

TOUCHDOWN

Why Richardson Stadium's locker room is one of the best

TRADE WARS

Queen's experts weigh in on what we can expect

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The alumnus who wields the sharpest pencil in comedy

QUEEN'S ALUMNI REVIEW

ISSUE 1, 2025

THE MAGAZINE OF QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY SINCE 1927



The Influencers

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ABOUT THE COVER

Julia Perfetto, photographed in Toronto on May 9, 2025.



Award-winning photographer Wade Hudson and influencer Julia Perfetto, a rising star online, spent a Friday afternoon in Hudson’s Ward Street studio to capture this image. A blue background symbolizes digital culture and technology, but also expansiveness and trust - a nod to the scope and power of influencers in the online realm. Ms. Perfetto’s silhouette is framed by a digitally rendered ring light, its ethereal glow a reminder of the ubiquitous tool of the influencers’ world, and a spotlight that asks the viewer to consider their own place and identity in the influencer economy. Are you casting or reflecting the light of influence?



SO MUCH MORE AT STAKE

As I write this, it is impossible to imagine any more critical subject than the current threat to universities, their independence, mission, and values, that is documented almost daily in media reports and analyzed at length in higher-education-sector magazines. The situation in the United States, in particular the confrontation between its current administration and what are amongst the most prominent institutions in the world, has riveted the attention of academics and university leaders everywhere. This is because there is so much at stake.

The financial stakes at Harvard are of course eye-wateringly high. From a Canadian university perspective, the threat of losing \$2.2 billion in grants from government is almost as incomprehensible as the prospect of receiving such an amount from the taxpayer in the first place. We operate in a very different world, one in which such a cut in funding would be felt and described in our typical if nevertheless strange way as “existential.” And in that respect our world is very much like that of universities everywhere, where institutions’ capacity to withstand a significant withdrawal of support from government is considerably less than it is at Harvard, with its \$50+ billion endowment.

Money matters, of course, but much more is at stake in the current climate. In fact, the weaponizing of research funding serves to distract from the real objects of attack: academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and the search for truth. Those three things define and constitute a university not just in the abstract, but in action. Society respects institutional independence and grants scholars the freedom to do their work so that the truth can be pursued. And underlying this unlikely and complex cultural construct, going back via the German Philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835) to the establishment of the University of Bologna in 1088, is what we must all hope remains axiomatic: the belief that no society can be enduring, just, or prosperous that is not founded on truth.

The challenge to universities will take different forms in different parts of the world, but our responsibility will always be the same: to question received wisdom, counter prejudice, and refute fallacies even when propagated with the force of government behind them – all in the interest of building a just, equitable, humane, well-informed, and sustainable society.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patrick".

PRINCIPAL PATRICK DEANE

DEAR MR. BURGESS ...

How a letter from a Queen's music student charmed a legendary author and led to an extraordinary correspondence.

BY TONY ATHERTON

It is exactly the kind of charming anecdote that might have made it into one of David Barber's whimsical retellings of music history – if it had happened to a Baroque composer instead of to Mr. Barber, Mus'80.

In 1985, Mr. Barber, then a 26-year-old copy editor at the *Kingston Whig-Standard*, convinced Anthony Burgess, Nobel Prize-nominated British author (*A Clockwork Orange*) and prolific composer, to write a preface for his book *Bach, Beethoven And The Boys: Music History As It Ought To Be Taught*. It was the second in a series of music-history romps by Mr. Barber that continue to charm musicians and music-lovers around the world.

The story begins during Barber's first year as a voice student at Queen's. On the recommendation of an English-department teaching assistant, 19-year-old Mr. Barber read the Burgess novel *Nothing Like the Sun*, a fictional account of Shakespeare's love life, and became an instant fan. He did have one quibble, however.

▼
When David Barber, Mus'80, sent a bold request to a literary icon, he could never have guessed the response – or that it would be an important part of his own journey to becoming a successful author.



“There’s a throwaway line that Burgess puts in: ‘The madrigalist sings of a silver swan,’” Mr. Barber says. He knew that “perhaps the only madrigal in English about a silver swan” was published by Orlando Gibbons in 1601, two years after the events Mr. Burgess imagined.

“So, full of piss and vinegar and youthful bravado,” says Mr. Barber, “I wrote a letter to Mr. Burgess, care of (his publisher),” praising the author but gently inquiring about the apparent anachronism. Mr. Burgess, to Mr. Barber’s delight, wrote back, claiming archly that he had “some other madrigal in mind,” and included a quatrain that Mr. Barber assumes the author made up on the spot. “The swan shone silver on the golden Thames,” it begins.

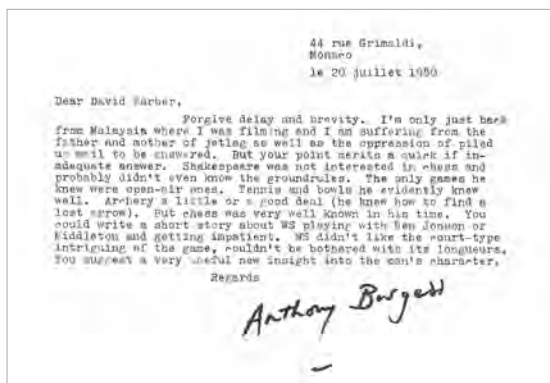
Mr. Barber immediately set the quatrain to music in the style of a 16th-century madrigal, sent it back to Burgess – but heard nothing in reply.

Three years later, Mr. Barber attended a lecture by Mr. Burgess at McMaster University. Afterwards, the author told Mr. Barber that not only did he recall their correspondence and the musical setting for his quatrain, but that he had composed a thank-you piece, “which was sitting on his piano back home.” Mr. Barber says he chose to believe that.

Having already sent Mr. Burgess his first published book, when *Bach, Beethoven and the Boys* was near publication, Mr. Barber risked sending the manuscript to Mr. Burgess with the audacious suggestion he might like to write a preface. Mr. Barber was bowled over when a wry, hand-typed preface arrived without comment or cover letter.

Since then, Mr. Barber’s waggish musical histories, including *When the Fat Lady Sings* and *Getting a Handel on Messiah* have attracted forewords by such musical luminaries as Yehudi Menuhin, Trevor Pinnock and Maureen Forrester (“each big name helped get others along the way”), but Mr. Barber says it is that first generous and unexpected offering by an eccentric British polymath that resonates most profoundly.

“Burgess was the first,” he says. “And still the one I’m most proud of.” 👑



PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID BARBER

YOU WROTE

A room with a view

Thank you for the picture of Carruthers Hall (*Alumni Review*, Winter 2024). I spent 13 months on campus in 1975-1976 as a graduate student in electrical engineering. In those days, the rooms on the second and third floors above the main entrance were the home of graduate students, with professors' offices

farther to the north. The view from my desk over the campus and Lake Ontario was spectacular. It was certainly the best view that I enjoyed over my 43-year career. The basement was occupied by CFRC, and I well remember listening to Shelagh Rogers and others from two floors above.

John Forsey, MSc'77

CONTRIBUTORS



Chloë Ellingson got her start in photojournalism just down the road from Kingston at Loyalist College in Belleville, where she learned the importance of finding stories close to home. She now works in her hometown of Toronto, specializing in local stories for publications such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, *The Local*, and many others. See "First Up," on page 27.



Robert Gerlsbeck is a Kingston-based freelance journalist. His articles have appeared in the *Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Star* and *Chatelaine*, and he's been an editor at *MoneySense*, *Marketing* and other magazines. He started his career as a daily newspaper reporter in Oshawa, Ont., and was the managing editor at *Smith Business Insight* at Queen's. See "The Age of Influence," on page 14.



Architectural historian **Jennifer McKendry, MA'84**, is author of numerous articles and books on the historic cemeteries of Ontario, early photography in Kingston, and 19th- and 20th-century architecture in the Kingston region. A member of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada, the Frontenac Heritage Foundation, and the Kingston Historical Society, she provides historical background for "If These Walls Could Talk."

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ON CAMPUS



The 2025-2026 season at the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts has been announced, featuring incredible acts and artists from Canada and around the world, such as Montreal's Juno Award-winning Dominique Fils-Aimé. Get more info about this season's lineup in Campus News.

What: The Isabel's 11th season; subscriptions, flex packages, and single tickets
When: Now through spring 2026 **Where:** 390 King St. W., Kingston

CAMPUS NEWS



The Partnership

Queen's, Embassy of Mexico embark on new hub for learning and research

Queen's has partnered with the Embassy of Mexico in Canada to establish the Mexico-Canada Research and Learning Hub. The hub will foster closer ties among Mexican and Canadian researchers, academics, and students through facilitating connections, encouraging collaboration, and continuing the momentum of ongoing research and academic initiatives between the countries. Carlos Joaquín González, Ambassador of Mexico to Canada, and Sandra den Otter, Vice-Provost (Global Engagement), formalized the partnership on

April 1 in a signing ceremony attended by Queen's leaders, faculty, staff, students, embassy representatives, and notable guests, including Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) President Alejandro Adem, Queen's Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) Matthew Evans, and Vice-Principal (Research) Nancy Ross.

The Season

The Isabel announces stellar lineup to "extend the rafters"

The Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts announced its 2025-2026 season on April 23. The 11th season is curated around the

Indigenous musician, visual artist, author Tom Wilson, left, and celebrated Canadian pianist Jaeden Izik-Dzurko and are among the performers featured in the 11th season at the Isabel.

theme of "Extending the Rafters," invoking the Haudenosaunee tradition of building good relations. In September, artist and activist Tom Wilson opens the Soloist Series with his Tehohàhake Trio and exhibit *Fading Memories of Home*. The Soloist Series includes concerts with percussionist Aiyun Huang and violinist Mark Fewer, jazz singer Dominique Fils-Aimé, and violinist James Ehnes. The Ensemble Series includes performances by the Elmer Iseler Singers, Roomful of Teeth, Kuné World, and the Amir Amiri Ensemble. Spotlight Concerts include A Miss Emily Christmas, Israeli Chamber Project, and Jane Bunnett and Maqueque. A highlight of the season will be the 2026 Bader-Overton National Piano Competition. The season will include performances by the Venice Baroque Orchestra, cellist Elinor Frey, violinist Chloe Kim, and a narrated performance curated by CBC radio host Tom Allen. The Piano Series includes Philip Chiu and Janelle Fung, Marc-André Hamelin and Charles Richard-Hamelin, and Jaeden Izik-Dzurko. Find out more about the dynamic 11th season at queensu.ca/theisabel.

