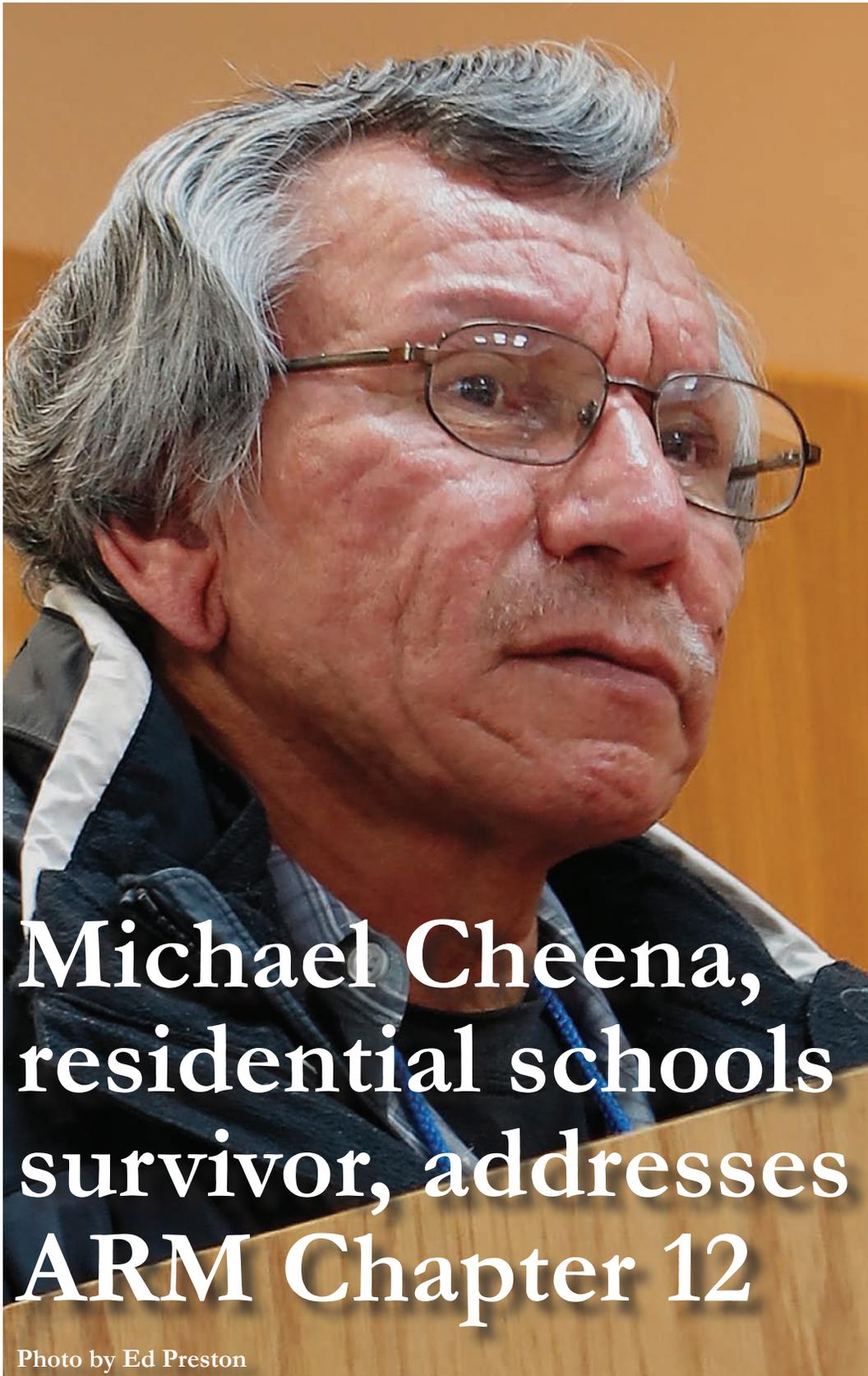

After School

armchapter12.org

Volume 18, Issue 2, May, 2016



**Michael Cheena,
residential schools
survivor, addresses
ARM Chapter 12**

Photo by Ed Preston

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Editorial Chatter

This issue is the Book Review Issue: we have three reviews of three very different books written by ARM C12 members Larry French, Dave Gracey and our regular reviewer David Schreiber.

In *The Retired Bard*, we consider the story of the burning monk of the early 60s in Saigon. *After School* invites artistic submissions from members, be they photographs, paintings, poems, or short stories.

Cyndie Jacobs and Don Wright tell us about our April presentation on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, a session that attracted 35 participants.

In February, 35 participants enjoyed TDSB's Aboriginal Education Centre's Program Coordinator Tanya Senk and residential schools survivor Michael Cheena in their presentation, *Indigenous Rights Are*

Human Rights. Plenty of thought-provoking material made the session a success.

President Manfred Netzel's column tells us that political engagement works.

Michelle Barraclough leads us on a journey in Antigua, Guatemala. Please feel free to submit your own stories and photos of your travel adventures for this feature.

Allan Hux introduces his first pub, the Abbott Pub and Fare. Let him know your favourite for him to cover in a future issue.

Julia Harney reviews *The Pass System*, a documentary about Canada's apartheid treatment of indigenous Canadians. This documentary shocks viewers as it reveals Canada as a racist nation.

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After School Volume 18, Issue 2, May 2016

After School is the official publication of Active Retired Members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Chapter 12 Toronto (ARM C12)

Opinions expressed in *After School* are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policies of ARM Chapter 12 or of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

Submissions are always welcome but will not be returned. All submissions are subject to editing for length and style while respecting the author's intentions.

Editorial Team: Larry French, Cyndie Jacobs, Manfred Netzel, Ed Preston, Paul Rook, Neil Walker

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Calendar

Wednesday, May 18, 2016. OTIP Information Workshop.

OSSTF Provincial Office, Erie Room, 60 Mobile Drive, North York. Everything you need to know about health, dental, home and auto insurance for retirees. Complimentary luncheon to follow. Confirm attendance with Jim Loftus, 416-447-0811.

Wednesday, May 25, 2016. Annual Spring Swing For Kids Golf Tournament. Challenge Course at Rolling Hills Golf Course, 9:30 am Registration, 10:00 am, Shotgun tee off. Cost: \$70 includes 18 holes of golf, cart for two, BBQ luncheon including choice of meats, three salads, vegetable plate, assorted cookies, coffee or tea, taxes, gratuities and prizes. Proceeds of a 50/50 raffle and a silent auction are donated to 15 or more children's charities across Toronto. Send \$70 per golfer, by cheque, to Jim Loftus, 301-7 Roanoke Rd, Toronto, ON M3A 1E3. Cheques should be mailed by May 18, 2015 and made payable to ARM C12 Golf Tournament, c/o Jim Loftus, Coordinator. Call Jim Loftus for further information, 416-447-0811.

Wednesday, June 1, 2016. Annual General Meeting. OSSTF Provincial Office, Erie Room, 60 Mobile Drive, North York. Registration 2:30 pm. Guest speaker John Cartwright, President, Toronto and York Region Labour Council, executive elections, and reports. BBQ dinner to follow. \$30 Confirm attendance with Jim Loftus, 416-447-0811.

Wednesday, June 22, 2016. ARM C12 2016 Stratford Festival theatre trip. For the first time ARM C12 Theatre Trip offers a choice

of three performances for our theatre patrons.

- *A Chorus Line*, dubbed "A Singular Sensation," presents the unique personal shared story of each member of "that glittering line" to create an inspiring musical masterpiece.
- *Breath of Kings (Part 1, Rebellion)*, A historical drama based on Shakespeare's Richard II and Henry IV, Part I. Lust for power, political turmoil, love, battles, and deaths mark this period.
- *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, A fantasy in a magical world where imagination and wonder surface in a quest where four kids travel through a wardrobe to fulfill their destiny in the land of Narnia.

A Chorus Line. Aisle and next to Aisle A Seating \$100, Regular A seating \$95, *Breath of Kings : (Part 1 Rebellion)* Spotlight Seating 1 @ \$99, 9 @ \$94; *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*: Premium Seating \$98 A list of convenient restaurants will be provided, and also bus pick-up if needed.

Schedule: 8:00-8:15 am pick up at Agincourt Mall, in front of Walmart, NW corner Sheppard/Kennedy

8:30-8:45 pick-up at North East corner York Mills/Yonge

9:00-9:15 pick-up at Walmart parking lot, 2245 Islington Ave, north of Hwy 401

Return : 5:00-5:15 outside Avon Theatre

5:15-5:30 in the vicinity of Tom Patterson and the Festival Theatres.

