children’s well-being to the overall health and strength of society. “It is far more effective to intervene and help people at the beginning of their lives than wait until they are grown up and experiencing serious problems,” he says. “Children are the most vulnerable sector of our society, and we feel a responsibility to give them the best possible start.”

Mr. Li says they chose to give to the Faculty of Social Work because of its reputation for excellence in child welfare. “While research in this field takes place over the long term and cannot offer the same sort of instant gratification as research in an area such as high technology, we feel this type of work on behalf of children is crucial to Canada’s future, and we are very proud to support it.”

Mr. and Mrs. Li Shun Xing

Research

Stuart Goldman and Lisa Freud-Goldman

A gift for Canada’s children and Canada’s future
Fresh Faces at the Faculty of Social Work

Four new faculty members set to come on board this summer

From HIV/AIDS and child maltreatment to cross-cultural psychotherapy and Aboriginal healing, the diverse areas of expertise of these four new faculty members will enrich the teaching and research environment at the Faculty of Social Work.

**DAVID BRENNAN**

In 1983 David Brennan read a *New York Times* article on a mysterious and frightening new disease called AIDS, and it set him on a career path that continues to this day.

“At the time, experts said that AIDS presented a risk to the “Four Hs”: homosexuals, heroin users, homosexuals and Haitians. “I remember feeling very scared, not just personally for myself but for these other communities who were getting a disease no one knew anything about,” says Brennan. “One of the ways I deal with fear is to just get involved and confront things head on, and that’s what I did with AIDS.”

Brennan began volunteering with the group that eventually became the AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts, New England's child- and largest AIDS service organization. After completing his Master of Social Work degree at Boston College, he moved on to positions of increasing responsibility in the field — from bereavement counselor and hospice social worker to program manager and psychotherapist.

After many years on the front lines, he decided to further his education at Boston College — where he is currently a PhD candidate — so that he could have a different kind of impact through teaching and research. “I wanted to stimulate more interest in the field, and I wanted to better understand how we can improve services for people at risk of HIV/AIDS or living with it.”

Brennan has presented and published on the subject of risk behaviour in HIV/AIDS and will continue this research at the Faculty of Social Work, in addition to exploring disparities in health promotion and Aboriginal communities who were getting a disease no one knew anything about.”

**BARBARA FALLON**

When Barbara Fallon was a Master of Social Work student at U of T completing a placement at the Children’s Aid Society, she could not have imagined that she would play a role in Canada’s first national study on the incidence of child maltreatment.

“Social work’s mission for being is to work with society’s most vulnerable people, and I cannot think of a group more vulnerable than children and families who require services from a children’s aid society,” she says. “They deserve the best programs and services. We need to do for them as we would for our own children.”

During the early part of her career, Fallon gained diverse experience in both research and field work focused on women and children. She served as co-manager of the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS-1998), which provided national estimates of child maltreatment for the first time ever in Canada when it was published and released by the Public Health Agency of Canada. She also co-directed the 1998 study for Ontario, along with the second cycle of both the national and provincial studies (CIS-2003), published in 2009. She accomplished all this while completing her PhD at the Faculty of Social Work. In her new contract appointment at the Faculty, Fallon will continue to focus on the management of the CIS in addition to teaching courses in the MSW program.

**EUNJUNG LEE**

As a social worker who has practiced in her native Korea, the United States and Canada, Eunjung Lee has firsthand experience of the challenges that can arise when clinicians and clients come from different cultures. Grappling with these issues in her professional life, she says, “led me to delve deeper into the concept of cultural competence through my doctoral research.

With over 15 years of experience in community social services and mental health agencies in Asia and North America, she has extensive knowledge of the complexities of practice with diverse populations. She was also trained in the Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Program at the Western Branch of the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society. So it was a natural next step to study the cross-cultural psychotherapy process in her dissertation at the Smith College School for Social Work in Massachusetts, where she is currently a PhD candidate.

“There’s so much in the research literature about cross-cultural practice and cultural competence — they’re almost become buzz words,” she says. “Yet when I began to look into it in my research, I found there was little integration between psychotherapy and multicultural practice.

My challenge has been to make the connection between cultural competence and social work practice more solid and concrete for practitioners.”

Lee looks forward to collaborating with colleagues at the Faculty of Social Work who are leading experts on cross-cultural psychotherapy, including Professors Tat Tsang and Marion Bogo, and is excited about working in one of the most multicultural cities in the world. “Toronto will be an ideal place to build on my research.”