The Appointments

New leaders set to begin roles in Queen's Health Sciences and Advancement

Principal and Vice-Chancellor Patrick Deane has recently announced two appointments. Lisa Tannock will be the new Dean of Queen's Health Sciences and director of the School of Medicine, effective July 1, 2025, and Kate Wilson will be the new Vice-Principal (Advancement), effective Sept. 1, 2025. Dr. Tannock joins Queen's from the University of



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF THE ISABEL; JOSÉ CRESPO

Kentucky, where she is the associate provost for faculty advancement and a professor in the Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes, and Metabolism. As dean of Queen's Health Sciences, Dr. Tannock will lead a faculty that includes the School of Medicine, the School of Nursing, and the School of Rehabilitation Therapy. Ms. Wilson joins Queen's from the University of Cambridge, where she is currently serving as CEO of its Centre for Better Futures at Downing College. In this role, she works to connect senior leaders with the university, its colleges, and partner organizations to advance solutions to global challenges.

The Leaders

Six Canada Research Chairs appointed

Six faculty members have been appointed Canada Research Chairs, with four renewals and two new chairs in areas that include health-care innovation, communications technology, language revitalization, and sustainable resource extraction. The federal Canada Research Chairs program recognizes established and emerging global research leaders at Canadian universities. As part of a national strategy to attract and retain top talent, the program supports researchers who are advancing knowledge and addressing critical challenges across disciplines. Dr. Gabor Fichtinger (School of Computing), Dr. Ning Lu (Smith Engineering, Electrical and Computer), Dr. Lindsay Morcom (Education), Dr. Jianbing Ni (Smith Engineering, Electrical and Computer), Dr. Farzaneh Sadri (Smith Engineering, Mining), and Dr. Amber Simpson (School of Computing / Biomedical Sciences) are among the 179



▲ Jana Amer, Healthsci'26, is the new Alma Mater Society president.

Canada Research Chairs awarded or renewed across the country in March. This announcement brings Queen's total number of Canada Research Chairs to 45.

The Election

New president leads the AMS

Jana Amer, Healthsci'26, has been elected 2025-26 Alma Mater Society (AMS) president, defeating Nico David Brasset Duque, Artsci'25, in the student vote. She will lead the AMS alongside Vice-President (Operations) Elena Nurzynski, Artsci'25, and Vice-President (University Affairs) Alyssa Perisa, Artsci'25. Ms. Amer's campaign was built around ACT - Accessibility, Collaboration, and Transparency - three pillars aimed at fostering a student

government that listens to and supports every student. She aims to remove barriers, making AMS resources and services easier to navigate and ensuring clear access to essential tools. "It's crucial to build a culture of love and mutual respect. My goal is to ensure every student feels like they belong at Queen's," she says, adding that she is committed to amplifying marginalized voices, particularly religious minorities, through proactive listening and action, including interfaith panels, cultural celebrations, and open dialogues.

The Gift

Anonymous donation will support AI research and graduate studies

Artificial intelligence and machine learning are helping researchers around the world answer some of humanity's toughest questions. Now, a new \$1.15-million anonymous gift to the Department of Geological Sciences and Geological Engineering will ensure more of that important work happens at Queen's. "It's no secret that AI and machine learning are transforming the world of research for the better," says Daniel Layton-Matthews, Head of Geological Sciences and Geological Engineering. "With this gift, we're going to help ensure that Queen's top-tier geological researchers can continue their important work and that grad students get the financial assistance they need." The donor has been a longtime anonymous supporter of Queen's. More than a decade ago, they established a fund for undergraduate education in Geological Sciences and Geological Engineering at Queen's. They have also set up several other scholarships and funds at other institutions. 🙌

The Unity Room

Football team's new locker room inspires solidarity with motivational messages and a state-of-the-art design.

BY JORDAN WHITEHOUSE

Queen's football head coach Steve Snyder is a big fan of mottoes and metaphors. They're everywhere inside and outside his team's stunning new locker room at Richardson Stadium. Near the entrance, for instance, is a wheelbarrow full of bricks with messages written on them like "One rep at a time." On the pillars surrounding the big Q in the centre of the room are reminders like "Reset, stay steady" and "Attack and finish." On a wall of the nearby Athletic Therapy Room: "Mind, body, ready to play."

"Anything you see written here is stuff that we repeat over and over to the team," says Mr. Snyder. "I think it's really important to have that reinforcement in anything you're doing, but especially in sports."

Mr. Snyder has been repeating those messages ever since he became the head coach in 2019. Back then, the team was split between two rooms in a building with just 84 small metal lockers – many of them banged up and held together with two-by-fours. So, when the two-storey Lang Pavilion opened in September 2023 – the final piece of the Richardson Stadium revitalization project – and the spacious new digs were revealed, "it was a whole different world," says Mr. Snyder. "We felt like we were home."

The new locker room and the adjoining washrooms, therapy space, coaches' offices, and meeting areas make this facility one of the best in Canadian university sports, says Mr. Snyder.

"It's perfect, we love it. But, first and foremost, this is the players' room, it's for them. And it's an equal room – every player gets the same quality of locker – and it focuses on bringing the team together. That's why we call it the Unity Room." 🏆



"It's perfect, we love it. But, first and foremost, this is the players' room, it's for them. And it's an equal room ... and it focuses on bringing the team together. That's why we call it the Unity Room."

HEAD COACH STEVE SNYDER



110

Number of lockers in the new room

6

Number of locker room bays, categorized by position: wide receivers; linebackers; defensive linemen; defensive backs; offensive linemen; running backs, quarterbacks, and H-backs

300+

Number of Queen's football alumni and supporters who made the locker room and the Lang Pavilion possible

\$10M

The revitalization project began with this lead gift from alumni Stu Lang, Sc'74, and Kim Lang, Artsci'76



Breaking barriers in education

Queen's research helps unlock potential in students with autism and other developmental disabilities.

BY BLAIR CRAWFORD

It was when he was a kid at a summer camp in Michigan that Jordan Shurr first started to understand what was possible for people with disabilities.

Dr. Shurr, an associate professor in the Queen's Department of Education, watched children with disabilities participate with all the wild abandon of any kid at camp.

"These were kids who normally had a lot of restrictions on them and, for the first time, they got to stay up late. They could get their wheelchairs dirty. They could be silly and eat junk food. It was a life-changing experience for them."

And for Dr. Shurr, it was the beginning of a journey in education. At Queen's, his research continues to search for ways to help educators reach into the world of exceptionalities and for new ways to measure success.

Technology has helped. Advances in artificial intelligence and programs such as ChatGPT, for example, allow teachers to quickly take a complex text and simplify its language while maintaining essential terms and jargon vital to the subject matter. Even something as simple as adding images can make abstract concepts more concrete.

"If somebody has a chemistry textbook and reads it to me eight times, it's probably not going to help me," Dr. Shurr says. "I don't have the context or the background to understand it. So, pictures plus discussion is a way of bringing that out. It gives



"... Pictures plus discussion is a way of bringing [understanding] out. It gives that student a chance to talk. You can see what the student knows, then find ways to build on that." DR. JORDAN SHURR

that student a chance to talk. You can see what the student knows, then find ways to build on that."

Dr. Shurr has seen how effective simple changes can be.

"The most telling thing for me is when I asked them what they remembered about the story – and

these are kids with pretty significant communication issues," he says. "Before I did the intervention, they would just stare at me or stare at the floor. The message was, 'I don't want to engage. I'm shutting down.' But when we did this forum with pictures, I couldn't stop them



from talking. They felt they were invited into the learning process.”

Assistive technology is nothing new in education for students with exceptionalities. Tablets and iPads were quickly adopted in the classroom. But Dr. Shurr’s research looks at how to measure the effectiveness of those tools. In education, there’s no such thing as one size fits all.

“Technology democratized access, but it also opened the door for a lot of things that aren’t well put together. That’s always been a problem with assistive technology. It has to be a match with the people who are using it, the context they’re using it in, and their strengths and needs,” he says.

“Putting an iPad in front of someone sometimes does more harm

than good. If they’re given an iPad with an app that’s supposed to help them without first ensuring that it’s a good match for the student’s needs, then they might not ever want to use it again.”

Dr. Shurr is also helping to harness and mentor the skills of his own students at Queen’s by establishing a research group where ideas can be shared. ADD*Ed – the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Research Group – is focused on promoting research, innovation, and engagement in education for students with autism and other developmental disabilities.

“I saw that students who were interested in special and inclusive education were having a hard time

ABOUT ADD*ED

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▶ Translates research into practical applications to inform and enhance teaching strategies.

▶ Delivers training for both pre-service and in-service educators, supporting professional growth across all experience levels.

▶ Guides leadership development initiatives, preparing master’s and doctoral students to shape the future of research, policy, and inclusive education.

▶ Conducts applied research on effective teaching methods to drive impactful improvements in classroom practices.



finding their place,” Dr. Shurr says. “I thought, ‘We’ll make a research group and get those students together every couple of weeks and talk about what they’re working on, what conferences there are, we’ll talk about journals.’ It’s just a nice place for them to find a home.”

One offshoot has been to establish an online magazine, also called *ADD*Ed*, that highlights the latest research in the field from Queen’s and around the world. Dr. Shurr hopes the magazine and the research it presents will be useful for educators, who may not be aware of research and ideas happening beyond their own school board, province, or country.

“We have more time than teachers to do something like this,” Dr. Shurr says. “We have expertise. We have connections and networks. We have time to step back and think deeply about these things. That’s part of our jobs.” 🐦



The ADD*Ed Research Group wants to connect with current and future educators. Scan the QR code to read their latest online magazine.

BY ROBERT GERLSBECK



TITLE: DISCOV
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THE INFLUENCER INDUSTRY IS BOOMING.
 MEET THE QUEEN'S ALUMNI WHO ARE TURNING ENGAGEMENT INTO SURPRISINGLY
 THRIVING CAREERS - AND BECOMING SOCIAL MEDIA STARS ALONG THE WAY.

The age of Influence



ing, holding

ey everyone! I'm so excited to share my favorite
ring outfit with you today. We're going to be
ing at some gorgeous pieces from [Brand Name],
d I think you'll love them!"