7:00-7:15 Return time, Toronto

Please book your ticket early, but payable by May 5. Call 416-783-6591, and make cheques payable to ARM C12. Cheques must be addressed to Karma Naik, 980 Briar Hill Ave, Toronto M6B 1M3

Out of Town Events

CHAPTER 9 (WINDSOR-ESSEX)

May 6: Monthly First Friday Breakfast @ 9 am Lumberjack Restaurant 475 Tecumseh Rd. E., Windsor. Contact: Judy Tenzer [519-979-8135](tel:519-979-8135)

June 3: Monthly First Friday Breakfast @ 9am. Same location and contact as above

Friday June 10th: Chapter 9 AGM and Lunch Starts 10am @ District 9 OSSTF Office, 547 Victoria Ave. Windsor. Contact: Scott Hunt, President (thomas010@sympatico.ca)

CHAPTER 11 (THAMES VALLEY)

Wednesday, May 4: AGM and Spring Luncheon Best Western Lamplighter Hotel & Conference Centre (Oakridge Room), London. Registration starts @ 9:30 Business Meeting @ 10am sharp. Complimentary lunch served @ 11:30 am. Contact: Mary Lou Cunningham (armpresident@osstf11.com)

CHAPTER 18/ 21 (UPPER GRAND / HAMILTON-WENTWORTH)

Tuesday, May 17th: Griffen House National Historic Site Tour and Luncheon 733 Mineral Springs Rd., Ancaster Tour of this 190-year old house purchased for, and used as, an Underground Railroad destination begins @ 10am. Following the 1.5 hour tour, lunch will start @ 12 noon @ Coach & Lantern Pub, 384 Wilson St. E., Ancaster. Contact: Chester Faulknor (armchapter21@gmail.com)

CHAPTER 22 (NIAGARA)

Tuesday, May 17: Monthly Chapter Breakfast @ 9:30am, Downtown Dolce Restaurant, 223 King St., Port Colborne. Contact: Ray Marshall (rmarshall23@gmail.com)

Tuesday, June 21: Monthly Chapter Breakfast @ 9:30am, Patti's Place 87 East Main St., Welland

Contact: Ray Marshall (rmarshall23@gmail.com)

Wednesday, June 29: Secrets of Niagara (Part 2) Adventure Tour @ 9:30am, Tim Hortons, 2780 Stevensville Rd. RR2, Stevensville. Enjoy a journey through the Niagara Region countryside to view the farm, birthplace, school, family church, etc of famed entrepreneur J.L. Kraft. Then join the group for lunch @ Mae's Place, 2568 Stevensville Rd, RR2. Contact: Ray Marshall (rmarshall23@gmail.com)

CHAPTER 29 (PRINCE EDWARD-HASTINGS)

Thursday, May 19: Glenora Fisheries Station Tour @ 10:45am Glenora Fisheries Station 41 Hatchery Lane, Picton. Meet the group in Belleville @ the Quinte Mall south-east corner of the parking lot by 10am, to allow for car-pooling for the 40-minute drive to Picton. The tour will take about one hour, followed by lunch at the nearby scenic restaurant Lake on the Mountain located in the Provincial Park near Picton. Contact: Jim Stewart (armdistrict29@gmail.com)

Political Engagement: It's More Than It's Cracked Up To Be

BY MANFRED NETZEL, PRESIDENT, ARM CHAPTER 12

One year ago, my opinion piece in this space was about the imperative of dumping the Harper government in 2015 and, in the words of another former despised leader (south of the Border), “mission accomplished!” Now, after some six months of the new 2.0 version of Trudeaumania in Ottawa and an ongoing political honeymoon with a polled majority of Canadians, I thought it might be useful to assess the validity of political engagement by you and me at many levels of both partisan politics and also personal involvement in labour and NGO organizations such as OSSTF, the Ontario Health Coalition (OHC), the Black Lives Matter and the Leap Manifesto movements.

Firstly, with respect to the federal scene, ARM Chapter 12 has been very active in lobbying for an enhancement of the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) along with our friends in the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), Congress of Union Retirees of Canada (CURC) and other seniors' advocacy organizations to lobby the Liberals for a graduated increase in existing CPP contributions. By 2023, this should then result in a doubling of the average benefits to around \$25,000. While this is not a king's ransom, it would at least allow a larger portion of future retirees (especially women) to live in greater dignity and less dependence on subsistence income levels, especially important in an expensive area like the GTHA.

Since the Trudeau election platform included a vague reference to CPP enhancement, there was a clear feeling that further lobbying of the government could be of use. Thus, several executive members decided to arrange for one or more meetings with local Liberal MPs to attempt to lobby them for their sustained or increased support of this issue in the Liberal caucus and Cabinet. Consequently, Margaret McPhail, Don Wright and I met with new Parkdale-High Park MP Arif Virani in mid-March for this lobbying effort, coming away with a sense that he both understood the issue and might also be supportive of such CPP enhancement “in consultation with the finance minister and the other provinces.” The recent Morneau budget again made some reference to

the issue and the minister stated that he is “cautiously optimistic” about the next round of CPP talks. Despite Saskatchewan's opposition to any changes to CPP, most of the current provincial governments seem to be onside, or open to further discussion. In addition, the Wynne government's plan for a provincially-sponsored ORPP has also seen its implementation date moved back to 2017 may be a positive sign.

The next example of collective political action leading to some positive results occurred just weeks ago, after a public campaign by the OHC to stop the Ontario government from increasing seniors' drug costs. The original plan presented in the late February Sousa budget had been to raise the low-income thresholds for both single seniors and couples on August 1st, thus increasing these richer seniors' prescription deductibles by 70% to \$170 annually and drug co-payments by \$1 to \$7.11. These changes would have cost a large group of older Ontarians about \$100 million more according to the opposition parties, since low-income seniors currently pay no annual deductible and make co-payments of just two dollars per prescription. Now, the revised policy position (aka political flip-flop) will keep the payments for those above the existing low-income levels at the current annual deductible of \$100 and co-payments of \$6.11. Both OSSTF and Chapter 12 were amongst the many signatories to the open letter campaign organized to oppose the announced Liberal funding changes. Of course, we must still remain vigilant about any announced public drug program reviews by Minister Hoskins, since Ontario's drug program costs are rising up to five per cent annually and consuming a larger part of the provincial budget due to an aging society and drug patents by big pharma firms.

Our continued support and involvement with advocacy groups such as the OHC, CURC and local Labour Councils remains critical, as other threats to our society's health and well-being remain. At the federal level, the change in attitude towards medicare and the Canada Health Act (CHA) can only be seen as hopeful, after a decade of funding cuts and a strategy of ignoring

Ottawa's enforcement role by the Harper Conservatives. This was clear during the election campaign when little was said about medicare by any of the major party leaders, while the provinces slowly have moved more to a two-tier system of services and programs... especially the case in Saskatchewan (cradle of medicare) and Quebec (greatest defier of extra-billing fee bans under the CHA). It will be crucial to maintain pressure on the Trudeau Liberals to ensure that a newly-negotiated Health Accord with the provinces retains the principles of universality and affordability. In Ontario, the current and anticipated further cuts to staff and services that hospitals in Toronto and across Ontario are facing must be challenged in fight-back campaigns. Many are sponsored by the OHC and its local counterparts, such as the Toronto Health Coalition. Our continued collective health and well-being depend on it.

Needless to say, current public attention about two very emotional and encompassing social justice issues in Canada remains heightened in the hearts and minds of both individuals and organizations like OSSTF: the plight of Canada's First Nations people and climate change as it affects our environment. Following upon our very successful Chapter 12 workshop in February on the topic "First Nations Rights are Human Rights," you will find several further content items about this past event and related book reviews elsewhere in this newsletter. We hope that you reflect and comment after reading these pages, using the contact information

provided on the inside cover page. Secondly, the growing public discourse about the LEAP Manifesto and the need for a green economy in the 21st Century has led to the selection of a keynote speaker on this theme for our upcoming AGM on June 1st. John Cartwright, president of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council will address the meeting on the ambitious Green Print economic development strategy he and his organization have developed to bring our community and the GTHA into the post-industrial era in a sustainable fashion. I'm sure that those of you planning to attend will be both educated and stimulated by this thoughtful presentation.

Finally, I would like to recognize a personal achievement by a member of Chapter 12 and long-standing local Federation activist, Warren (Art) Turner, at AMPA 2016 in March. As an OTBU member of the District 12 delegation, Art was singularly recognized and congratulated by the 500 other attendees for his 41 years of AMPA attendance. Well done, Artie!!! Also of note, is the fact that District 12 Vice-President, Leslie Wolfe, was presented with the Liz Barkley Status of Women Award. I hope that Leslie will eventually decide to join our merry group in ARM – when the time comes, of course.

In Federation,

Manfred

Keep up-to-date with ARM Chapter 12 events

Check out newsletters and the calendar at
www.armchapter12.org

Notify ARM and OSSTF of address and email changes

armchapter12@gmail.com

&

[Tammy Gulla, 416 751-8300](tel:4167518300)

OTPP and CPP Rule Out Divestment

Should the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan dump all its fossil fuel investments?

