

Michael Duggan Beaufort Visiting Scholar at St. John's College Cambridge

For the first three months of 2017, I had the opportunity to research early Judaism and Christian origins at the University of Cambridge, England. I was elected as a Beaufort visiting scholar at St. John's College in the University for the Lent term (January 5-March 25).

The award is named in honour of Lady Margaret Beaufort (1443-1509), the mother of King Henry VII and the paternal grandmother of King Henry VIII. In the decade before her death, Lady Margaret—a devout, decisive and industrious woman—directed John Fisher to establish St. John's College. Upon her death, she bequeathed the lands for the construction of the college buildings, which began in 1511.

I was grateful to have stimulating contacts with my fellow Beaufort scholars, Prof. Richard Lockhart, a professor of statistics at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver; Prof. Huasheng Song, who teaches economics at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China; and Prof. Max Du Plessis, a human rights lawyer from Durban, South Africa.

The variety of disciplines that the Beaufort scholars represent reflects the interdisciplinary culture of St. John's and the other colleges at Cambridge. A gracious energy animates the college, deriving from dazzling conversations across disciplines. These take place every day as the senior fellows (women and men), research scholars, lecturers and tutors gather for the less formal noonday meal and the formal dinner. Centuries-old protocols ensure that, at every sitting, each person converses with colleagues who represent a unique range of disciplines. On any given day, I would be immersed in fascinating exchanges with engineers, musicians, neuroscientists, archaeologists, astronomers, philosophers, economists, geneticists, and historians. As a Beaufort scholar, I was happily obligated to dine at the high table either at noon in the 16th century Combination Room or at dinner in the great dining hall. The keys to university culture, I learned, are food and table fellowship.

The 31 diverse colleges at Cambridge bring to the 21st century resonances of 13th-century monastic ideals. Mindfulness pervades the atmosphere—there are no video screens announcing upcoming events and no one, whether student or professor, walks the magnificent college grounds fixated on a cell phone. (You can, however, look through arched windows and see students composing their papers at computers.) Everyone is understated. You need to



Dr. Michael Duggan and wife Christy.

inquire in order to learn of the stellar research that your colleague in conversation is doing. In my three months at St. John's, I never heard anyone—student, teacher, or staff person—say, "My apologies, I need to dash to a meeting," or "Excuse me, I need to take a phone call." The work gets done because everyone is attentive to the silence within. This is the source of personal creativity. In conversations, attentive listening takes priority over the impulse to express one's insights. Everyone is constantly learning and is well aware that, whatever we know is minuscule in relation to the infinite dimensions of reality.

Evensong was a mainstay of the hospitality that my wife, Christy, and I experienced. Four times a week, we marked the transition from daylight to darkness in contemplation inspired by the choir of St John's Chapel. This world-renowned ensemble of young men from the age of 10 to 25 represents a tradition that began 340 years ago. Each evening they sang a unique version of the Magnificat of Mary (Luke 1:46-55) composed at some point in the last 400 years. We were edified by the investment that St. John's makes in the Chapel. The liturgies provide an essential experience of mindfulness and meditation for the college community.

To Prof. Chris Dobson, the Master of St. John's, Dr. Frank Salmon, the President of the College, and Prof. Stefan Reif, the emeritus professor of Jewish Studies, and the fellows of St. John's, Christy and I express our gratitude for the gracious hospitality we experienced.

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Stimulating Simulations

Dr. Cory Wright-Maley is the 2017 recipient of the Dr. David Lawless Award for Scholarly Achievement.

My main research interest is simulations: an approximation of real life enacted under artificial conditions. In my field—social studies education—most people know about Model Parliament or Model United Nations simulations, and this is a helpful image to have in mind when thinking about the purposes of simulations in teaching and learning. Simulations give students access to learning about the world in ways that represent the real world, where they are actively involved in the process, and the decisions they make impact the outcome of the simulation, all of which takes place with the supportive guidance of an experienced teacher.