TRANSITION:

ose-up of the packaging, highlighting the brand

UNBOXING AND FIRST IMPRESSION

ay, so we're starting with this beautiful [dres
op/pa
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thos





IF THERE'S ANYONE WHO CAN TURN LUMPY cottage cheese into gripping entertainment, it's James Bok, Comm'14, GDA'14.

On a Sunday last October, Mr. Bok, dressed in a grey long-sleeved T-shirt and black baseball hat, leaned over a cutting board in his Toronto kitchen, hit record on his phone, and began explaining how to turn leftover Costco rotisserie chicken into a healthy, high-protein salad – in five minutes or less.

With the easy assurance of a Martha Stewart, he combined two cups of shredded chicken, chopped carrots, celery, onion, and two diced dill pickles. "You have to get a dill pickle," he emphasized. "I'm just not a fan of sweet pickles."

Then came the secret ingredient.

Instead of mayonnaise (every mom's chicken salad standard), Mr. Bok scooped a generous spoonful of protein-packed cottage cheese into a clear plastic tub, added Greek yogurt, mustard, pepper, and garlic, blended, then stirred the saucy mixture into the chicken and veggies.

Next, he took a bite.

"Incredible!" he proclaimed with a wide grin. "It's crazy that this is healthy."

This Instagram video has been viewed 8.3 million times to date. By comparison, last year's top Canadian TV show, *The Amazing Race Canada*, season 10, averaged 1.3 million viewers per episode.

Welcome to the world of online influencers, where content creators like Mr. Bok can attract millions of eyeballs on TikTok, Instagram, and other social media sites, earning surprisingly large incomes through brand deals. No longer just a pastime for bored teenagers shooting videos in their bedrooms, content creation has become a bona fide profession, and Mr. Bok is one of several Queen's alumni helping shape this booming (albeit largely misunderstood) multibillion-dollar industry.



W

HAT DO MOST influencers have in common?

They never intended to do this for a living.

James Bok grew up in Toronto, the son of Korean immigrants. After earning a Queen's commerce degree, he pursued finance and accounting, starting at KPMG in Toronto before moving to Bank of America Merrill Lynch. Later, he worked remotely for a venture capital firm, living in Europe, Thailand, and, finally, South Korea.

In Korea, he dabbled professionally in social media for the first time. Mr. Bok was intrigued by the popularity of skin-care products in Korea; preparing to launch his own skin-care line, he opened a TikTok account in January 2023 to promote himself as the company founder. However, instead of hard-selling products, he posted videos of himself cooking, eating, and going about daily life.

To his amazement, these videos caught on. Soon, he abandoned the skin-care business idea to become a full-time content creator. Looking back, he admits, "I might have been a little delusional." At the time, his following was modest – around 30,000 on TikTok and just 5,000 on Instagram.

But as he began posting consistently, his audience grew rapidly. Now back in Toronto, he has 528,000 followers on Instagram, 413,000 on TikTok, and 84,000 on YouTube. His posts regularly attract hundreds of thousands of views and, sometimes, millions.

What makes him so appealing? Like most successful influencers, Mr. Bok has a friendly on-camera presence. His delivery is natural, and he smiles often. While he occasionally posts about skin care, lifestyle, and travel, about 70 per cent of his content is food related.

"I've never worked in a kitchen but I'm just so pas-

sionate about food. Social media kind of became an outlet for me to pursue that,” he says, adding, “When you’re passionate about something, people will be able to see it through the lens.”

He excels at fast-paced demonstrations of quick, tasty dishes. In one, he shared a three-ingredient mango sorbet recipe (mangoes, Greek yogurt, and honey, scooped back into the mango rind as the bowl). In another, co-starring his mom, he made flattened and fried strawberry-jam-and-cream-cheese croissants. The trick: he smooshed the croissant with the bottom of a frying pan.

“People love economical and healthy, and they love food hacks,” he says.

Mr. Bok films on his phone, using only natural light and no extra sound or video equipment. He prefers that his content appear spontaneous rather than overly polished. Each video starts with an “after” clip of him eating the dish he’s about to prepare, followed by a satisfied “Mmmm!”

While he makes it look easy, there’s plenty of planning behind the scenes. He prefers recipes with just a few ingredients and emphasizes simplicity. He also keeps up with food trends. His leftover-chicken salad recipe was inspired by cottage cheese’s resurgence as a high-protein, cheap option. And after posting, he responds to comments.

Then there are brand collaborations. Companies pay to have their products featured in some of his videos. He attends influencer events to network and recently signed with an agency to handle his deals. McDonald’s, Procter & Gamble, Subway, Kiehl’s, and Turkish Airlines are among the brands he’s partnered with.

As for income, Mr. Bok says he now earns twice as much as the six-figure salary he received while working in corporate finance.

Yet despite his success, some people he encounters still don’t understand how he earns a living as an influencer. “They ask me what I’ll do after this ‘content thing.’” He admits such questions can be grating. “Content creation is my job, and I work really hard at it.”



LIKE MR. BOK, Julia Peretto, Comm’21, never envisioned becoming a social media personality. She wanted to be an accountant. But then the pandemic – and an invite to appear on a reality TV show – intervened.

Ms. Peretto, who grew up in Hamilton, Ont., began posting workout videos on Instagram and TikTok in late 2020 while still at Queen’s. “My friends always knew me as the girl who was into fitness and wellness, and during the pandemic we were all stuck inside. I thought maybe I should start posting some of my workouts. If I could help get people moving, that would be really cool,” she recalls.

One day, on a whim, she invited her older brother to join one of her shoots. By chance, producers of a new Netflix reality show called *Dated & Related*, saw it. They invited Ms. Peretto and her brother to join the cast of the show, where single siblings help each other find soulmates while living in a luxurious villa in the south of France.

After filming ended, Ms. Peretto returned home, intent on turning her workout video hobby into a full-time career by selling workout plans and offering fitness coaching online.

“WHEN YOU’RE PASSIONATE ABOUT SOMETHING, PEOPLE WILL BE ABLE TO SEE IT THROUGH THE LENS.”

– JAMES BOK

Then, in late 2022, *Dated & Related* was released. Suddenly, she says, “I had a whole new group of followers that didn’t know me from my workout videos but knew me as a personality from this show.”

Seizing the moment, Ms. Peretto expanded her content beyond fitness. “I started posting about my life, what I was doing that day, and beauty and hair,” she says. As a result, her following skyrocketed. Today, she counts 310,000 followers on TikTok, 120,000 on Instagram, and 80,000 on Snapchat.

Her content is an eclectic mix showcasing a young, entrepreneurial woman living the big-city life in Toronto. One video might show her visiting a spa, another sampling dishes or drinks from restaurants. In others, she tries out skin-care products, spends time with friends, shares makeup routines with her mom, and unboxes products sent by PR companies.

Her naturally curly hair is an occasional topic. She films her attempts to style it, showing before-and-after results – successful or not. These posts tend to perform well and generate lots of comments. “I think people like them because I’m not trying to come across as an expert and I’m being a bit vulnerable. I’m saying, ‘I don’t know how to style my hair, but this is what I’m going to try.’”

Ms. Peretto’s appeal stems from her straightforward, unpretentious approach. She strives to speak to

followers as she would face-to-face to a friend. Marketers might call this “authenticity.”

In fact, the bond influencers like Ms. Perfetto and Mr. Bok build with followers is a chief reason companies now invest heavily in influencer marketing, says Robert Kozinets, PhD’97, a professor at the University of Southern California and co-author of a textbook on the subject: *Influencers & Creators: Business, Culture, and Practice*.

Viewers see influencers as real people, whereas many have grown skeptical of corporate advertising and mass media, he explains.

Influencers can also be more cost-effective than traditional ads. They offer targeted audiences and are often “perceived as more credible” by brands, Professor Kozinets says. “They can help explain a product’s use, like how to put on makeup.”

While top influencers have millions of followers – think YouTuber MrBeast or actress/singer Selena Gomez – many succeed with smaller audiences. And the influencer market is set to explode. Fortune Business Insights estimates its value will reach US\$23.6 billion this year and expand at a 17 per cent annual rate, hitting US\$71.04 billion by 2032.

Notably, only a small portion of an influencer’s content is typically sponsored. For Ms. Perfetto, that’s about 20 per cent.

Her first deal was for a mere \$50. Then a company offered her \$500 to feature its fitness scale. “I remember telling my mom, ‘Oh my gosh, they want to pay me to do this?’”

As her audience grew, brands started calling. Today, her following is large enough that companies mostly reach out to her, and she earns a minimum of four figures per deal. Dove, Tatcha, L’Oréal, and Olaplex are among the brands she’s worked with recently.

Unlike many influencers, she negotiates with brands herself rather than relying on a social media management agency. “I’ve positioned myself as a brand-friendly creator, so brands tend to want to work with me. A lot of them will reach out and say, ‘Hey Julia, we love your content. We’re really interested in working with you.’”

She credits her business degree from Queen’s for giving her the confidence to strike deals. In her last year of Commerce, she even took an entrepreneurship class, COMM 405, in which her final project was to create an entrepreneur’s guide to a social media career.

Ms. Perfetto says last year was her best financially – her first

earning a six-figure salary – and she’s exploring the idea of launching her own wellness products. “I would love to keep the momentum going and see how big I can build my brand and what else I can accomplish.”



W

HAT COMES NEXT is a question many influencers grapple with. Fame and influence can be fleeting. Content creators are entrepreneurs. They put in many hours and, like any small business, must evolve to stay relevant. There

are only so many eyeballs to go around on social media.

One creator who understands this challenge is Nolan White, Artsci’22.

A Montreal-based men’s fashion influencer, Mr. White has amassed a sizable audience in just a few years. But he has not confined himself to social media videos. He consults in the fashion and social media industries, and he expands on topics from his videos in articles on Substack, an online publishing platform. For example, a video on how to find a good vintage leather jacket was accompanied by a more in-depth Substack article with additional advice.

In other words, he’s building his own media brand with fashion at its core.

Mr. White hails from Windsor, Ont. Recently, at a family gathering, he recalls he was asked to explain what he does for a living.

“I’m a magazine condensed down to one person. I provide a little bit of information, a little bit of styling advice. I’ll do a roundup of bags or shoes or hats or whatever. I’ll do a little op-ed piece. I’ll do a history of a fashion piece, maybe I’ll do an interview, do a shop overview, and then, occasionally, I’ll sell a page to an advertiser.”