BY CHARLES HAWKES

Our pension fund has a continual record of success. It posted a \$13.5 billion surplus in January 2016, is now 107 per cent funded, and ranks number 2 internationally on management efficiency. No wonder that year after year, retired Ontario teachers give the OTPP 9 out of 10 in satisfaction surveys. Yet, it is coming under pressure to sell its investments in oil and gas companies as a global divestment movement against fossil fuel companies gathers momentum.

At the time of this writing, OTPP along with the Canada Pension Plan made news when they ruled out divestment. In fact, the OTTP increased its stake in the industry when it invested 3.3 billion for oil and gas holdings in Cenovus Energy, a Calgary based company.

The divestment campaign began three years ago, inspired by Bill McKibben, author of *The End of Nature*, and many other books on environmental issues. Starting with student movements in several countries, including Canada, it has now spread to the pension, endowment, and foundation funds in 43 countries. Some notable institutions include the United Church of Canada, the Anglican Church, the Rockefeller Foundation (its original fortune came from the Standard Oil company), and Norway's sovereign wealth fund (built on oil revenues).

The Paris climate change conference held last December set a goal of keeping the rise in global temperature below two degrees Celsius. To do so would mean that with present technology of carbon capture, 60-80% of fossil fuels would have to stay in the ground. That puts the world on a 'carbon budget', the finite amount of fossil fuel that can be burned before global temperatures exceed the limit. Oil reserves with low production costs would be tapped and used first up to the budget limit, while reserves with higher production costs would stay in the ground. This is bad news for Alberta's oil sands, since production costs range from

\$75 to \$85 per barrel, well above lower cost oil.

Other problems with fossil fuel investments for institutions involve the stranded asset issue which involves holding an investment to a point where its rate of return is insecure. The most obvious example is another fall in oil prices similar to the one we have experienced lately. The OTTP itself lost \$1.768 billion on its holdings in energy companies last year. A breakthrough in innovation in sustainable energy is another risk. The idea of carbon liability could become a problem for oil companies if they are sued for causing health problems similar to what happened to the tobacco companies. Finally, the opposition of indigenous people and communities to oil and gas exploitation acts as another blockage undermining values of fossil fuel holdings.

The final argument for divestment is both moral and pragmatic. It is that scientific evidence proves that climate change caused by carbon emissions is a grave threat to the world, particularly those unborn. As more and more people accept this fact, the movement to limit and eventually end fossil fuel use will force governments to impose even more stringent controls of fossil fuels. This in turn will reinforce the pressures mentioned above that force holdings into becoming stranded assets.

Pension funds, including the OTPP, defend their opposition to divestment by stating that they as large investors can influence fossil fuel companies from within to become better climate change citizens. They also defend these holdings as necessary in the present to provide the returns for present and future pensioners. That may be so, but educators teaching young people who will experience the very real challenges of climate change should come clean and take the lead on eliminating investments in oil and gas.

(This article drew on a study by Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, entitled [Pension Funds and Fossil Fuels](#), Nov.20, 2015)

Invisible Wounds of War and Peace

First responders are at high risk of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, but it can affect almost anyone, including education workers

BY CYNDIE JACOBS



Steve O'Brien on the resources available about PTSD

At the ARM Chapter 12 luncheon on Wednesday, April 20, 2016, Don Wright and Steve O'Brien provided, to 35 attendees, a brief overview of PTSD - a relatively new form of mental illness.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a psychological disorder and, until quite recently, was largely misunderstood and mostly attributable to service men and women returning from combat. The clinical definition, while very broad, describes PTSD as a “natural emotional reaction to trauma experiences that involve actual or threatened serious harm to oneself or others.”

Anyone who faces any kind of intense, terrifying event will continue to have strong feelings about it, even months after the event. Usually, within three months or so, the stress eases and behaviour patterns return to what they were prior to the event. For some people, however, the thoughts and/or memories of these horrible events seriously affect their lives long after any real danger has passed. It could take years before any symptoms of PTSD appear. While most people experience trauma at some point in their lives, not all traumatic experiences lead to PTSD.

Anyone can develop PTSD, including children. However, some people are at greater risk of developing PTSD after witnessing or experiencing a traumatic event. Some of the factors that can increase the risk include:

- An existing mental health condition
- Previous exposure to a life-threatening event (trauma)
- Trauma experienced during childhood or

adolescence

- Lack of support from family and/or community
- Ongoing stressful experiences

It is difficult to identify which events are traumatic enough to cause PTSD, since people view and experience things differently. Some typical traumatic events include:

- Bombings, rape, torture
- Natural disasters: earthquakes, hurricanes, floods
- Being forced to leave your home
- Witnessing someone being harmed or killed

The signs and symptoms of PTSD are commonly divided into three categories or clusters:



Don Wright gives us the histories of four PTSD cases

- Re-experiencing or re-living the traumatic event
- Avoidance - avoiding things that remind the person of the event
- Hyper-arousal - feeling keyed up and on edge most of the time

The American Psychiatric Association adds a fourth category: negative changes in beliefs and feelings.

Feelings of shame, guilt, hopelessness, anger and having revenge fantasies are a few of the effects of PTSD. Others demonstrate impulsive and self-destructive behaviours or have difficulties getting along with people. This can lead to problems with family, friends and colleagues.

PTSD can be host to or result from other mental and physical problems such as depression, stomach problems, dizziness or chest pains. Some people turn to drugs and alcohol to alleviate the symptoms. Often, when patients seek help from their physician for emotional problems or

illnesses, neither the doctor nor the patient are aware that the problems could be related to PTSD.

While the symptoms of PTSD are the same across all cultures, how they are manifested can change from culture to culture. In some cultures, the high level of stigma associated with mental illness may mean that emotional distress - PTSD - is more acceptable if it is expressed through the body than through the mind.

Studies indicate that women are at greater risk of developing PTSD than men. For example, in the case of rape, which is one of the highest risks for producing PTSD, women are far more likely to be raped than men. Recent data show that 4 per cent of men and 10 per cent of women will be diagnosed with PTSD in their lifetime.

People can and do recover from PTSD, but the time it takes varies greatly, depending upon the individual. There are two main types of treatment for PTSD, and the most effective course of treatment is a combination of both:

- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), which teaches the person how their thoughts, feelings and behaviours work together and how to deal with problems and stress.
- Medication for depression, nervousness and sleepless problems.

When someone you know is diagnosed with PTSD, there are many challenges for him/her as well as those around him/her. The best way to help is by learning about the illness, so that you have a better idea of their experiences and can understand the behaviours better. Offer your support if they are seeking treatment or ask if you can help them in any way. For those who develop PTSD, receiving early treatment may stop the symptoms from becoming chronic.

If you are concerned that a colleague, friend or loved one has experienced post-traumatic stress, encourage him/her to seek help and support. Some initial contacts could include:

- A family service agency
- A community mental health agency
- A counsellor or family therapist
- A family doctor
- A religious or spiritual leader
- A workplace employee assistance program (EAP)
- Telephone hotlines
- A hospital
- A settlement agency (if the person is an immigrant or refugee)

On April 5, 2016, in a rare occurrence at Queen's Park, all three Parties unanimously supported the passage of Bill 163 - Supporting Ontario's First Responders Act (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). This Bill amends the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA) and the



Sept 3, 1999, 401 accident. Rob Gurdebeke - Windsor Star

Ministry of Labour Act with respect to PTSD. This Bill creates a presumption that PTSD in first responders arises out of and in the course of the workers' employment. While this is an important recognition of the severity of PTSD, the Bill has omitted many of the other workers who are afflicted by the disorder.

The Ontario Federation of Labour's submission to the Standing Committee on Social Policy on Bill 163 describes what must be done to include the many other workers who have PTSD. The submission can be found at <http://bit.ly/1TgPj4t>

For additional information and resources, please visit: <http://www.ptsdassociation.com/> or the Canadian Mental Health Association website: <http://www.cmha.ca/>

A sample of the many books written about PTSD include:

1. Ute Lawrence: *The Power of Trauma: Conquering Post Traumatic Stress Disorder* (2009)
2. Daniel J. Levitin: *The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload* (2014)



Sept 3, 1999, 401 accident. Jason Kryk - Windsor Star

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Dr. Gabor Maté: <i>When the Body Says No: The Cost of Hidden Stress</i> (2012) 4. Jean Carper: <i>Your Miracle Brain</i> (2000) 5. Francine Shapiro: <i>Getting Past Your Past: Take</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Control of Your Life with Self-Help Techniques from EMDR Therapy (2012) 6. Romeo Dallaire: <i>Waiting for First Light: My Ongoing Battle with PTSD</i> (2016) |
|---|--|

Ute Lawrence in a Fog

How PTSD can happen and what one couple did about it

BY DON WRIGHT

September 3, 1999. Ute Lawrence and her husband Stan Fisher set out from London along Highway 401 toward the American border.

With little warning, they drive into dense fog. Suddenly, they crash into a massive scene of crushed and burning vehicles. They skid sideways into a car. A van settles on their roof. A tractor trailer passes over their trunk.