I became interested in simulations as a school teacher. I found it baffling that students didn't understand how basic processes (like the assembly line) worked. More troubling still was the perennial claim in my Modern European History course that they (the students) would have stood up to Hitler or Stalin, and that they couldn't understand why anyone would not. This led me to develop a month-long totalitarianism simulation, in which I became the dictator known as Maestro. Students were informed that half of their grade for the unit was determined by how well they followed my orders; every time they lost points they would come closer to their exile (in the principal's office) and a failing grade in the unit. Their goal was to organize resistance and overthrow me without my finding out.

Of the seven classes in which I used this simulation, only two ever risked overthrowing me.

In the end, they left my class with a robust understanding of how

people respond to oppression and the reasons why resistance often fails to materialize. Since that time, simulations have been a source of inspiration for me; my curiosity about their strengths and challenges in classrooms, why they engage students as they do, what students learn from them—and why teachers resist using them—drive my research in this area.

To my surprise, when I began researching simulations, there was very little recent scholarship, no clear agreement about what a simulation is, or even a clear notion that they added much of value to student learning. Through my work, I have helped define simulations and differentiate them from other related phenomena (like games and role-plays), establish the role of effective and ineffective teaching practices with simulations, demonstrate how simulations in teacher education can help shift teachers' mindsets about English Language Learners, and provide both evidence and examples of simulations in practice to inform teachers and teacher educators about their potential and limitations.

Recently, I have tried to help teachers expand their vision for using simulations; I've published articles on a simulation that demonstrates the spread of the Black Plague in *The History Teacher*; OPEC in *Social Education*; Deficit Crisis Monopoly in *Social Studies Research and Practice*; and two guides to practicing with simulations in *Canadian Social Studies*, including "What Every Social Studies Teacher Should Know About Simulations" and an exploration of using simulations to teach complex and tragic episodes of human history like slavery and the Holocaust. Currently, I am editing a book on using simulations in the social studies, entitled *More Like Life Itself: Simulations as Powerful and Purposeful Social Studies* (Spring 2018).

My Love Affair with Spain—Dr. Carolyn Salomons

I fell in love with Spain on my first visit. I loved the people, the slower-paced way of life, the old cities with twisting cobblestone streets, the beautiful art and architecture. But I realized on that trip that I knew nothing about the history of Spain. That vacation changed my life and, soon after, I was studying to become a professional historian, with a research focus on 15th-century Spain.

I have always been fascinated by the issue of religious identity and conversion, which informs so much of Spanish history – the only western country where Christians, Jews, and Muslims lived together for almost 800 years. My book project began with the question of how Jewish converts to Christianity – whether converted by force or by will – understood their new religious identity, and at the same time, how did their "old" Christian neighbours regard these incomers to the faith? I chose to explore this question by focusing on the events of the late 15th century in a small town in Castile, called Ávila. Thanks to a Fulbright scholarship, I was able to spend a year in Ávila, working in the local archives there.

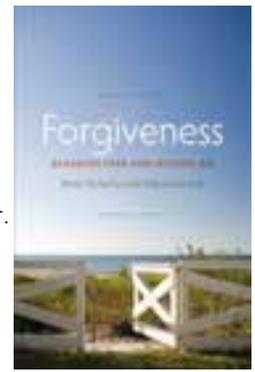
As I have continued to research, the focus of my book has shifted somewhat. I began to explore the writings of various churchmen of the late 15th century, men who were affiliated with the court of Isabel I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon and who acted as chief advisors to the "Catholic Monarchs." The writings of these men were often deeply concerned with how to better "Christianize" new converts, and whether local Jews were a deterrent to this process. This led me to consider the notion of tolerance in this time and place. Numerous excellent books have already been written



attempting to determine whether or not early modern Spain can be regarded as a tolerant society in any way, dominated as it was by the Holy Office of the Spanish Inquisition, an institution which has embodied intolerance for generations of historians. My book project focuses on what I call the "threshold of tolerance," as informed by the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas. My argument in the book is that the people in the city of Ávila were deeply influenced by ideas about toleration circulated by both the religious and political elite of the day. These ideas had a direct impact on society, resulting in increased religious tension and strife, culminating in deadly violence and the expulsion of the Jews.

A St. Mary's Research Grant allowed me to return to Ávila this summer, so I could conduct further research in the Provincial Archives.