Like Ms. Perfetto, he started in the pandemic. In 2021, during his second year at Queen’s, multiple lockdowns left him stuck inside with little to do. Eyeing his fashionable wardrobe, he realized he had no reason to get dressed up. So, he started putting on those clothes anyway and posting videos of his outfits on TikTok.

To his amazement, people started commenting. Some asked fashion-related questions: How do you style a cardigan? What shops would you recommend in

James Bok shares his passion for food, skin care, travel, and all things lifestyle with his followers.



Toronto? In response, Mr. White began posting more informational and how-to content.

For a while, he did not make any money for these posts. However, while clothes shopping in Toronto, he was sometimes recognized by people who'd seen him online. Eventually, he connected with other men's fashion influencers, such as Wisdom Kaye, an American-Nigerian model and social media personality, and he attended his first New York Fashion Week in 2021.

"That's where I switched gears and decided, 'You know what? I've got this awesome opportunity in front of me right now. I may as well take the risk while I'm young and swing for the fences.'"

Now living in Montreal – where many of Canada's fashion designers and manufacturers are headquartered – Mr. White has amassed 325,000 followers on TikTok and 242,000 on Instagram. His Substack platform, which he started last year, already has 16,000 subscribers. Some of the brands he works with are eBay, American Express, and Maison Birks.

He has incorporated his business, which earned \$250,000 last year from brand deals and consulting work. He pays himself a salary from that revenue, but his business must also cover expenses such as a video editor, camera equipment, and work-related travel.

Mr. White's popularity may stem from his everyman quality. As he explains, "I'm five-foot-seven and I've got a bit of a baby face. I'm not your six-foot-two runway model with chiselled features." This, he believes, makes his fashion advice more relatable to a broad cross-section of men. "A lot of guys are like me," he says. "They're not used to clothes fitting them, and shopping can be a frustrating experience. I think people can pick up on the fact that I was where they were at one point."

His posts are educational and entertaining. Recently, he gave viewers a tour of his entire trucker jacket collection. In another, he covered the history of Oliver Goldsmith eyewear, famously worn by Michael Caine and Audrey Hepburn. Shoes, boots, suits, belts,

Julia Peretto's sphere of influence is a mix of beauty, fashion, lifestyle, and fitness advice.

With an eye for style, Nolan White curates content focused on menswear, watches, and interior design.

and watches also get their turn, and earlier this year, when Donald Trump hit Canada with tariffs, Mr. White provided a timely list of Canadian clothing brands that, he said, "you should absolutely support if you can."

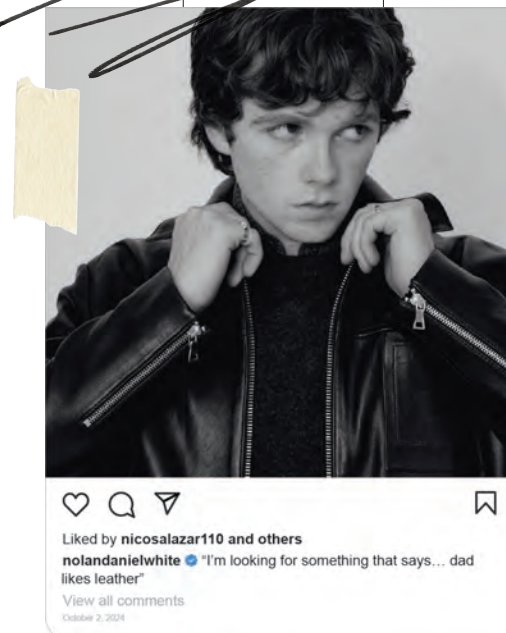
While most of his audience are men (his core demographic is 18 to 40), around 30 per cent are women. "I've had women recognize me in public and tell me their boyfriend dresses so much better because of my videos," he says with a laugh.

Is there a downside to fame? Yes, he admits. Social media users can be quick to criticize. If he features \$250 pants, someone will inevitably accuse him of suggesting people need to buy expensive clothes to look good. "That can be frustrating," he says. "Especially when I was starting out, I struggled a lot with that stuff. They see one video and make snap judgments about you." Mr. White tries to cater to both dedicated fashion enthusiasts and men just beginning to explore style. He strives to showcase both high-end and affordable menswear, hoping to help men become more confident shoppers. The best part is hearing from guys who have benefited from his advice.

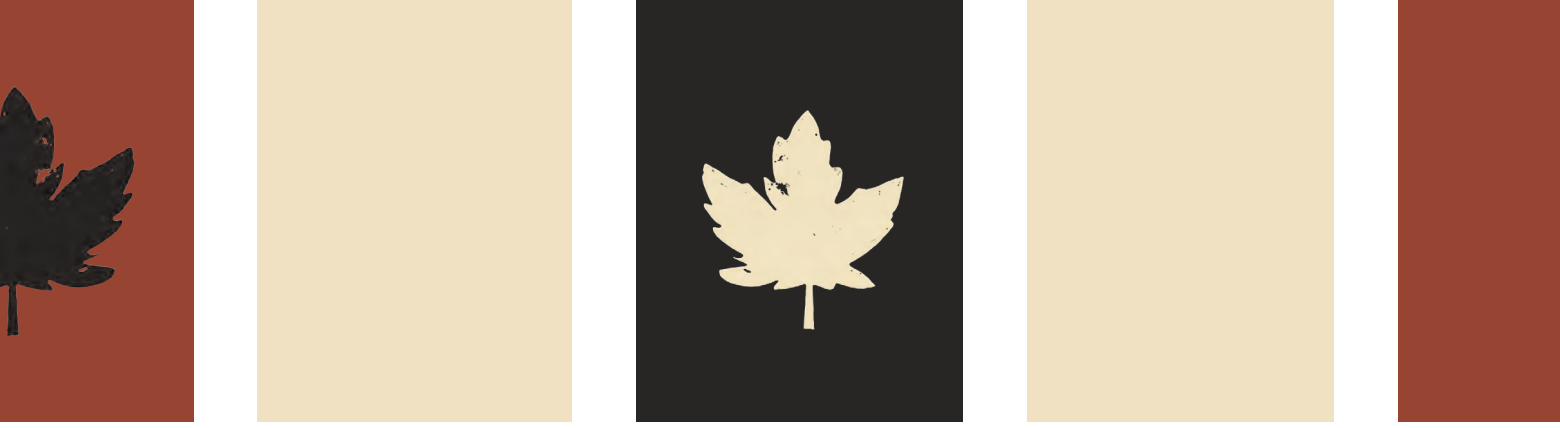
Last year, for example, Mr. White wanted a suit for his aunt's wedding. Rather than buy new, he challenged himself to assemble an outfit for under \$250 by shopping for inexpensive apparel. He documented the process in a series of videos, highlighting his used finds.

Later, he received a note from a young man who had recently gotten married. The groom and his bride had a limited budget, and he wanted to save money on his suit so she could spend more on her wedding dress. Inspired by Mr. White, he successfully put together a stylish outfit for very little money. "He sent me pictures from their wedding, and it was awesome," Mr. White says.

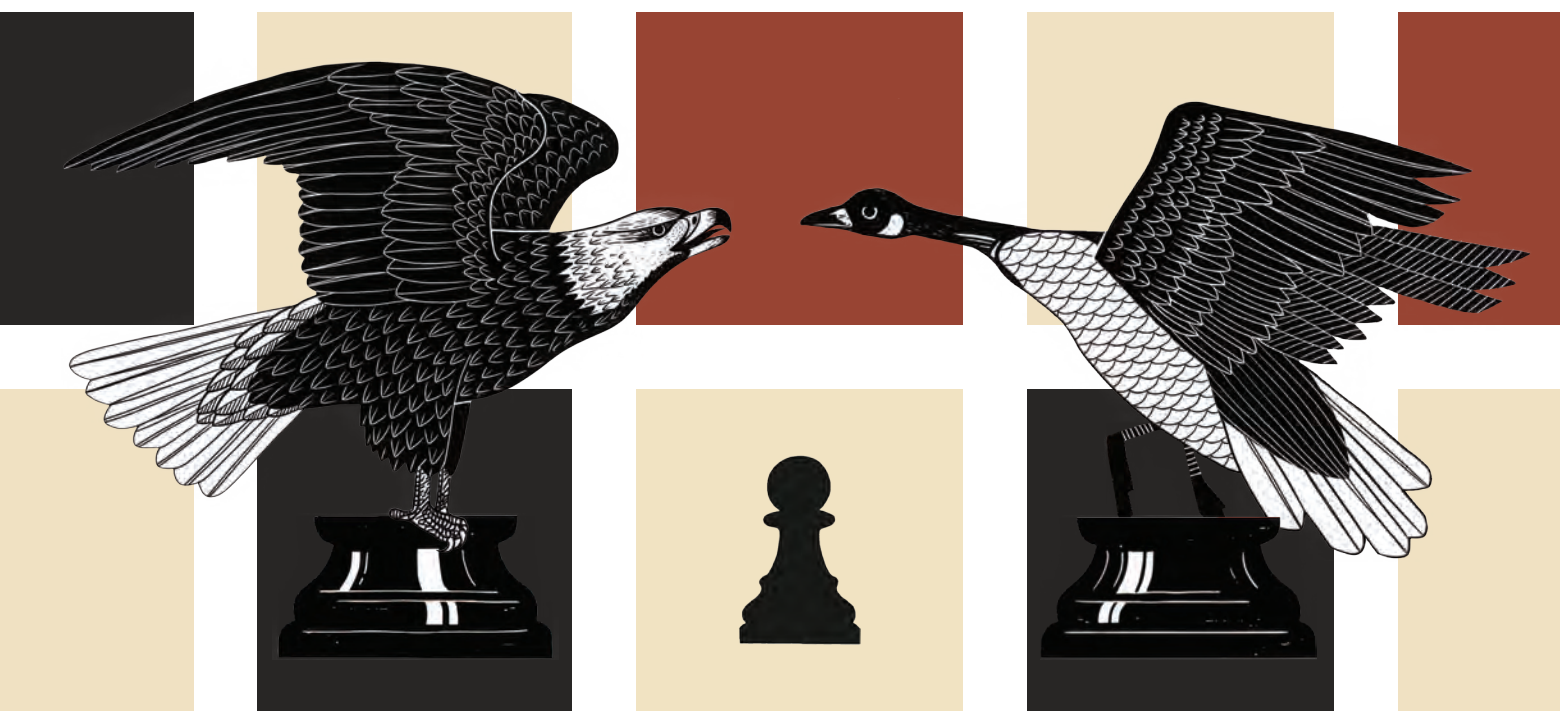
"For me, it was like, 'Oh, I actually had an impact.' And that was a good feeling." 🙌