They see an arm crushed between their car and the next. A voice cries out with words that become familiar across North America: “Please help me, I’m only fourteen.” A trucker appears with a fire extinguisher. He comes too late. The girl dies with her parents.

The crashing continues. Each rocks their vehicle. Fourteen cars burn. Five tractor-trailers. Eighty-seven vehicles are destroyed. Forty-five people are injured.

Eight die.

Many hours later Ute and Stan arrive home. They drink all the wine in the house. In the morning, Stan leaves to buy coffee cream. When he fails to return, Ute looks out to the drive. Stan sits in their second vehicle crying. He is unable to drive.

Stan recovers. Ute does not. When she goes back to her office she can’t concentrate. She is afraid to drive. She is isolated from the world and out of control. The phone rings and she slams down the receiver. She wants her old self back.

She goes into treatment eight months after the accident. When her therapy is complete she is able to escape from the trauma. She and Stan establish the first Post Traumatic Stress Disorder clinic in North America.

Indigenous Rights Are Human Rights

Toronto has the largest number of indigenous people in Ontario

BY CHARLES HAWKES

Few subjects are more timely than this topic presented at ARM's February 17 luncheon by two indigenous speakers. Tanya Senk, the Program Coordinator for Indigenous education at the TDSB, and Michael Cheena, a member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Tanya is a Metis/Cree/Anishinabe educator, artist and writer, (and a grand niece of Louis Riel on her mother's side). Michael, born in Moose Factory on James Bay, is a residential school survivor. Their combined presentations confirmed the urgent need for change in all aspects of our relationships with Canadian indigenous people.

Ninety-four recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are related to education and research. As an educator, Tanya pointed out that Toronto has the largest number of indigenous people in Ontario, but because many do not self-identify, teachers are unaware of students' family background. These students are, in her words, "hidden, but in plain view." The need for a different educational approach and curriculum to fully engage them is needed. Some of the ideas she explained included the

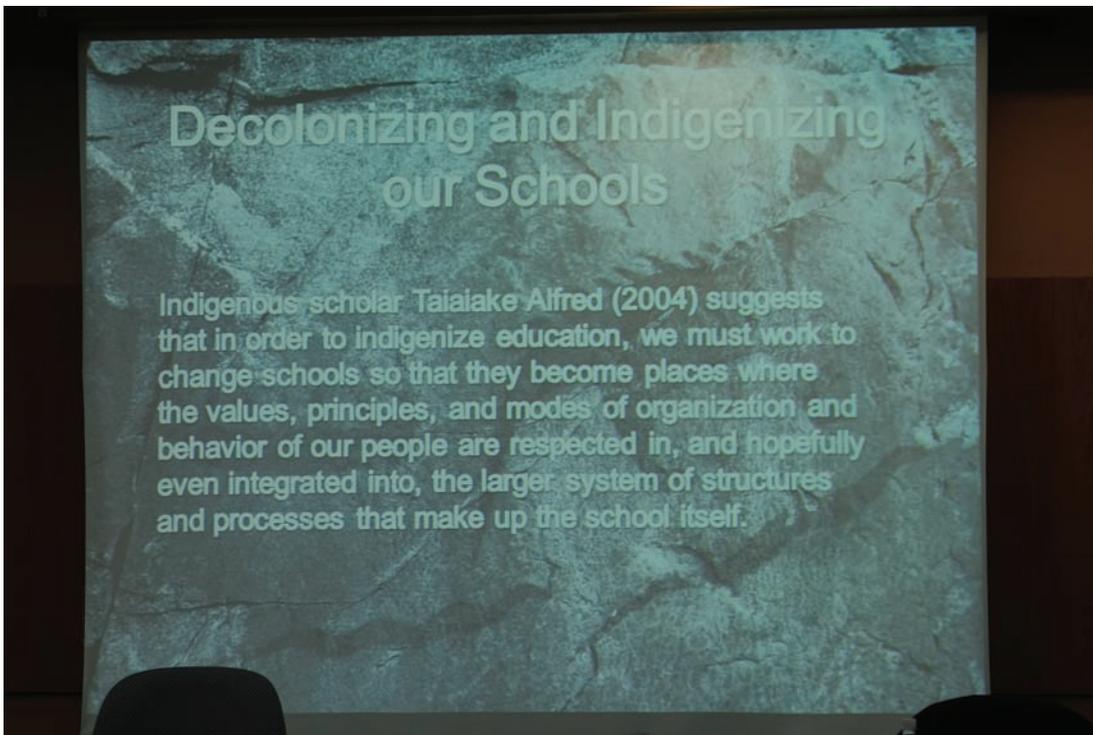


Tanya Senk, Program Coordinator of the TDSB's Aboriginal Education Centre, awakened ARM C 12 to the work being done in the TDSB for indigenous students and for all students who need to know Canada's indigenous history and issues

use of talking circles, the avoidance of images "of, rather than by," indigenous peoples, concentration on the here and now of indigenous peoples' status rather than the cultural tourism of their past. Indigenous people are diverse; some do

not consider themselves Canadian, and resist being fitted into the official multi-cultural framework.

Michael Cheena, the residential school survivor, (and hockey player in several Ontario towns) answered the generalized questions we asked about status, and non-status Indians, and the issues of unceded territories. An important idea to realize is that indigenous attitude to treaties is that the land doesn't belong to us, we belong to the land. In the past particularly, indigenous peoples regarded these treaties as more friendship agreements than actual



ownership transfers.

This educational morning ended with presentations of cards and gifts to Tanya and Michael. Thanks to organizer

Julia Harney who has always been a strong advocate for indigenous people, assisted by Neil Walker. Credit of course to Jim Loftus for notifying attendees.

A Historical Perspective on Indigenous Studies in the Toronto District School Board

OSSTF was a significant part of the founding of the TDSB's Aboriginal Education Centre

BY JULIA HARNEY

In 1977 the Wandering Spirit Survival School was founded by parents Pauline Shirt and Vernon Harper (Cree Nation). In 1989 the school was renamed First Nations School of Toronto, and located at 935 Dundas Street East, Toronto, Ontario. The curriculum included the teaching of native traditional values and the Ojibway language.

In the early 1980's, as a Contact Alternative Secondary School teacher, I attended an Area East community education meeting. Parents from First Nations School asked me whether Contact School could incorporate indigenous literature into the curriculum. With funding from the Toronto Board of Education (TBE) and the Ontario Arts Council, artists, writers and actors were engaged to participate in our program. In 1987, writer Lenore Keeshig-Tobias designed and team taught English courses that included Native literature (oral and written). Course materials were shared with other schools.

As members of the professional development committee (OSSTF), former District 15, Karma Naik, Rosemary Mohring, and I initiated native culture workshops, with the support of other committee members. The workshops (four per year) took place in the Talking Room at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (NCCI) and were open to

all teachers, staff and students of the TBE and the Faculty of Education, University of Toronto. The workshops were funded by the OSSTF and the TBE. The first aboriginal keynote speaker for a professional development day was Patricia Monture, Professor, Faculty of Law, Dalhousie University. Subsequently, the TBE hired Vernon Douglas as its first Native Education Advisor.

Professional development of teachers and staff is essential to the successful incorporation of new programs into the curriculum. From this humble beginning, we should all be proud that in 2016 the Toronto District School Board has an effective Aboriginal Education Centre, run by a staff of eleven, with Tanya Senk as the Program Coordinator. It is located at 90 Croatia Street, Toronto, Ontario. Tel 416-393-9600.

A fine source for native educational resources is GoodMinds.com, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, 188 Mohawk Street Brantford, Ontario N3S 2X2

Email: burnhamj@goodminds.com Tel: 519-753-1185 / Fax: 519-751-3136

Also, visit the Woodland Cultural Centre at, 184 Mohawk Street, Brantford, Ontario, N3T 5V6

Phone: (519)759-2650. Fax: (519)759-8912

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Considered

The Pass System

This film shows us Canada as an apartheid state

REVIEWED AND COMPILED BY JULIA HARNEY

The *Pass System* depicts a little-known period of Canadian history in which indigenous people in Western Canada were forbidden from leaving their reservations without a pass signed by their local Indian Agent, for any reason, such as hunting, visiting family, or their children in the residential schools.

Alex Williams' documentary *The Pass System*, took five years of research and interviews to complete. It was viewed at the TIFF Bell Lightbox Theatre on February 21, 2016. Narration by Tantoo Cardinal, with music by Cree/Mennonite composer Cris Derksen. Following the viewing of the film, a panel discussion took place with Pamela Palmater, Mi'kmaq lawyer, and Professor of the Ryerson Indigenous Department, John S. Milloy, historian, and former head of research for the TRC Commission, Bev Jacobs, Mohawk lawyer, James Cullingham, producer at Tamarack Productions, and panel moderator, Ali Kazimi, filmmaker, and Chair of the Department of Cinema and Media Arts at York University.