**CYNTHIA WESLEY-EQUIMAUX**

In order to do effective work with Aboriginal Canadians in today’s society, Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux says social workers must understand what happened to Aboriginal Peoples in the past.

“Social work must mitigate the results of historical trauma in the Aboriginal community,” she says. “What I hope to provide to the Faculty of Social Work is a dialogue on how we get here and what happened to Aboriginal people, not only in terms of the loss of land and rights, but also what happened on a psychological and social level to create the psychic trauma we’re now trying to unravel.”

With more than 20 years of experience in community empowerment and policy development for First Nations Peoples — including her own Nation, the Chippewas of Georgina Island — Wesley-Esquimaux is a widely respected teacher, speaker and media commentator. Her doctoral research at U of T examined the effects of outside intervention and the tragedy of youth suicide in a remote Oji-Cree community in Northern Ontario. Since then, she has written and presented on issues ranging from Aboriginal governance structures to contemporary Native health and healing.

Wesley-Esquimaux will begin a joint faculty position in social work and Aboriginal Studies at U of T, where she is already an assistant professor. Part of her role at the Faculty of Social Work will involve mentoring Aboriginal students. “They can feel overwhelmed when they have to confront different mindsets and ways of learning,” she says, “and I hope to make that transition more comfortable for them.”
Gifts for the Faculty’s Future
Two alumni share their reasons for making future gift arrangements to the Faculty

Douglas G. Gardner
(MSW 1958)
Douglas G. Gardner took a calculated risk when he decided to switch careers and pursue social work. He had full-time work experience and a couple of university degrees under his belt when he arrived at the Faculty, but today he says it’s one of the best decisions he ever made.

“I left my job at home there and so clear that I had needed right choice,” says Gardner. “My con-nection to the Faculty goes back to day one.” This sense of connection and loyalty to the profession led him to put the Faculty in his will more than 20 years ago.

The 1950s were an exhilarating time to be a social work student at U of T, according to Gardner. “We had many of the top people in the field in Canada on faculty, people who had a seri-ous impact on the day’s social welfare legislation. They were really quite powerful in their influ-ence,” he says, citing Dean Charles Eric “Chick” Hendry as just one example. “They all had a real impact on me. I’ve always felt that I was lucky to have been a part of it.”

Douglas Gardner chose to arrange a charita-ble bequest in his will, while Ruth Manke’s legacy will be realized through the proceeds of a life insur-ance policy she donated. In addition to making a significant impact on the Faculty’s long-term sus-tainability, these gift options come with tax benefits that can reduce their out-of-pocket cost, now or in the future.

Ruth Manke
(MSW 1966)
It’s been more than 50 years, but Ruth Manke still remembers vividly the day when an immigration officer in Germany asked her what she planned to do with her new life in Canada. “I told him I was going to go to university and become a social worker, and that’s what I did,” she says, “though realizing that ambition was not easy.”

She and her mother arrived in Toronto in 1951 from Eastern Europe after living as refugees after the Second World War. They had very little money and few connections in the community, but Manke managed to work full-time while earning her undergrad-uate degree, enabling her to eventually complete her Master of Social Work degree at the Faculty. This firsthand experience of struggle inspired her decision to help succeeding generations of social work stu-dents through a gift of life insurance.

Though she never spoke of her financial chal-lenges while she was a student, news of her plight travelled to former Dean Albert Rose, who quietly established a fund out of his own pocket to help her and others like her. “It was a gesture that I will never forget,” she says. “I look back with gratitude to the people who helped me through my years at the Faculty, and that gratitude comes with a responsibility.”

Manke held positions in child welfare and voca-tional rehabilitation before launching a successful 25-year career in school social work. It wasn’t until after her retirement from the school board that she learned about the possibilities for planned giving to the Faculty. “I was exactly what I’d been looking for, and the rest is history.” She says her only regret is that she didn’t arrange the gift of a life insurance policy earlier.

“I’m very proud of my profession, and I feel that no one should ever be prevented from entering it because of financial issues.”
Soon-to-be PhD Graduates Poised to Make Their Mark

In the last issue of Reach magazine, we profiled the career paths of several recent PhD graduates. In this issue, we present five PhD students who will soon be defending the dissertations outlined below. All of them bring rich experience in a variety of social work settings to their scholarship and teaching. As they graduate in the months ahead and take up teaching positions at universities across Canada and the world, they will play a role in shaping the future of social work research and practice.