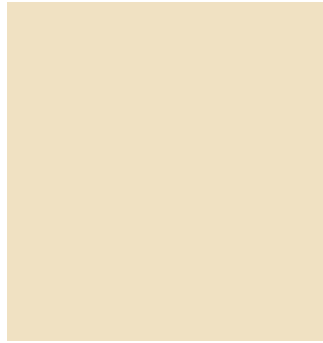
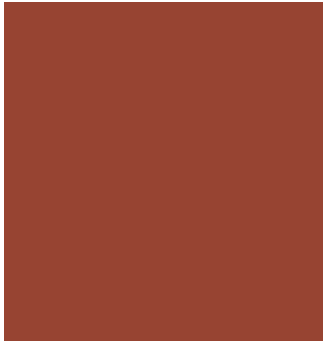
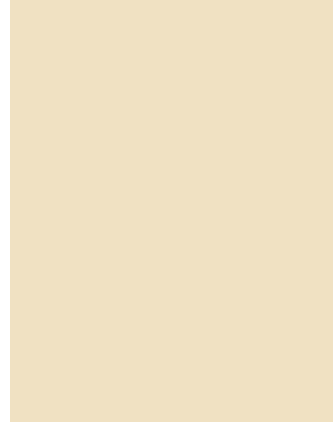
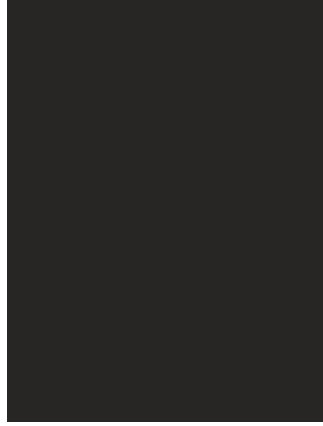


Want to find more Queen's influencers? Check out the *Alumni Review* online to discover more alumni to follow.



ENDGAME

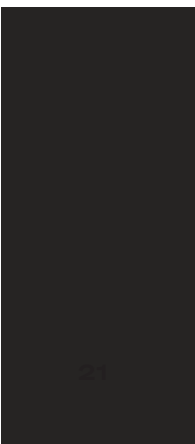
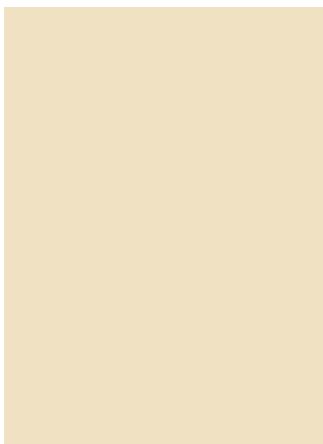
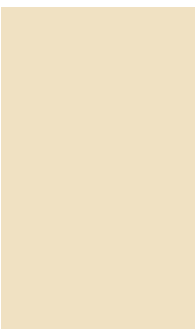




BY JEFF PAPPONE



We asked Queen's experts in different disciplines to predict the next moves in the U.S.-Canada trade war. Here's what to expect in the months, and years, to come.





IT'S ANECDOTAL, BUT MANY AT QUEEN'S ARE VERY PURPOSE-DRIVEN YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE GREAT OPPORTUNITIES, BUT THEY'RE A LITTLE BIT SCARED OF THE FUTURE.

- DR. DAVID DETOMASI



THIS MAY BE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY. IT REALLY DEPENDS ON THE WAY WE PERCEIVE OR THE WAY WE REACT AS A COUNTRY TO THIS INSTABILITY IN OUR BIG TRADING PARTNER.

- DR. BEVERLY LAPHAM



I
N DR. SEUSS'S *THE SNEETCHES AND OTHER STORIES*, the character Sylvester McMonkey McBean uses uncertainty to get his way and make more money – reminiscent, some say, of U.S. President Donald Trump's approach to tariffs. Sneetches without belly stars get ostracized by those with stars, so McBean convinces the starless ones to use his "star-on machine" to gain acceptance. Then, he convinces the original star-bellied group that "belly stars are no longer in style" and they need a trip through his "star-off machine."

In the end, the Sneetches go broke using the machine to put on and take off stars, until no one knows whether "this one was that one ... or that one was this one ... or which one was what one ... or what one was who."

Canadians can relate to Sneetches these days, with on-again, off-again tariffs keeping everyone guessing about what will happen next. Although the constantly shifting threats seem to mirror the silliness of a children's book, the unpredictability pushes the stakes much higher.

At Queen's, several experts are following these developments through the lens of different disciplines, helping us make sense of what the *New York Times* has described as the widening "rift between the United States and some of its closest allies."

"Businesses like certainty: it doesn't necessarily even have to be a rule or regime they like; as long as they know what it is, they'll make their decisions on investments or not," says Dr. David Detomasi, professor and Distinguished Teaching Fellow of International Business at Smith School of Business. "The whole idea of free trade was not just about the actual figures going across the border: it's about the confidence it gave in businesses to invest, develop supply chains and accounting practices, and relationships with financiers that were all very smooth and predictable."

The good news is that free trade up to this point does make Canada more resilient to the impact of new tariffs; the bad news is that increasingly integrated global supply chains and intertwined economies mean shocks to the system can be more pronounced, something seen during the COVID pandemic.

"It is difficult to assess the counterfactual, but suppose we had not signed the U.S.–Canada Free Trade Agreement in 1989 and we maintained trade barriers, trading less with the U.S. and possibly other countries. Then, current trade frictions might be less destabilizing, but would the Canadian economy have been more or less stable over the last 30 years?" asks Queen's department of economics professor Dr. Beverly Lapham. "We do know that dismantling those trade barriers contributed to higher growth and productivity in Canada."

Today, that predictability seems almost irrelevant. Even if deals get reached and hands get shaken, the possibility of yet another sudden 180-degree turn in Washington makes it unlikely that things will go back to normal any time soon.

"History is full of contingencies; you can have all the plans, all the order in the world, and then an archduke gets shot, things spiral out of control, and there you are," says Dr. Daniel Woolf, Queen's history professor and Principal Emeritus, referring to the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand that led to the start of the First World War. "I think we're in that kind of very dangerous space right now where a lot of things can happen."

But there are additional factors at play in 2025. In previous financial crises, political and policy stability seemed to be a given in working to solve issues, but today's world can no longer count on predictability from the U.S. in many different areas.

"It's not just economic uncertainty, it's all kinds of policies – immigration, military, defence, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and its future – all of those can impact Canadians' concerns about the future," says Dr. Lapham, who specializes in international trade, international finance, industrial organization, and macroeconomics. "Anytime that you have that kind of instability, it terrifies market participants and all of that uncertainty goes into the mix in terms of people making day-to-day decisions in economic transactions, whether they are consumers, households, workers, or firm owners."

Those who think Canada should counter the uncertainty by simply walking away and shifting its trade focus to the rest of the world need to consider the experience of the United Kingdom post-Brexit. Although some outside-the-box thinking did occur, the U.K. experience dumped cold water on the idea that a country can simply abandon its traditional partners for fertile ground elsewhere.

Nicolas Lamp, associate professor in the

IT'S A DELUSION TO THINK THAT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO SOMEHOW MAKE UP FOR LOSS OF TRADE WITH YOUR LARGEST MARKET... BY SOMEHOW BOOSTING TRADING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD.

- DR. NICOLAS LAMP



Queen's Faculty of Law, pointed to the "gravity model," which essentially predicts that a country will inevitably trade with partners that are closer and large.

"It's not just a theory – that's the economic evidence of how countries trade – there's just no way around it. It's a delusion to think that you would be able to somehow make up for loss of trade with your largest market, which is right in front of your doorstep, by somehow boosting trading relationships with other parts of the world," says Dr. Lamp, whose research focuses on competing narratives about the winners and losers from economic globalization. "Brexit is another example of a country suddenly facing barriers to its biggest market and trying, with limited success, to diversify its trade. The big difference, of course, is that Brexit was self-inflicted. I don't think Canada has done anything to deserve this."

Zooming out even further reveals an even bigger shift in the fundamental relationship between the two countries that will play out as the next four years unfold.

"I think a lot of damage will have been done, such that there may be a new normal for a while, but I don't think it's going to be the same as what we've had for the last 80 years," says Dr. Woolf, whose two main areas of research are early modern British intellectual and cultural history and the global history and theory of historical writing. "I think we've become so used to thinking that we were just completely immune from hostile powers, especially in our nicely insulated country with oceans on three sides and good old Uncle Sam on the fourth."

That long period of stability coupled with increasingly open trade created the certainty and predictability that saw companies on both sides of the border push production boundaries due to increased confidence

and the constant sharing of ideas and know-how. Now, businesses will likely hit the pause button in many areas because they don't know what will happen in the short term or the impact on the longer term.

"If you're coming from free trade with some exceptions, like dairy in our case and softwood lumber on their side, and then you put up a 25-per-cent tariff, or even a 10-per-cent tariff, you

can do a lot of damage," Dr. Lamp says.

Even a short period of high tariffs would have an effect, especially when it comes to hiring younger, less experienced workers, which is something Dr. Detomasi feels may be happening already.

"The people that will suffer the most initially will be young people – by nature someone's taking a chance on them when they hire them. One of the concerns I have more broadly than just economics is the attitude of young people about optimism in the future," he says. "It's anecdotal, but many at Queen's are very purpose-driven young people who have great opportunities, but they're a little bit scared of the future. They've dotted every "I" and crossed every "T" to make their lives good when they leave and they're still having trouble. I do worry about the mental health and the attitudes of young people towards their futures."

On the other hand, the old adage about never letting a good crisis go to waste also applies. In short, Canadians need to use the crisis to look for ways to insulate the country against ongoing and potentially long-lasting unpredictability.

"My version of long term is that there's a positive effect to the extent that it's forcing us to do things I think we should have done long ago that would have helped solve these problems. And if that's true and we do things that we couldn't even have contemplated weeks ago that are good for the economy, then I think that's OK," says Dr. Detomasi, whose research interests include globalization, geopolitics, and corporate and non-profit governance.

In addition, Canada's relative political stability, as well as certain policy shifts, may also see people and investment flow north in some sectors. For example, funding cuts to universities and to research in the U.S. could be a way for Canada to attract new scholars and researchers to its universities, and new investment in education and research and development.