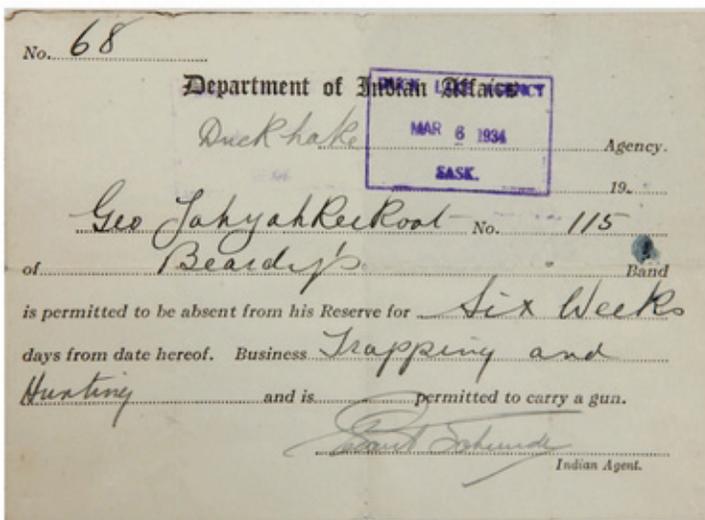


documents were destroyed by the Canadian government.

Williams wanted us to hear from elders whose lives, and their parent's lives, were directly affected by the pass system. The film features Cree, Soto, Dene, Ojibway and Blackfoot Elders from Treaty 4, 6 and 7, and Battleford's area locales and people such as Philip Favel (Second World War veteran from Sweetgrass), Jacob Pete (first treaty Indian full member of the RCMP), Fort Battleford re-enactments and footage of Battleford. Senior historians from Saskatchewan and Alberta provide context and artists Alex Janvier and Lori Blondeau relate personal and family stories of living under the wide-sweeping powers enforced by the Indian Agent.

With *The Pass System*, Alex Williams wanted to present a more complete history of Canada other than the sanitized version "where pioneers settled the west and made things better". Growing up in Saskatoon, Williams (who is of Lebanese/Irish parentage) witnessed racism in many forms. He thought that the pass system revealed a very Canadian tactic of colonization, one that non-indigenous Canadians need to hear. Canadians need to face their racist history, which has kept Canada a white state. We need to listen to indigenous people "with our hearts" and complete the story. It will take the will of many.

For future screenings, check the websites of Tamarack Productions, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network and the CBC.



In response to the North-West Rebellion led by Louis Riel, the pass system was implemented in 1885 by Prime Minister John A. MacDonald and his advisors. It became an effective tool of apartheid used to control the movement of indigenous peoples until the 1940's. The pass system was illegal; most passes and relevant



The Retired Bard

Silent Question

I have been haunted for a lifetime by an image from a long lost war. At a busy intersection in Saigon, a middle-aged monk sits cross-legged in the street.

His back is straight. His eyes are open. His head does not turn. Calm, and expressionless, he sets ablaze the hem of his saffron gasoline-soaked robe.

In seconds his body image is nearly lost in a thick billow of smoke and flames.

He sits absolutely still, his self-immolation unattended by sound or gesture. There is an indefinable decorum and symmetry in this final act of his life.

In the brief moments before his body slumps into death, he raises his gaze above the surrounding buildings.

The transformation from dignified presence to crumpled smoldering corpse has occurred in what seems no time at all. Fascination and horror have warped time.

No one has attempted to intervene in the holy man's suicide. Many of the passersby on the streets enclosing the square have put their hands over their mouths and eyes, or turned away from the flaming scene. When it is clear that his death has been consummated, a sad, almost keening murmur begins. Prayers are quietly made; anguished gestures can be seen throughout the crowd. No one approaches the dead monk. People glance towards him and move on their separate ways.

It is clear that the motivation for his death is not apparent to anyone present. The monk spoke to no one, shouted no slogans, went about his macabre task with quiet purpose, and

died as if pain did not exist, or was somehow irrelevant.

Farther along the square, some fifty yards away, the uniformed American cameraman, who has filmed the entire episode from beginning to conclusion, is ending his own task. He is breaking down his photographic gear, capping lenses, stowing film, and preparing to move himself and his equipment to the nearest cold beer.

He does not anticipate that his work this day will eventually be seen on television screens around the world. He is tired, sweaty, and truly dismayed by what he has captured and recorded through his zoom, but he has seen, and filmed worse. His years in Southeast Asia have given him a philosophic detachment from suffering that could easily be construed as indifference.

When he gets back to the "world," he will have difficulty remembering in detail the incident he has just recorded.

The reasons that impelled the holy man to take his own life in a public setting, silently and formally, remain an open question. Was there a deep moral significance intended? A message in silence to be deciphered by humanity at large, the makers and victims of war and its consequences?

Finally, did it all matter? Perhaps so. For a brief and limited time, the all-consuming world of News was sufficiently shocked that it paused to focus for a moment, and ask why. For a short while, the usual collection of viewers, commentators and pundits offered explanations and interpretations in bewildering variety, but their attention flickered and faded as newer "News" occurred. I still think of it now and then.

— Bruce Archer



Children of the Broken Treaty : Canada's Lost Promise and One Girl's Dream

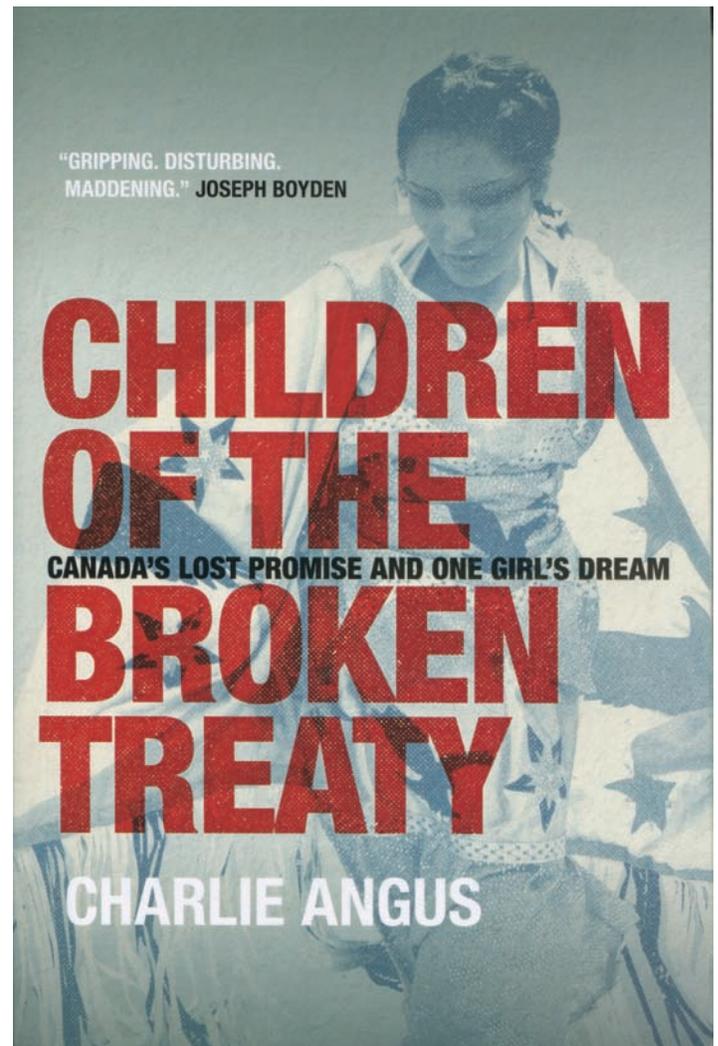
By Charlie Angus (University of Regina Press, 2015)

REVIEWED BY LARRY FRENCH

Duncan Campbell Scott is one of our bards of the northland. He gave us *The Forsaken* and *The Onondaga Madonna* whom he depicts as a savage “woman of a weird and waning race.” Is he for her or against her? If you read Charlie Angus’s distressing indictment of Scott and his successors in our federal government you will see that Scott is definitely against. His negotiation of the infamous Treaty 9 and the policies he instituted to “Kill the Indian in the child” evoke those of Eichmann and his final solution. If he is a pretty good poet, he is also a racist bureaucrat who set in process what would be a century of oppression and suffering for our First Nations.