New Book on Forgiveness from Patti-Anne Kay and Dr. Peter Doherty



Forgiveness: Breaking Free and Moving On is a synthesis of clinical experience and research in anthropology, literature, psychology, spirituality, and media. The book presents not only a comprehensive understanding of forgiveness but also strategies for being a forgiving person.

As therapists, we recognized that many of our clients were blocked by hurts that they could not get past. The question of what was interfering with their healing and how to get them to move on motivated us to explore different strategies. We recognized that forgiveness both of themselves and others played an important role in their healing.

We acknowledged that a client's beliefs about forgiveness often interfered with their ability and willingness to forgive. It became clear that many did not have the skills to forgive and we also became aware of people who did not want to forgive, for whom holding on to their pain was preferable to letting it go. Their pain, their sense of woundedness, has become part of their identity.

We studied the narratives of people who had experienced

wounds and had forgiven the perpetrator. Hearing people's stories left us with a deep appreciation for their painful struggles and attempts to bring healing in their lives. We were surprised and encouraged that some people were able to forgive deep and painful losses.

Originally, our plan was to design a series of workshops and retreats on forgiveness, but as we grew in our understanding, we realized that we wanted to take our work to a larger audience. Getting a book published was made more challenging because of our multi-discipline approach. Editors from Catholic presses told us the book wasn't Catholic enough; editors for various secular presses told us our book was too Christian or too spiritual. We were inspired to persist by workshop participants who left empowered by healing and knowledge.

It was an exciting day when our book was accepted by Novalis Press. Our slim, direct and deeply usable book provides valuable tools and strategies so that we can all learn to be a forgiving person.

Conflict and Compromise

This past spring, the University of Toronto press published a two-volume history of Canada, *Conflict and Compromise*, co-authored by Raymond Blake of the University of Regina, Jeffrey Keshen of Mount Royal University, Barbara Messamore of the University of the Fraser Valley, and St. Mary's own Norman Knowles. Below, Dr. Knowles shares some of his thoughts on the contributions of this new history and the value of knowing the past.

As Canadians commemorate the 150th anniversary of Confederation, we are all challenged to revisit our history. For many this is largely a joyful matter of celebrating accomplishments and the progress we have made as a nation. Others, however, find little to celebrate in a painful past filled with isolation, oppression, and alienation. That this should be so is hardly surprising. Every period of Canadian history has been marked by cleavages and conflict—among Indigenous peoples, between Indigenous peoples and newcomers, between French and English, elites and rebels, workers and employers, rural and urban domains, immigrants and host society, men and women, and region and centre. Notions of conflict and compromise permeate this book and provide a basis for discussion and, I anticipate, vigorous debate. It is my hope that this history of Canada will help readers see their own country more clearly, gain greater understanding of its complexity and its place in a wider world, and appreciate the struggle—past and present—to achieve fairness and justice.

While cleavages constantly challenge the idea of a single unified nation, Canadian history has also been marked by a process of negotiation and compromise that has enabled

Canada to develop into one of the most successful pluralistic countries in the world. Our past has, as often as not, been a story of peaceful gradualism and accommodation. "Unity" may sound like an admirable goal, but a successful nation, particularly one as complex as Canada, must accommodate heterogeneity, disagreement, and conflicting visions, rather than seeking to stifle them. Canadians have been most successful when we have been willing to listen to one another and to seek practical solutions to pressing problems. While negotiation and compromise may not seem particularly inspiring ideals, I would argue they are essential to maintaining a successful civil society. The existence of deep-seated problems in need of urgent redress in both the past and present does not undercut the fact that Canada's story is fundamentally one of reasonable success when compared to many other nation-states—a point that is too often overlooked. Canada is one of the world's most prosperous and welcoming countries, where the rule of law protects people and property and where citizens have access to a rich array of social programs. It is a beacon to many in the world, with growing evidence of opportunity, diversity and social inclusion. Good history, of course, strives to present the past fully and fairly, exposing the faults and failings of historical actors and the darker side of past values and attitudes as well as the noble and often courageous accomplishments, visions, and sacrifices of those who went before us.

In a letter to an historian of whom he disapproved, the French philosopher Voltaire stated: "An historian has many duties. Allow me to remind you of two which are important. The first is not to slander; the second is not to bore." I trust students will find that we have followed Voltaire's advice.