“We’ve had a brain drain problem in Canada and this might help reverse it. If people are concerned about the political instability in the U.S., this may be a great opportunity. It really depends on the way we perceive or the way we react as a country to this instability in our big trading partner,” Dr. Lapham says.

While Canadians and businesses need to stay calm and make decisions based on facts rather than emotions, they also should not lose sight of some of the bigger implications of the policy shifts happening in the U.S.; the chaos only serves to mask an underlying philosophical shift that will bring far-reaching consequences, Dr. Lamp contends.

“Trump has this very clear and consistent sense that the United States should essentially be self-reliant, just produce its own stuff, and keep all the manufacturing jobs to itself. It’s so scary because it’s not a product of chaos or spur-of-the-moment craziness; it’s a firm belief,” he says. “I think that is the most serious challenge for Canada: it means there’s no place for a healthy trade relationship with Canada in this vision for the future of the American economy.”

Dr. Woolf looked to Athenian historian Thucydides’ Melian Dialogue as a parallel to explain the nature of the U.S. threats. The passage, part of the *History of the Peloponnesian War*, centres on the Athenians’ demand that Melos become an ally in its war with Sparta or suffer the consequences:

join us or we’ll invade Melos, kill the men, and enslave the women and children. “It’s incredibly arrogant, and basically a ‘might makes right’ view that’s become a kind of core doctrine in some schools of international relations: smaller countries are always going to be, to some degree or other, prey for the bigger ones,” he says.

The end result of this “epochal moment” might return the world to a pre-First World War political model with spheres of influence, empires, and regimes, Dr. Woolf says. This would bring a huge shift for Canada, which had Britain as a protector until the end of the Second World War before it gave way to the U.S. and a very pro-Canada North American alliance that has lasted until now. “It was a great system of friendship and alliance and one of those things that works perfectly, or near perfectly, until it doesn’t. In the end,

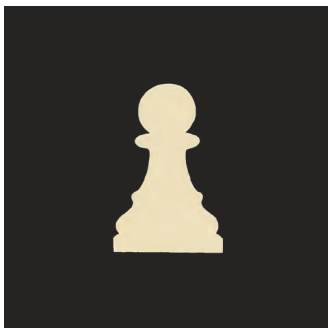
this may actually be good for us, because if there’s one thing history teaches us, it’s that nothing lasts forever,” says Dr. Woolf, whose sabbatical project is a book about learning lessons from the past.

And past experience will come in handy while the country navigates this somewhat erratic time, as Canadians need

to remember that they faced previous crises and emerged stronger, Dr. Detomasi says.

“It’s not as if we in Canada haven’t made tough decisions and met tough challenges before – this is part of the deal of being Canadian. We’ve been pretty fortunate to live next to a benign kind of neighbour for a long time and we kind of assumed it would continue. The wake-up call is that this may not always be the case: being under threat may be normal.” [♠]

IN THE END, THIS MAY ACTUALLY BE GOOD FOR US, BECAUSE IF THERE’S ONE THING HISTORY TEACHES US, IT’S THAT NOTHING LASTS FOREVER.
- DR. DANIEL WOOLF



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QUEEN'S ALUMNI REVIEW

OFF CAMPUS



First Up

Aryne Tavares, CEO, philanthropist

Aryne Tavares, MScPT'15, began her work life in two different streams at about the same time. A paying job allowed her to see firsthand that some parents must forgo nutrition to feed their families, while a volunteer position that soon turned into a paying job started her on a path to working with children in need. Her passions and experience have come together in her leadership of the John Tavares Foundation, which she co-founded with her husband, Toronto Maple Leafs centre John Tavares.

I never imagined that my first job at Tim Hortons in Whitby, Ont., back in 2006 would plant the seed for the work I do today. At the time, it was one of the few places that hired young employees, so I applied and quickly thrived in the fast-paced environment, juggling multiple tasks, managing customers, and learning how to adapt on the fly. In many ways, that experience wasn't so different from my role today as chief executive officer of the John Tavares Foundation. →

→ What really stayed with me was something much deeper than just the hustle: I saw parents struggling to afford healthy meals for their families and forced to prioritize cost over nutrition. That was an eye-opener. Food insecurity wasn't just something I read about; it was playing out right in front of me. And even though I was young, I knew this wasn't how it should be.

Around the same time, I took on another job, one that would shape my future just as profoundly. I started as a lunchroom supervisor for children with disabilities, first as a volunteer and then in a paid role, where I eventually managed volunteers myself. That's also where I first met John. He was playing for the Oshawa Generals at the time and completing a temporary placement at my high school. He would stop by my lunchroom group, chatting with the kids and lending a hand whenever he could. Our connection was built on a shared desire to help others.

My career as a physiotherapist reinforced that even further. I spent my days teaching people how to care for their bodies and fuel themselves properly, but my passion for working with children and underserved communities never faded. I knew I wanted to do more and that's why John and I made it our mission to empower kids to reach their full potential when we founded the John Tavares Foundation. We focus on access to nutritious food, physical activity, education, and economic development, because every child deserves a fair chance.

Looking back, it's incredible how those early jobs shaped my path. What started as a high school job at Tim Hortons and a lunchroom role has turned into a lifelong commitment to making a difference. Today, through our foundation, we're helping children and families build stronger, healthier futures, and that's the most rewarding job of all.

— As told to Jeff Pappone

▶ Author,
Nathalie Cooke
Artsci'82

THE BACKSTORY



Serving up history – one menu at a time

Nathalie Cooke analyzes a feast of menus and interprets the stories they tell.

Elephant consommé? Roasted bear ribs? Wolf haunch? If any of these sound appetizing, you can find them all in a new book about menus throughout history.

As author Nathalie Cooke, Artsci'82, describes them, menus are “ephemera – random pieces of paper that really didn't expect to be collected, especially if they were not for royalty or official banquets.”

But the professor of literature at McGill University also knows readers and academics alike will look at these historical menus and see that they contain lots of information worth examining. “They're definitely not something that belongs in the rubbish bin,” Prof. Cooke says.

To preserve some of that historical ephemera, she wrote and recently published a book titled *Tastes and Traditions: An Illustrated Journey Through Menu History* (Reaktion Books, London, U.K.). The elephant, bear, and wolf, among other rare Parisian creatures, come up in one particularly interesting menu in the lavishly illustrated book. It documents a Christmas dinner from 1870 during the siege of Paris when some elites ended up “eating the zoo,” as Prof. Cooke puts it.

“It's interesting that the idiom of French cuisine is still at play, even in that menu of dire times,” she says. “So, there's still consommé, but it's not beef consommé – it's elephant. And the traditional civet dish is kangaroo,

New content from faculty and alumni



not rabbit or deer. And you ask yourself, ‘Why kangaroo?’ and then you realize it’s because it’s also an animal that hops.”

As a literature professor, Prof. Cooke is interested in genre and the lives of everyday people. Menus are just another genre – one that has received very little close scholarly scrutiny, she says, adding that her book is about interpreting the stories that menus tell. “This book allowed me to use my toolbox for literary interpretation and bring that to menus.”

Prof. Cooke has been interested in culinary history for 25 years.

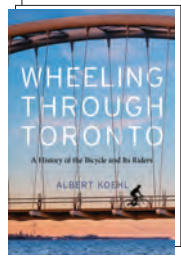
“My training is to look at women’s life stories, so I started with stories in fiction, and then I turned my attention to non-fiction, especially stories told in their own words, and then I cottoned on to the fact that moments of really pivotal societal change were being described by women in intimate and detailed terms,” she says. “There are dramatic cultural and social shifts that are documented closely in cookbooks, if you pay attention.”

You can see, for example, the disappearance of certain foods, such as fish when stocks were low. Overfishing of turtles led to mock turtle soup. The First World War heralded many more “mock” foods and technological innovations – think of Knox-brand gelatin.

When her publisher asked her to consider writing a book about menus, she realized these everyday items fall somewhere between documentary evidence and flights of the imagination. Her book features 190 menu images for which she had a “fleet of research assistants” searching. She says they did their utmost to locate the copyright and provide information on how future researchers can find them.

Prof. Cooke started looking at rare material, something that has remained a constant in her career, while at Queen’s, where – as the first person in her family to go to university – she received her first degree in Canadian studies.

— By Jennifer Campbell



01

What is it about the bicycle that causes it to be beloved by many, yet despised by others? That question is at the heart of *Wheeling Through Toronto: A History of the Bicycle and Its Riders*, a new book by **Albert Koehl, Law’84**. The book, which is especially timely given Ontario Premier Doug Ford’s controversial plan to rip up bike lanes, pedals through 130 years of transportation history – including archival materials, newspapers, and interviews – highlighting the oft-ignored humble bicycle and its potential in a climate emergency. Published by University of Toronto Press.



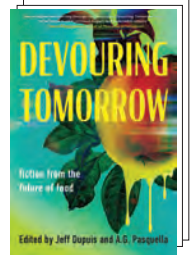
02

What may seem like junk to us may in fact be treasure to someone else, as a young boy discovers in the children’s picture book *Beautiful Junk* by alumna and elementary school teacher **Melissa Assaly, Artsci’00**. Before moving day, a family leaves unwanted items on the curb. The boy observes people rummaging through the pile in search of treasure and discovers the joy in saving items destined for the landfill. Published by Fitzhenry & Whiteside.



03

“Smoother blending of parts,” “More powerful from end to end,” “Most complete individual” – just some of the comments you might hear at a cow-showing competition or on the new comedy series *Cows Come Home*. Co-written, co-produced, and directed by **Katie Uhlmann, Artsci’09**, it is a “heartfelt comedy about a woman who hits rock bottom and moves back to her small town, putting her life back together with the help of her best friend, through the world of competitive cow showing.” The six-part series is set to air June 11 on Bell Fibe TV1 and also features actor **Allie Dunbar, Artsci’07**.



04

Imagine a world where meat grown in a lab becomes sentient, where there are no longer any bees left to pollinate, where disease wipes out fruit crops – are these the plots of a dystopian fantasy or the terrifying possibilities of tomorrow? **Adam Pasquella, Artsci’96**, has created an anthology of speculative short fiction, *Devouring Tomorrow*, that imagines a not-too-distant future where society grapples with climate, technological, political, and social changes that may affect how and what we eat. It includes work by collaborator **Elan Mastai, Artsci’97**, and is published by Dundurn Press.