Charlie Angus, the NDP Member of Parliament for Timmins-James Bay, is one of my heroes. He represents Kirkland Lake, the town where I grew up. A man for all seasons, Charlie is a singer and musician with the Grievous Angels. He celebrates the north with striking tributes to the mining industry –*Industrial Cathedrals of the North*, a photo portrait of headframes, *Cage Call* and *Mirrors of Stone*, photo essay tributes to mines and miners, and *We Lived a Life and Then Some*, the story of Cobalt where he now lives. His book before *Broken Treaty*, *Unlikely Radicals*, is the page turning saga of the fight to prevent Toronto from dumping its garbage in the Adams Mine pit. Lest you think he is a part time MP neglecting his riding while he puts pen to paper, Maclean’s has named him “The top constituency MP in Canada.” (350)

With Treaty 9, Angus’s “broken” treaty, the James Bay Cree in 1905 ceded their vast northern Ontario ancestral lands to the government of Canada. They had little choice: Duncan Campbell Scott, negotiator and future top bureaucrat for the Department of Indian Affairs, told them the federal government would take over the lands with or without their consent. The mineral, hydro-electric and timber resources of the territory that would fuel Canada’s prosperity in the 20th century were an irresistible prize. The key provision of the Treaty that induced the Cree chiefs to sign was Scott’s promise to furnish education to their children: the Crown would pay



the salaries of teachers and provide school buildings and equipment “as may seem advisable” to the government. Scott promised with a forked tongue; “as may seem advisable” allowed him to betray the children of the treaty from the very beginning.

We know the story. Angus gives us a heart rending portrayal of the ongoing sell-out of the First Nations and their children. Scott wanted to as quickly as possible “get rid of the Indian problem...Our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic...” To eradicate Indian culture, he would off-load responsibility for their

education to the churches, and as cheaply as possible. Both the Anglican and Catholic churches already had mission schools: the Anglicans offered to educate the James Bay Cree children for the rock bottom price of eighty dollars per capita; the Oblates undercut them, lowering the ante to sixty dollars per capita.

By 1907, when Scott was negotiating with the churches, residential schools were already a horrific failure. A Department of Indian Affairs report indicated that death rate of Indian children while at school or just after leaving school in the West was twenty-four percent; in one school it had risen to a near genocidal sixty-nine percent. Scott was not deterred. The chronic underfunding of Indian communities and education that he initiated is the background to Angus' main story, the battle to get a viable school in Attawapiskat.

As a result of the abuse in schools like St Anne's Residential School in the fifties and sixties, Indian communities demanded their own local schools. In 1976, J.R. Nakogee Primary School opened in Attawapiskat. Joy and exultation! But short-lived. A pipe carrying fuel to the teachers' apartments froze in the muskeg under the school and cracked, polluting the school and its yard. The children were exposed to a toxic cocktail of benzene, toluene, xylenes and diesel fuel. Students were getting sick, teachers quitting. In 2000, the school was finally condemned and portables erected. However, they were adjacent to the contaminated brownfield in the school yard and exposed to the same toxic pollution. Bob Nault, Liberal Minister of Indian Affairs, promised that a new school would be built. His successor, Andy Scott repeated the promise. Empty words.

In 2007, the Conservatives killed the school project. In 2008, the Attawapiskat children aided by elders and Charlie Angus launched a protest. Schools in the south joined in by writing letters to Chuck Strahl, new Minister of Indian Affairs. Enter Shannen Koostachin. The school's thirteen year old student produced a power point presentation and posted it on YouTube. The Public School Boards' association led by Catherine Fife joined in, as did the teachers' federations. Shannen and fellow students decided to take their grade eight school trip to Ottawa at the moment of the National Day of Action for



The community as a holding camp. Grade school portables at Kashechewan First Nation, 2014. Courtesy of the author.

Indigenous People. They spoke at a press conference with the national media. Responding to the pressure, Chuck Strahl agreed to a meeting with the children and elders in his office the next morning. There was hope in the air. However, Strahl bluntly informed the group that there would be no school. The elders were shattered; Shannen looked Strahl in the eye and told him 'We're not going to quit, we're not going to give up.'

Leaving the office, Shannen and her little group joined the protest on Parliament Hill. Shannen was chosen to relate what had happened in Strahl's office. The small teen-ager electrified the crowd and media with her description of the substandard conditions of her education and her defiant message to the Minister: "We will not quit until every First Nation child has a school that they can be proud of and that they can call their own."

Shannen's *cri de guerre* and the subsequent protest that reached the United Nations (Shannen was nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize) finally had an effect. In the Fall of 2009 Strahl announced that the new school would be built. MPP Gilles Bisson recently told me that it is up and functioning well. Shannen did not see the school: while attending Timiskaming District High School in New Liskeard the charismatic young woman was killed in a car crash on Highway 11 north of the community. Her influence lives on: amidst the outpouring of grief at her death the Shannen's Dream movement was launched to fight for equity for all First Nation's youth. We can only hope it succeeds and the sooner the better.

The Nomadic Retiree

Antigua, Guatemala

The land of eternal spring

BY MICHELLE BARRACLOUGH

I was first introduced to Antigua in the 1980s, while their civil war was still on-going. Antigua was the old capital of Guatemala, until it was severely damaged by an earthquake in 1773. It is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site and has a lovely mixture of Mayan and Spanish colonial buildings.

At the time, early 1980s, as a wide-eyed new teacher, I saw everything as an adventure. I was starting my four over five and travelling the world. Together with an old school friend, I was preparing to travel around Central and South America. After a little research I decided to go and study Spanish in Antigua. A local home-stay provided a roof and meals with several hours of Spanish classes thrown in. Of the Central American countries it had the largest indigenous population and to me it was the most



Woman using a back-strap loom



The monastery/hotel of Santo Domingo

interesting.

I still remember standing in line at my favourite bakery, waiting for the most wonderful brownies and chatting to an American woman who lived in Antigua. After a bit, she asked me if I had seen the strafing of a nearby village early that morning. She had watched it from the roof of her home. It rather jolted me to find out that it was the village I had recently visited. I wondered how many of the people I had spoken to were still alive. Talk about clueless.

At any rate, Guatemala is now much more sedate than it used to be. There is a shuttle directly from the airport to Antigua. It will drop you off right at your hotel. Antigua has a variety of accommodations from hostels to five-star hotels. Today it consists of cobblestone streets and brightly coloured houses hiding world-class restaurants and art galleries in a beautiful setting surrounded by volcanoes.

Not to say that you can't still have adventures. There are all kinds of excursions from a visit to beautiful lake Atitlan, a kettle lake surrounded by volcanoes, to climbing an active volcano if you have the desire. When I climbed Volcan Pacaya, the lava flow was subsiding and I saw locals roasting tomatoes in the lava. Additionally you can visit a coffee plantation, bike around the surrounding villages, or take a chicken bus to a woman's co-operative to watch the ancient practice of weaving with back-strap looms.

There is also the option to take a short trip across the border to Copan in Honduras where there is a delightful Mayan city waiting to be discovered. Or if you have a bit



Volcan Fuego

more time, delve deep into the Guatemalan interior, and visit Tikal, one of the most important cities of the ancient Mayan world.

Whether you enjoy culture, food, textiles, jewellery or Mayan culture, Guatemala is a must-see when coming to this unique continent. Antigua is the land of eternal spring.



Catedral de San José



Decorations for a wedding

Considered

The Secret History of the Mongol Queens

by Jack Weatherford

REVIEWED BY DAVID SCHREIBER

Genghis Khan is not remembered kindly in the West. Medieval chroniclers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were so terrified by his reputation that they never saw past the appalling idea of what would happen if they resisted him. They regarded him as a ruthless barbarian, a demon, an Asian Horseman of the Apocalypse, and their fearful image of him remains with us today. In *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*, anthropology professor Jack Weatherford attempted to expand our understanding of the great Mongol conqueror, reminding us that not only did Genghis Khan create the largest empire in the history of the world, but he also provided reasonable government and, by placing the state above religion, offered religious tolerance at a time when that was extremely rare. Most important of all, he developed the Silk Road, turning an unreliable, often dangerous caravan route controlled by a string of unpredictable warlords into a commercial superhighway. The trickle of commerce turned into a torrent, with the flow of goods, people, and ideas cross-fertilizing and advancing the cultures of both East and West. Under the Mongols, according to Weatherford, the Silk Road laid the foundations for modernity and served as a prototype for modern communication systems. It was an achievement sought after but never realized by Alexander, the Romans, Muslims or Christians.

In *The Secret History of the Mongol Queens: How the Daughters of Genghis Khan Rescued His Empire*,

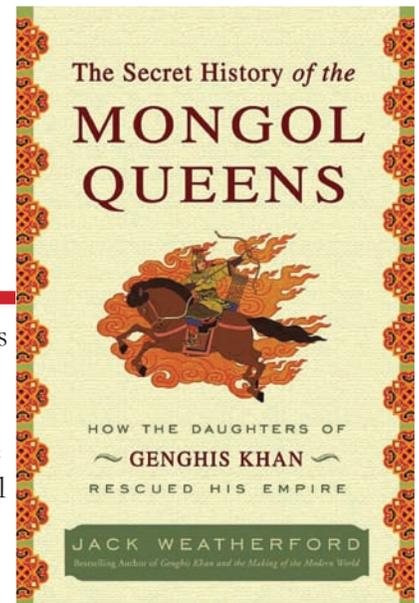


Genghis Khan

Weatherford illuminates another surprising feature of the Mongol leader, how he gave the top roles in the Mongol Empire to women.