Dr. Mary Ann McLean was the first recipient of the St. Mary's University Teaching Award.

The Award was presented at Convocation on June 9, 2017.

My Teaching Philosophy by Dr. Mary Ann McLean

My teaching philosophy has simplified over the years to “making connections.” This includes connecting students with their environment, their community, and their peers. It also includes connecting ideas, connecting disciplines, and connecting experiments with scientific method.

Connecting with their environment: Many of our students are out of touch with their environment; they move through the landscape without noticing it. In response, I have developed several labs that take them out into Fish Creek Park to do “real world” experiments. In one of them, Ecology students determine how effectively local engineered wetlands clean the water from storm drains, by assessing water chemistry, fecal coliforms, plankton and benthic invertebrates.

In non-majors' Ecology, which doesn't have labs, I introduce students to the park on a walkabout, where we talk about whatever we see, how species arrived here, European settlement of the area, anthropogenic impacts on the park and interactions between species. Students then conduct weekly observations of processes and species, which they connect with ideas from lecture. Initially, students find these observations difficult—but by the end of the semester almost all are thinking quite differently about their environment; it moves from the background of their activities to the foreground.

Connecting with the STMU community: I also use Biology courses to connect students with the St. Mary's community. Several recent senior projects involved the development of new labs for our courses, allowing students to give back. A side benefit: at least some of these have been, or will be, published with the students as co-authors.

Connecting with the wider community: In Biological Conservation, each student does a service learning project with a local conservation organization. Projects this past year included data analysis to determine whether riparian zones actually reduce erosion on stream banks, development of teaching materials on conservation for elementary classrooms, and assessing the success of a weed eradication program in Weaselhead.

An important aspect of connecting to the community involves being able to communicate scientific ideas to a variety of audiences. In Introductory Biology, students develop a project on some aspect of diversity. One of the purposes is to engage grade 9 students in these ideas, which means the projects need to be interactive. Students presented their projects to local grade 9 students, who eagerly played games about the genetic implications of small populations, the evolution of different bird beaks, and the cycles of predator-prey interactions, among many others. In other courses, assignments involve communication of scientific ideas to non-specialist audiences. For example, in microbiology, students choose a common microbiological misconception to explain

and refute. These videos, talk shows, and presentations were informative and often very funny.

Connecting with their peers: Several labs in my courses require students to work in teams to develop a class dataset and deal with the challenges of such datasets. These require a lot of communication, clarification, and troubleshooting. I also encourage students to communicate and collaborate with their peers in their Senior Projects. My goal was to have them develop their project proposals in a collaborative atmosphere that would improve the quality of all proposals. Each week, students prepared a piece of the proposal (initial idea, experimental design, statistical analysis, budget, etc.), which was carefully reviewed by a colleague. To ensure collaboration, the quality of their peer review was graded, not the material submitted. A survey indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the process, the usefulness of peer review, and increased collaboration between the students in other contexts.

Connecting ideas: I routinely use critical thinking questions to get students to connect ideas from class with applications in the real world. For more complex ecological issues, which involve not only ecological information, but also social, political and economic information, case studies help students wrestle with these complexities. The case study on weed control in an urban park, published with Dr. Gary Grothman, is a good example.

Connecting disciplines: Several chemistry courses are required in our degree, but students often think of chemistry and biology as completely separate. To counter this effect, Eric McLeod (our Chemistry Lab Coordinator and Instructor) and I have developed a couple of labs that link the two. Next winter, students in Introductory Biology and Chemistry will study the hyper-accumulation of zinc by aquatic plants. The experiment will be set up in Introductory Biology, where the microscopic impacts of the zinc on the plants will be examined over time. In Introductory Chemistry, students will analyse the amount of zinc taken up by the plants using spectrophotometry. Assignments will address the major concepts in both disciplines.

Connecting with scientific method: Although students have encountered the “scientific method” multiple times in high school, they come to university not really understanding how to conduct experiments, which is a fundamental concept in science. I have designed several open-ended labs to allow students to practice developing experiments starting in their first year. Introductory Biology students really enjoy designing an experiment to understand the triggers that elicit aggression in Betta Fish. Ecology students design, conduct and present results from an experiment examining the environmental needs and tolerances of plants.