323
WILLIAM
STREET

BUILDING
Built in 1912 by masonry contractor William Morley. Bought by Science '44 Co-op Incorporated in 1977 and operated for several summers as a youth hostel.

STYLE
Conventional L-shape footprint with a wooden porch supporting a balcony but minimal ornamental features.

More than a home

BY TONY ATHERTON

The 2½-storey brick house at 323 William Street had been around for eight decades when Stacy Kelly first crossed its threshold in the fall of 1994.

Since 1977, the house had been among a roster of properties owned and operated by Science '44 Co-operative Incorporated (now Kingston Student Housing Co-op) and had been taking in students and other roomers for at least 20 years before that.

Suffice it to say, a lot of people have called 323 William Street home, however temporarily.

But for Mr. Kelly, the house was more than

a home. It was the haven he needed in a difficult time.

Although Mr. Kelly is Artsci'93, he didn't graduate with his class.

"After a very disastrous third year, I voluntarily withdrew to take care of myself," he says. "I hoped to only be gone for a year, but I ended up being gone for two years. When I was finally able [to come back] my entire community was gone."

He felt more adrift entering the Queen's community at the age of 21 than he had coming out of Quebec's CEGEP (Collège

d'enseignement général et professionnel) system as a teenager, he says. "I was both excited and, shockingly, deeply terrified ... I never felt so alone, and I was really scared."

Mr. Kelly's entire Queen's career to that point had been spent in residence; he had joined the Residence Society student government in first year and just stayed. That made the prospect of fending for himself in a big house with a bunch of strangers all the more daunting.

"I didn't think I could go back and thrive and survive at Queen's without some sort of community. So, that's how I discovered Science '44 Co-op.

"What I liked about it was that you had ... the central dining hall where everyone would eat together all during the week, your groceries were delivered to you through the co-op, you shared things," Mr. Kelly says.

"I knew I would want that kind of structure and support and so I applied and was assigned 323 William. I arrived not knowing anyone ... and the very first person I met was Dana."

Dana Kearns, Artsci '95, had been living at 323 William since the beginning of her second year.

The co-op lifestyle made things easy, she says, and the community was great. There was one minor quibble, though. She and the two other female housemates at 323 William were craving more gender parity in the 10-bedroom house. "We thought, 'Wouldn't it be nice to have four girls in the house this year,' a bit of [female] community," Ms. Kearns says.

So, when the list of new housemates was posted and the women saw the name Stacy Kelly, they were pleased, says Ms. Kearns. "Awesome! Another girl. Terrific."

When Mr. Kelly showed up during Frosh Week '94, Ms. Kearns didn't lament his gender for long. They were soon jabbering away "like a couple of magpies," she says and, after dinner the next night at the Copper Penny, were friends for life. "She was the emcee at my wedding," says Mr. Kelly.

Over that year together at 323 William, Mr. Kelly and Ms. Kearns would serve on the co-op board together, party together with their housemates, and share moments that would cement their friendship.

But for Mr. Kelly, it was that first day at 323 William Street that banished his dread of returning to Queen's. "It was a lifesaver because I really didn't know what was going to happen and, all of a sudden, I had a friend." 🍷

▲
Tell us about the University District house you lived in and the memories you made: review@queensu.ca

Lifting us up in times of uncertainty



Honouring our students and distinguished alumni offers hope for all.

Spring has sprung! And with it comes Queen's University's awards season. Each spring our community celebrates the contributions and achievements of a diverse range of students, staff, and faculty. At the time of writing, I am particularly excited to congratulate the student recipients of the Agnes Benidickson Tricolour Award, the highest tribute paid to Queen's students, for distinguished service, leadership, character, and community impact during their time at Queen's, and to welcome them into the Tricolour Society in a few weeks.

This June, at our annual Alumni Awards gala, we will also honour exceptional alumni who have demonstrated many of the same qualities as the Tricolour Award recipients, gaining recognition in their communities and in their fields as a result. Having had the pleasure of speaking with some of these award recipients over the years, I note that often they will credit their time at Queen's as having sparked or nurtured their desire to make meaningful contributions in their careers, volunteer activities, and areas of influence.

This year, the Queen's University Alumni Association is thrilled to be honouring the career achievements of such distinguished alumni as renowned Canadian singer-songwriter Jill Barber, whose first-ever performance was at the Grad Club, and Queen's University's own celebrated women's soccer head coach Dave McDowell. McDowell's nominators credit him with playing a critical mentorship role in the lives of hundreds of Queen's women's soccer alumni, spanning a time period of more than 30 years.

We will also honour alumni who have had a critical impact in their community, such as Edward Thomas, Associate Director at the Arthur B. McDonald Canadian Astroparticle Physics Research Institute and PhD candidate in Cultural Studies, known for research bringing attention to the ban on Black medical students at Queen's that began in 1918 (a ban that went enforced until 1965).

In addition to those highlighted here, there are several other recipients who have made incredibly worthy contributions that will be announced and detailed elsewhere in communications from the QUAA, and I encourage you to learn more about them. They are all very inspiring!

Pausing to recognize and celebrate our exceptional students, staff, faculty, and alumni is uplifting in a time of uncertainty. I hope that if you know of exceptional members of our community who are worthy of recognition, you will consider nominating them next year (even if it makes our very difficult job of selection even more difficult).

Sincerely,
ALLISON WILLIAMS,
PRESIDENT, QUAA

Professor Amarnath Amarasingam tries to better understand radicalization by talking to extremists



When a terrible attack occurs, especially when it involves terrorism, acts of hatred, or other forms of extremism, Amarnath Amarasingam is the expert who journalists will turn to while trying to help the public make sense of senseless acts. He has nearly 70 peer-reviewed publications, written and edited several books, and has shared his expertise on major Canadian, U.S., and British networks. His Rolodex includes some of the world's worst outcasts, from ISIS fighters to Neo-Nazis – all to better understand extremist violence.

Where did you grow up?

I was born in 1982 and grew up in Sri Lanka for the first six years of my life. This is when the war in Sri Lanka between the government and the Tamil Tigers was ramping up. My earliest memories are of the war, hiding out in bunkers and things like that. Luckily, we had family already in Toronto and so we arrived as refugees and settled here in May 1988.

How did you first become interested in religion and extremism?

In my first week of undergrad at the University of Toronto Scarborough, 9/11 happened. That's initially what sparked my interest in religious studies and sociology to try to understand violence. This idea of why people join violent movements and come to see violence as not only necessary, but obligatory, either as a defensive mechanism or for some kind of a broader cause, interested me.

What did you do with that interest?

I started my PhD in 2007 under Lorne Dawson at the University of Waterloo. I switched topics a bunch of times, but eventually came back around to Sri Lanka because, around that time in 2009, the war in Sri Lanka was coming to an end. It was that period where the Gardiner Expressway was blocked and there were a lot of mass protests in Toronto. So, that became my PhD topic: to understand diaspora activism and what happens when the main focus of that activism – the militant movement in Sri Lanka – is defeated.

Where has your research taken you?

Right after my PhD, I went back to Sri Lanka a few times because I was doing more field work and I started interviewing former members of the Tamil Tigers to understand the same question: how did they join the movement and what was life in the movement like?

Was the research dangerous?

The Sri Lankan government didn't allow research from abroad during this period, so much of that work had to be undercover. You couldn't meet people, especially former members of the Tamil Tigers, in the open at coffee shops. I had to work with trusted non-government organizations locally who would provide a safe space to do these interviews.

I was stopped by this guy on a motorcycle carrying a backpack three times one day asking for directions. He was making it known that I was being watched. But the bigger problem was some of the guys I was interviewing weren't captured and were still on the run from the Sri Lankan government. I made sure, when I was taking notes or when recording, that I would immediately upload the interview content to the cloud and then erase it. I would flush written notes.

Where did life take you after defending your PhD?

Lorne Dawson was asked by the federal government to take a deeper dive into the foreign fighter issue. Around the time the Syrian revolution had started in 2011, people from Canada and other parts of the world had started leaving their countries to join ISIS or join al-Qaida-linked groups. The government was accustomed to thinking about how foreign events or foreign wars might radicalize people domestically to attack here, but they weren't expecting a bunch of people to get on planes and leave.

We've always had a foreign fighter issue in Canada. We've had people go to Somalia, Bosnia, Afghanistan, et cetera, but what was unique about 2013 and 2014 was social media. All these guys and girls who started to leave kept their social media profiles active. And



so, they were tweeting about their breakfast and then they're tweeting about what they were doing on the battlefield. It created a really interesting research opportunity to reach out to them and do virtual interviews either through text messages or Skyping with them.

What was it like to talk to jihadists?

It started to become all-consuming because when you meet someone for an interview, you talk to them for an hour and then you leave, but because you're texting with someone, sometimes I would be talking to these guys for six months, a year, two years, over the whole time they were fighting in Syria.

I started to get to know some of these guys quite closely, fighters from the West, some Canadians. Sometimes they'd get killed, sometimes they would vanish. By this point, the returnee phenomenon had started and you had people coming back. I started travelling around talking to former fighters and returnees who were still committed but had left. I started interviewing a lot of mothers and fathers and siblings to try to understand the whole ecosystem around how radicalization might actually occur.

What do you do at Queen's?

I teach several different religion classes, some of which touch on violence, hate, and xenophobia. Being in the classroom with students is great. The courses seem pretty popular, so I think I'm doing a good job. I'm also continuing



with the extremism research. I am finishing a book on the far right in Canada with Stephanie Carvin. I am also finishing another book with Marc-André Argentino on dangerous conspiracies to understand why some conspiracy theorists become violent and others don't. The far-right extremism space from about 2015 onwards has gotten very bizarre. There's a lot left to examine and understand.

You've spent years researching this topic – what have you learned about radicalization?

If I think about the commonalities of the interviews with the Tamil

Tigers, plus the Neo-Nazi interviews, plus the jihadist interviews, even the conspiratorial stuff, there's this moral urgency that draws people toward violence. Once you start to believe that simple political activism is not enough, but a morally urgent thing to do to protect your group and to protect something more nebulous like culture or nation-state, then you're in a realm where people can justify violence. I'm tinkering with this idea of moral urgency or what a friend of mine calls a moral emergency and how that might motivate and push people along. 🐾

– By Liam Casey



Quick sales with fair returns

GORDON'S HELPS CLIENTS DOWNSIZE EXCESS
REAL ESTATE ASSETS PREDICTABLY

To thrive in the ever-evolving Canadian real-estate market, leading companies need to be able to manage a diverse range of sales opportunities.