This fact was obscured not only by European writers; some unknown person doctored the historical record. In the classic Mongol chronicle, *The Secret History of the Mongols*, written soon after the death of Genghis Khan, there is only one hint of what he did, a single revealing sentence. Preceding that sentence is a report of how Genghis Khan distributes titles, offices, and territories to various male members of his family. Then come the words, “Let us reward our female offspring.” At that point the document is mutilated, an unknown number of words being cut out. Nothing remains about his female offspring. Professor Weatherford, however, has managed to piece together what really happened by poring over non-Mongolian sources—Chinese, Korean, Persian, Tibetan, Russian, Italian, French. It makes a fascinating story.

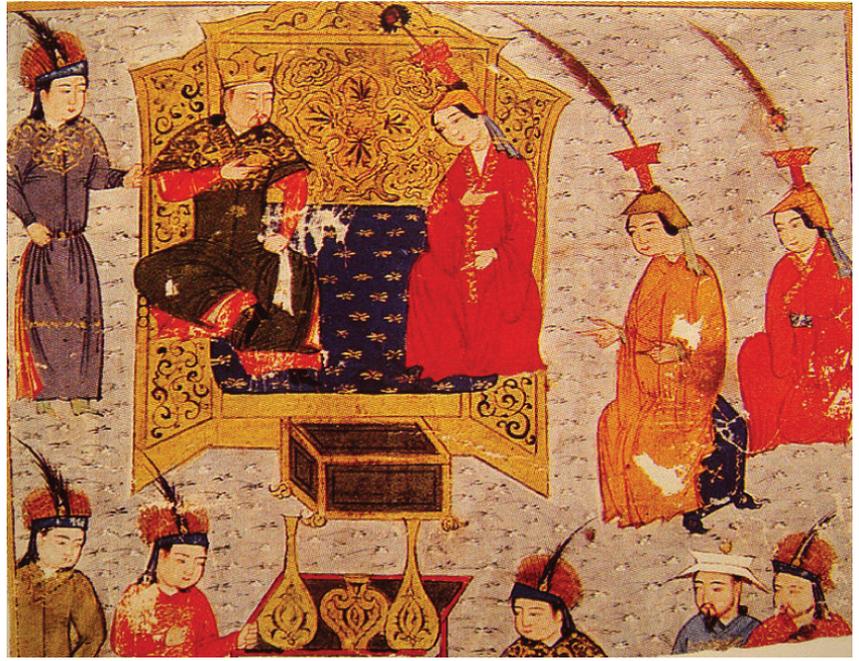
The view that women can rule as well as men came easily to Genghis Khan. Both his mother, Hoelun, and his wife, Borte, came from steppe tribes in which women played influential roles. They raised his daughters to rule, and even as his daughters matured and strengthened under their imperial tutelage, Genghis recognized that his four sons were drunks and wastrels. In preparation for his first major military campaign beyond the Mongolian Plateau, he gave his most important appointment to his daughter Alaqai, to rule over the lands adjacent to China south of the Gobi desert, his springboard for a massive invasion. During her reign, which lasted 21 years, Alaqai began by making herself literate, then set up administrative and cultural organizations so effective that they became models for the entire Mongol Empire. Her capital was the model for Karakorum, the capital of Ogodie, Genghis Khan’s son, and for Beijing, the capital of Khublai Khan.



Genghis put two other daughters in charge of kingdoms controlling the Silk Road, the gateway between China and the Muslim lands to the southwest—and an arrow pointing at Russia and Europe. A fourth ruled over the northern lands reaching into Siberia. The four sons administered the stable, nomadic Mongolian heartland. The daughters were given full power, not expected to be puppets of a central government. To ensure that no one would infringe on their freedom, Genghis was careful about how he installed them. Upon marrying a daughter to the leader of a vassal state, he designated her as queen and demoted her new husband to mere “prince consort.” The prince consort had to divorce all his existing wives. Then the hapless husband was conscripted into the Mongol army and sent to the front lines, where he usually died in battle within a few years. The daughters of Genghis Khan thus ruled without opposition or interference of any kind.

After the death of Genghis Khan and, later, his daughters, the empire began to unravel as members of the ruling clan fought for power. When the dust settled after the first round, the widows of Genghis Khan’s sons emerged victorious—another group of Mongol queens, who ruled from Korea to the Caucasus, and from the Arctic to the Indus, the largest empire ever ruled by women. Cleverest and most powerful was Sorkhokhtani, a Christian, who, by avoiding marriage to Genghis Khan’s son and successor, enabled her to advance her own sons, all four of whom took the title of Great Khan. So impressive was she that her fame spread far beyond the empire, a Syriac scholar writing, “If I were to see among the race of women another woman like this, I should say that the race of women was far superior to that of men.” Unfortunately, the daughters-in-law of Genghis Khan struggled ceaselessly against each other, as well as other ambitious relatives. After several generations of such infighting, the empire was torn to shreds. The great Mongol Empire was reduced once again to little more than a tribal power.

Even during this period of decline, remarkable Mongol women appeared. Khutulun, who lived in the fourteenth century, declared that she would never marry a man unless he could defeat her in wrestling. No man ever did, and it is said she won 10,000 horses from the



The Christian Mongol queen Sorkhokhtani with her husband, Tolui, son of Genghis Khan. Rashid al-Din, early 14th century. Note Mongol women’s distinctive headdress.

men who tried. She went on military campaigns with her father, the Great Khan, and was a fearsome warrior who, according to Marco Polo, could ride into enemy ranks and snatch a captive as easily as a hawk snatches a chicken. In the late fifteenth century, almost three hundred years after Genghis Khan, Queen Manduhai the Wise arose virtually out of nowhere to unite the Mongols once again, if not in a great empire at least as a proud and independent nation. Hers is an amazing story. Taking in hand seven-year-old Dayan, Genghis Khan’s last, sickly male descendant, who had barely escaped assassination by several pretenders to the throne, she maneuvered so brilliantly from her small power base, winning battle after battle, that she was finally able to have him installed as Great Khan over all the Mongols. She married him when he grew up, and they ruled as a pair.

In a fascinating final chapter, Weatherford contends that it is impossible to suppress history forever. Everything that happens leaves traces of itself. Traces of the Mongol queens can be found, for example, in Chaucer’s “The Squire’s Tale,” in Milton, even in the Taj Mahal. Khutulun surfaced in an Italian play in the seventeenth century as a woman warrior named Turandot. The play was translated by Schiller, directed by Goethe in 1802, and turned into an opera by Puccini in 1924.

16th Annual General Meeting OSSTF Active Retired Members Chapter 12

June 1, 2016

2:30 pm Registration

3:00 pm Meeting Begins

60 Mobile Drive

The Erie Room

***Guest Speaker: John Cartwright, President
Toronto and York Region Labour Council***

***Please call Vice-President Jim Loftus to confirm your attendance
at dinner following the meeting \$30
416 447-0811***

ELECTION OF 2015-2016 ARM CHAPTER 12 EXECUTIVE

The election will take place at the annual meeting, June 1.

Anyone wishing to serve on the executive should notify Paul Rook:

E-mail prook@sympatico.ca Phone 416-292-9919.

Provide your name and the position to which you wish to be elected.

If you have questions or want more information please feel free to contact Paul Rook.

Executive positions

President (1)

Vice-Presidents (2)

Secretary (1)

Treasurer (1)

Executive Officers: Each has a leadership role for a specific activity such as pensions and benefits, communications, political action, theatre, data, golf, etc.

Members at Large are full members of the Executive but do not have a specific role.

There is no limit to the number of Executive Officers and Members at Large, so everyone who is nominated and accepts is considered elected.

The Abbot Pub and Fare

3367 Yonge Street. 416-544-9074. <http://theabbot.ca/yonge/>

BY ALLAN HUX

In my inaugural column on Great Pubs in Toronto in February I suggested there are at least eight key criteria that must be considered. These are: the brews, fare, service, atmosphere, design/layout/décor, price, location, and accessibility which I will address in random order.

My favourite local establishment is The Abbot Pub and Fare, which is on the east side of Yonge St, two blocks from my house, and four and a half short blocks north of the Lawrence subway station when you exit from the north end of the platform. This makes it both an ideal local pub where you can meet friends and very handy for visitors to gather from across the city via the TTC

When you enter The Abbot, Clare and Sabrina are two of the regular hostesses who are pleased to greet, seat and serve you. They are also accustomed to patrons with food allergies so don't hesitate to ask their assistance on the menu. You have a nice choice of seating with booths on both sides of the room in front of the bar, tables down the middle that can be re-assembled to handle different size parties and two great tables inside the front window. My wife, Denise, and I had dinner there on April 17th and the front window was opened to provide a patio effect as people welcomed spring. The bar is on the right side in the back third of the room with eight stools and opposite the bar are a number of small tall tables against a bench with two tall chairs per table. There is only one television set over the bar and cash register. The room has a very high ceiling with a metallic, gold look that allows the sounds to rise and the patrons to hear each other. Unfortunately, the washrooms are down a steep set of stairs in the basement and are not wheel chair accessible although the pub area is.