Gina Dimitropoulos
gina.dimitropoulos@utoronto.ca
Supervisor: Dean Cheryl Regehr
Families Caring for Individuals with Autism Nervosa Using a cross-sectional design, Dimitropoulos de- seminated self-report measures to families of indi- viduals struggling with long-term caring disorders in tertiary care and community-based settings. This research has resulted in the development of an innovative model for explaining the caregiving experience, with a particular emphasis on the adverse effects of stigma on family functioning. In addition, the study revealed interesting gender differ- ences in the experience of caregivers.

HIGHLIGHTS OF SCHOLARSHIP
- Twelve years of experience as a clinical social worker in a variety of settings with children, adoles- cents and adults, with particular expertise in family and couple interventions
- Teaching experience at the undergraduate and graduate level, including courses in family therapy, group work and conflict resolution
- Expertise in quantitative and qualitative meth- ods, with main research interests including: effects of stigma on families, caregiver burden, and design and evaluation of interventions aimed to improve the experience of caregivers of individuals with long-term mental illness

Lynn Lavallee
lynn.lavallee@utoronto.ca
Supervisor: Professor David Mulchanski
Threads of Connection: Addressing Historic Trauma Of Indigenous People Through Cultural Recreational Programming
An indigenous research framework formed the basis for Lavallee’s dissertation, beginning with the med- icine wheel teachings of health based on balance between physical, emotional, spiritual and mental well-being. The community-based research project focused on the delivery of a cultural and recreation program at Toronto’s urban Aboriginal community. Lavallee explored the potential of physical wellness and the intersection to mental, emotional and spiritual well-being in urban Aboriginal adults. The participants’ stories were captured with sharing cir- cles and a method that Lavallee developed called Anishnaabe Symbol-Based Reflection.

HIGHLIGHTS OF SCHOLARSHIP
- Experienced social work clinician; involved in social work practice research in the areas of chil- dren’s mental health
- Present at national and international confer- ences on the topics of mental health needs of chil- dren and youth with learning disabilities
- Taught social work courses at the University of Toronto and Renison College, University of Water- loo; developed and instruct an online course in social work with groups
- Developed a workshop on understanding learn- ing disabilities that has been delivered to thousands of individuals throughout the province

Michael A. Saini
michael.saini@utoronto.ca
Supervisor: Dean Cheryl Regehr
Parent Functioning After Divorce: Exploring the Relationship to Attachment and Conflict Differences in parenting functioning are a result of a highly complex interaction, particularly at times of stress such as separation/divorce and involvement in legal proceedings. To explore these complex interac- tions, Saini surveyed 253 parents participating in a court-based mandatory family law information ses- sion. His analysis investigated why some parents are able to work through feelings of preoccupation, host- ility and loss towards their ex-partner, while others remain caught in inter-parental conflict which pre- vents them from moving into workable co-parenting relations and thereby sheltering their children from the negative effects of conflict.

HIGHLIGHTS OF SCHOLARSHIP
- Currently the Systemic Review Specialist for the Research Institute for Evidence-Based Social Work at the University of Toronto
- Over 10 years experience in clinical and direct prac- tice with children, parents and families, including custody and access evaluations, child protection and working in youth offender’s facilities
- Presented at both academic and professional confer- ences and published in the fields of divorce, con- flict, child welfare, social work education, health and adult mental health

Sandra Tam
sandra.tam@utoronto.ca
Supervisor: Professor Sheila Neymirth
Understanding Young Women’s Provisioning: The Social Organization of Youth Employment
This qualitative study aimed to produce new under- standing about young women’s working lives from their own perspective. It was part of a larger multi- site research project entitled “Provisioning, Women and Community” funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Tam used the concept of provisioning to capture a wide range of work activities such as paid employment, domes- tic work, caregiving and postsecondary education. She demonstrated how social policies that organize the Canadian labour market shape the conditions under which marginalized young women make deci- sions about jobs, education, careers and family life.

HIGHLIGHTS OF SCHOLARSHIP
- Actively involved with community organizations committed to social justice and equity, in addition to contributions to theoretical development and social policy analysis of young women and social programs in the academic arena
- Past member of the Chinese Canadian National Council’s research committee, editorial member for the Women and Environment International Magazine, and community editorial board member of the Toronto Star
- Teaching experience at the undergraduate and graduate levels in women’s studies, social work and writing across the curriculum
HIV Vaccines: If We Build It, Will They Come?