The Abbot offers generous choices on the menu as well as four daily specials. My favourite menu items include the cod fish and chips. The lamb sausages are also a treat because Denise does not like the smell of cooked lamb and so we never prepare it in our kitchen or on the barbecue. These meals are in the \$14 to \$16 range. The high end of my favourites is the

pork schnitzel at \$18, but is this too much food for a lunchtime meal? There are several burgers including a veggie option in the \$13 - \$15 range. For the careful dining crew, they have green and Caesar salads that you can have as starters or meals in the \$6 - \$11 range. The serious salad meals include the Cobb, Stilton, and Beet salads which are amazing. For us sinners, there is dessert. Sticky Toffee Pudding is the house specialty and one we like to share, but when feeling a little guilty about the calories, I order the berry crumble instead. Dessert may push us over the \$25 lunch target depending on your drinks.

This does bring us to the brews. They have the standard domestic brews on tap and in bottles as well as imported beers and ales. What I like is their rotating set of craft beers on tap so each time you visit you may find a new craft beer to try. Half pints are \$4.50 and pints \$6.95.

Now you may wonder how often I visit The Abbot and the short answer is frequently. I have taken my first department head who hired me in 1975, a student from my first year of teaching who is now the head of the history department at Western Michigan University, a colleague as we planned a conference for history teachers on April 18th, 2016 and my last principal at TDSB. Oh yes, our church discussion group went there after our evening meeting on March 31st. Frequency is the true testimonial to the quality of a pub.

Remember to send me the name of your favourite, local pub – no restaurants or chains, just a pub. And if you decide to drive to The Abbott, there is street parking on Yonge St. and two local Toronto Parking Authority lots, but you will have to pay. There is only one hour parking in the first block on the side streets off of Yonge St., so you might as well park in the second block where you can stay for three hours free. That will put you almost in front of my house so consider giving me a call and we can go together!

Contact Allan Hux to recommend your favourite pub for inclusion in a future issue of After School: (416.487.8255 or allanhux@sympatico.ca)

Considered

Dark Money

By Jane Mayer

REVIEWED BY DAVE GRACEY

Dark Money is a must read for anyone who wants to understand the reality of US politics today. Big money has always played a significant role, but the Supreme Court rulings in Citizens United and Speech Now have made it the dominant factor. In Mayer's well documented book, the US has become a de facto oligarchy.

The prime organizing force behind this trend is the Koch brothers. Immensely wealthy (\$41 billion), they, along with their billionaire allies control a cast network of philanthropic institutions, think tanks, lobbyists, and superpacs. This Kochtopus promotes minimal government, low taxes, the free market, deregulation, privatization and cuts to welfare, social security and medicare. They reject the science of climate warming and oppose all environmental regulations, unions, minimum wages and food stamps. But they demand, and receive, vast subsidies and tax breaks for themselves. The Kochs have been convicted many times of violations of environmental laws, but have been let off with fines. Many of their allies have been convicted of tax evasion, insider trading and many other crimes, but never imprisoned.

The Koch campaign began a generation ago as an effort to change the conversation by setting up foundations and think tanks to subsidize supportive writers and publishers, fund chairs at universities and push their message among the intellectual elite. Then, because of the regulatory threat to their business, they moved to lobbying and direct involvement in state and national campaigns. Their interventions led to the defeat of several Democratic incumbents and the elections of otherwise obscure Republicans, such as Scott Walker in Wisconsin. He proceeded to follow the script to the letter, trashing the public service unions and attacking public education.

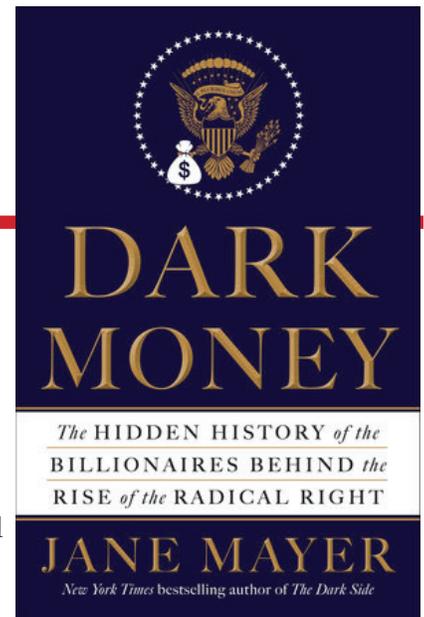
The rise of the Tea Party after Obama's election in 2008 was widely heralded as a populist reaction to Wall Street and corrupt elites. However with the backing of the Kochtopus, it was soon transformed into an anti-government, right wing movement which was used to divert anger away from the banks and towards government, unions and the unemployed. This strategy

was very successful in the 2010 elections, which produced Republican gains in Congress and in many states. The victories in the states allowed Republicans to control the 2011 redistricting process and to make voting more difficult

for minorities and the poor. In states like Texas, Ohio, Florida, North Carolina and more, they were able to gerrymander electoral districts to ensure Republican wins. In several state elections, for example, the Democrats won the popular vote, but the Republicans won the most seats.

The Kochtopus has succeeded in making the GOP the party of the very wealthy. Candidates are asked to take the no tax increase, no environmental regulations pledge in order to receive Koch funds. Moderates are denied money and forced out. John Boehner, majority leader of the House of Representatives, was displaced when he wouldn't bow to the extremists. Governor John Kasich of Ohio criticized the Koch opposition to Obamacare, in April 2014, and was ostracized. His campaign for president was denied funds and has withered. It is remarkable that Trump's campaign also had no backing from the Kochtopus and has flourished so far. Whether it will ultimately succeed remains to be seen.

The Democratic party is not immune to the influence of Big Money, although most of their backers, such as George Soros, have a more progressive agenda. Obama's dependence on Wall Street money led to his administration's weak response to the 2008 financial collapse. The result is a very un-virtuous circle. The more influence Big Money acquires, the more public policy is altered to allow them to make even more profits, which in turn gives them more influence. The result is rising inequality – "a system controlled by a handful of ultra-wealthy people who got rich from the system."





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Enter at www.otip.com/ARMwin or call 1-800-267-6847. No purchase necessary. Open to active and retired education employees residing in the Province of Ontario, 18 years of age or older. A minimum of 1 renewal date or a retirement date required to qualify. Contestants enter once; maximum 4 ballots. Odds of winning depend on total entries received. Grand prize is \$5,000, with additional \$50 Visa gift cards awarded throughout contest period. Contest closes May 31, 2016. Skill-testing question must be answered correctly. Contestants agree to be contacted by an OTIP broker. Go to www.otip.com/give-me-5/rules for all contest rules.

May 1, 2016

ARM Toronto – Chapter 12

**ACTIVE RETIRED MEMBERS OF
OSSTF TORONTO – CHAPTER 12**

Margaret McPhail

Secretary
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Toronto, Ontario
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Dear ARM Chapter 12 Member,

I am writing this open letter to all of you to formally endorse and request your consideration for enrolment into one of the available health benefits plans offered to all current and former OSSTF members by the Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan (OTIP). Should you already be an OTIP subscriber, I hope you are satisfied with the service offered, and that you will encourage other colleagues to consider becoming a new subscriber in 2016.

As about 40 per cent of you already know, all retired Ontario education employees, their families and survivors are eligible to apply for coverage under an ARM plan. There is also NO age restriction to join an ARM plan, simply a requirement of Ontario residency and OHIP coverage at the time of application. Should you spend a certain period of time outside of Ontario during part of the year, you are covered by 95 consecutive days of comprehensive travel insurance with any of the current ARM plans at no additional cost to you. Dental coverage can also be added at any time, without penalty. Importantly, as an ARM OTIP subscriber who might be diagnosed with cancer, you also have access to the CAREpath cancer assistance program which provides expert guidance and support through every step of your cancer experience.

When you purchase an OTIP health plan, you are also automatically enrolled in ARM, and the \$50 membership fee charged by OSSTF is deducted annually with your January plan premium. If you decide to join ARM mid-year, the fee is waived until the following year. Full information about the various OTIP health benefits plans is available by viewing the link on our Chapter 12 website armchapter12.org or by contacting OTIP directly at: 1-800-267-6847.

In an effort to provide the ARM membership with more comprehensive health benefits information, OTIP and Chapter 12 are planning an information workshop on Wednesday, May 18th located at the OSSTF Provincial Office (60 Mobile Drive). The presentation will start @ 11am and a light lunch will be provided. Please contact Vice-President Jim Loftus (416- 447-0811) by May 10th, if you plan to attend or also bring along an interested friend or colleague.

In Federation,

Manfred

Manfred Netzel, President