Professor Peter A. Newman tackles the social and behavioural challenges of preparing for future HIV vaccines

W hen Bill Gates joined with the Cana- dian government this past winter to launch a multi-million dollar initiative aimed at accelerating the development of an HIV vaccine, the announcement generated wide- spread media coverage and sparked countless water- cooler discussions. It did not, however, raise the hard questions that Professor Peter Newman has been asking in his unique research program on HIV vaccine preparedness: Who exactly will participate in HIV vaccine trials? How will HIV vaccines be distributed across the world once they are ready? And most important: Will HIV vaccines be acces- sible and acceptable to the vulnerable communities most affected by HIV/AIDS?

For Newman, who has spent over 15 years as a practitioner and researcher in the HIV/AIDS field, increased funding for HIV vaccine development is good news on several fronts. For one, it will mean more biomedical research, more clinical trials and more momentum towards the best long-term hope for controlling the global epidemic. The funding boost will also help transform the once hypothetical HIV vaccine into more of a reality in the eyes of research granting agencies, which may then be more inclined to support his investigations into vaccine planning. Until the last few years, when a few more researchers started examining the social and behav- ioural issues around dissemination of future HIV vaccines, Newman and his handful of collaborators were virtually alone in this specialized field. “Scientists estimate that it will be up to a decade or more before an approved HIV vaccine is available, and we need to look at this window of time as an opportunity to overcome the challenges that will come with getting a vaccine out there in an efficient and equitable way,” says Newman, who holds the RBC Chair in Applied Social Work Research at the Faculty of Social Work. One aspect of his research focuses on community engagement in HIV vaccine trials, which is not only crucial to the scientific process of vaccine development but will also influence popu- lar attitudes towards a future vaccine when it becomes publicly available.

Recruitment for HIV vaccine trials is understand- ably difficult, and Newman is working to under- stand the barriers and facilitators to participa- tion among vulnerable communities. “The cur- rent under-representa- tion of women and peo- ple of colour limits the generalisability of clinical tri- als,” he says. “My work is focused on how we can facil- itate access to clinical trials among vulnerable commu- nities by designing culturally appropriate outreach and information that would empower individuals to decide if this is something they want to do or not.”

For both moral and practical reasons, Newman says HIV vaccine trials must adhere to stringent ethical standards and maintain transparency. For example, individuals who participate in a trial should be guar- anteed access to the eventual vaccine product if it proves to be effective. “There are some places in the developing world where it’s simply not ethical to con- duct a trial because there’s no health infrastructure to care for volunteers who may develop trial-related side effects or to support a vaccine’s later dissemination,” he says. Volunteers must also be guaranteed full dis- closure about their role in the trial and associated risks and benefits. “In some languages, there isn’t even a word for ‘placebo,’ so how do you explain a vaccine trial? It’s challenging, but it’s essential. Because if people feel wronged by a clinical trial, more and more communities will resist getting involved and it will hurt the whole effort to develop a vaccine.”

Newman is taking an international approach in all of his investigations, studying diverse communities at risk for HIV across three continents. Despite geo- graphic and cultural differences, he’s found that indi- viduals from vulnerable communities share certain concerns about clinical trial participation and HIV vaccines in general. Whether they are Latinos in Los Angeles, Black women in Toronto or gay and bisexual men in Thailand, they worry about some of the same things: vaccine-induced HIV infection, physical side- effects and AIDS stigma “Across communities, it’s still important – even 20 years into the epidemic – to chafe at the radar that an HIV vaccine is not a ‘magic bul- let,’ and AIDS is still a dangerous disease. It’s a diffi- cult balance: you have to maintain hope without enabling potential harm.”

In addition to addressing people’s fears and mis- perceptions about HIV vaccines, Newman’s research has demonstrated how vital it is to confront the sys- temic issues that hinder HIV prevention. “We are increasingly seeing a need for structural interventions to deal with institutional prejudice, poverty, lack of access to health care and human rights violations.”

His study of women attending public health clinics in Nairobi, for example, found that their striking poverty would prevent them from accessing any future HIV vaccine unless it was government subvi- sioned. In his research on men who have sex with men in India, the most compelling structural issue is the criminalization of homosexuality. “When gay male outreach workers are routinely harassed by police simply for carrying condoms and HIV prevention materials,” he says, “that’s completely antithetical to public health.”

Another challenge that permeates all of Newman’s work is how to prevent people from “lightening up” on their safer sex practices when an HIV vaccine becomes available – especially given the fact that initial vaccines will not be com- pletely effective. “If people stop using condoms or increase their number of sexual partners, it could counteract the epidemiological benefits of a vac- cine,” he says. “We have to keep the message on the radar that an HIV vaccine is not a ‘magic bul- let’ and AIDS is still a dangerous disease.”

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