Gordon's Downsizing & Estate Services, a real-estate company serving clients throughout Ontario, takes pride in an in-house expertise that can support all manner of client needs as it relates to downsizing and estate settlement. Sometimes, clients start the downsizing process by simplifying their investment portfolios by selling off real-estate rental assets. Gordon's has the flexibility to provide uniquely seamless and efficient service that takes care of managing and liquidating both the real estate and contents.

Dave Neely approached Gordon's to sell a duplex that had been used for many years as a group home. The units had been operated as a business for many years by his wife, Dawn. Now, for personal reasons, the couple needed a quick sale that would provide a fair return on their investment.

But Neely says the real estate market in the area appeared to have stalled at that time. He was concerned they were going to be left holding a property they could no longer manage.

"The house we wanted to put up for sale was next door to another property that was on the market for a year before it sold. We needed a quick sale. We knew Gordon's and their good reputation through our network, so we approached them and told them our concerns."

The couple's network was developed over many years through their school and business ties. Both are graduates of Queen's University: Dawn Neely graduated from the Faculty of Education to become a teacher (retired) and Dave attended Royal Military College and graduated from Queen's with a B.A in psychology.

Today, after years working with IBM, he is a professional development speaker and coach, and runs his own business, D.K. Neely and Associates (neely-training.com).

Gordon's gave the Neelys a straightforward presentation of what the company could do for them, and the couple accepted. Dave's concern about a stalled market did not last long.

"In a matter of weeks, we received an offer we were willing to take," he says. "I think our money was in the bank within two months of the property going on the market. Were we happy? You're damn right we were."

Adam Gordon, president of Gordon's Downsizing, says the Gordon's team stays on top of market trends and provides comprehensive services.

"The vast majority of our clients, all of whom are downsizing or dealing with an estate, are looking for a predictable real-estate experience that provides a fair return on an asset they no longer need versus trying to achieve a specific price. Our robust, data-driven process was built to deliver just that so that our clients can move on with confidence. With thousands of properties sold across Ontario over six decades in business, we have the knowledge and expertise to help people navigate the market and exceed expectations."

The Gordon's team went to work to unravel the complexities of unloading a property, engaging first in helpful discussions and moving forward with the legal paperwork. "My wife handled all of that," Dave says, "and she was impressed with how clearly and professionally Gordon's proceeded. They just made it so easy for us."

Dave says he couldn't believe how quickly their worries about the property melted away.

"We couldn't have been happier with the whole deal. Let me tell you, if I sell the house I'm in now, I'll use Gordon's again."



Thinking about
downsizing or settling
an estate? Scan or call
(800) 267-2206 ext. 3.

Mightier than the sword

George Reinblatt knows how to skewer the rich and famous – with a pencil.

BY GREG HUGHES

It's been said that a good roast is like a eulogy – but with better timing. And, in that regard, no one has better timing than George Reinblatt, Artsci'99, a film studies grad who has carved out a singular path in the world of television comedy, specializing in the art of the roast.

But even though he's an expert in the kind of barbs that make celebrities squirm, for Reinblatt, now head writer and executive producer of CTV's *Roast Battle Canada*, it's all part and parcel of having a positive impact on the world through the art of comedy and the power of the written word.

"There's so much art nowadays that stirs up bad emotions or makes you feel sad. And I'm just the opposite. I only want to make you laugh," he says.

Roasts are just a part of Reinblatt's impressive resumé.

His professional start came with his creation – alongside fellow Artsci graduates Christopher Bond, Artsci'01, Frank Cipolla, Artsci'98, and Melissa Morris, Artsci'02, (now Adjunct Lecturer at the DAN School of Drama and Music) – of *Evil Dead The Musical*, a show the *New York Times* said might just succeed as "the next *Rocky Horror Show*."

Reinblatt's musical, which launched at the Tranzac Club on Brunswick Avenue in Toronto back in 2003, has exploded in popularity worldwide.



"When writing a joke, you analyze every syllable. Should this word go at the top of the sentence? Or is it funnier at the end? Can I make it shorter? The art is in trying to shape the perfect sentence that gets the biggest possible laugh."



What started as a small-time tribute to the Sam Raimi-Bruce Campbell-led comedy-horror franchise is now a certified cultural phenomenon, with fans around the world – something Reinblatt says he never could have imagined.

“Did I expect this show would reach these levels? Of course not. We shoot fake blood on our audience

▲ George Reinblatt is now head writer and executive producer of CTV’s *Roast Battle Canada*.

as they watch musical theatre. You could never predict something that ridiculous would be playing for over 21 years in over 350 cities,” Reinblatt says. “I’m still shocked by how big this became.”

Ever since *Evil Dead The Musical*’s rise, Reinblatt has enjoyed considerable success as a writer on both sides of the border. And while you

may not recognize his name, you most certainly have been entertained by his words. His writing has appeared in shows on major American networks, he’s been nominated for six Canadian Screen Awards and an Outer Critics Circle Award (honouring theatrical achievement), and won a Dora Award, which recognizes excellence in theatre, dance, and opera productions in Toronto.

And, of course, it is no surprise that he has also contributed as a writer to *Comedy Central Roasts*, including roasts of Justin Bieber, Bruce Willis, and Rob Lowe. To top it off, he’s written comedic material for big names like Taylor Swift, Selena Gomez, and Steve Martin at the Much Music Video Awards and Montreal’s Just For Laughs festival.

“The amount of times the word ‘roast’ is on my resumé is crazy,” he jokes.

But the recipe for a perfect roast is, well, no laughing matter.

“When writing a joke, you analyze every syllable. Should this word go at the top of the sentence? Or is it funnier at the end? Can I make it shorter?” he says. “The art is in trying to shape the perfect sentence that gets the biggest possible laugh.”

Throughout Reinblatt’s professional success, one thread has remained constant: his deep ties to Queen’s. As a student, he was part of Queen’s Musical Theatre (QMT), the now-defunct Studio Q (a former video media organization within the Alma Mater Society), and Queen’s Bands.

“Literally, I can trace almost everything I’ve done back to Queen’s,” Reinblatt says. “With *Evil Dead*, I met Chris and Melissa in QMT, I met Frank in the Bands – so *Evil Dead* is a total Queen’s connection.”

Reinblatt says he found many outlets for performance at Queen’s, all leading him down the path to success as the playwright and writer he is today.

“Queen’s just gave so many opportunities to perform, to express yourself, and I took as many as I could at the time,” he reflects. “And now, all these years later, it kind of sparked everything that became my career.” 🍷

CLASS NOTES



QUEEN'S H

1960s

G.W. Stephen Brodsky

Arts'69

Steve's book, *Intimations of Joseph Conrad: A Century of Sightings and Citings of Conrad's Presences in Print, Crafts, Media and Monuments*, was published in September 2024 by Palgrave Macmillan. He regards book writing as indecent at age 91. Therefore, at age 92 he writes only articles and reviews.

Mike Carson

Sc'69

Mike was inducted into Curling Quebec's Hall of Fame in 2024, in the category Player and Builder. His involvement in the sport of curling began in 1970, and since then he has gone on to win more than 15 medals in provincial

▲ The Queen's pipe band of 1941 from *Queen's University at Kingston, 1841-1941*, a centenary booklet published in 1941.

championships. He also received the Sportsmanship Award in 2001 and a Masters Silver Medal in 2012. He was only the second player in the history of Quebec curling to have skipped for two different teams the same year (2009). During his career, he was involved in the 1982 Quebec Games, the 1983 Canada Games, the 1988 Brier, the Canadian Masters championships for 10 years, as well as Curling Quebec. He played various roles in each



▶ Mike Carson, shown with his wife, Lise, was inducted into Curling Quebec's Hall of Fame last year.



WRITE TO US

If you have memories of friends, faculty, and colleagues you would like to share, email us: review@queensu.ca.

All comments may be edited for clarity, civility, and length.



@queensureview

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES



PIPE BAND OF 1941

of these organizations, either as director, administrator, technical director, co-ordinator, or president. He also developed the first page system for curling; was a member of the Governor General’s Curling Club (2013); was chosen as administrator-volunteer for Sports Quebec (1988); and received the Curling Canada Ray Kingsmith Lifetime Volunteer Award (2018). Any friends who’d like to get in contact with Mike can reach him at mikecarsoncurl@gmail.com.

Wendy (Philips) Trutnau
Arts’64

The photo shows Wendy thanking Elke (Oehlschlaeger) Beecken (MEd’84) for her long and successful work as head of the German Queen’s Alumni Group, originally established by Wendy and her husband, Peter Trutnau (BA’79). For almost 20 years, Elke worked non-stop organizing very successful reunions across Germany. The photo was taken by Alison (Walker) Plön (Artsci’92),



who, together with Elke, organized a wonderful alumni weekend in September 2024 in Flensburg, Germany. Sebastian Gocht (MSc’86), who graduated in electrical engineering, has offered to take over from Elke. This is super news for the German Queen’s alumni group because Sebastian has helped support all the gatherings, starting back in the early ’90s when the Trutnaus were in full swing. Elke deserves our thanks for her years of service for Queen’s in Germany.

Garry L. Willard
Meds’63

Dr. Willard is a recent recipient of the King Charles III Coronation Medal. The presentation of medals was held at the Coldwater Legion in Ontario. His family and friends are extremely proud of his lifetime of dedication to surgery and the accomplishment of his book, *Into the Dragon’s Jaws: A Canadian Combat Surgeon in the Vietnam War*. All the royalties from his book are dedicated to the treatment of PTSD in military veterans.

1970s

Tom James
Com’72, MBA’74

The early 1970s graduating classes were among the luckiest

generation ever! They graduated with the prospects of securing good jobs with opportunities for career advancement and were able to buy a home, something the younger generation can only dream of. Tom would now like to remind his fellow grads that it’s time to pay it forward. The “Last Pro Bono Award” was established to honour Fred Delaney (BComH’72 and LLB’75) through the provision of scholarships to students from the local area entering the faculties of Business or Law. Fred, a dedicated lawyer and three-term mayor of Gananoque, believed in service, fellowship, and uplifting others. His guiding philosophy, “You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you,” continues through this award. Fred often provided legal services to those who couldn’t afford to pay on a pro bono basis, hence the name of the award. Tom is asking others to give through a monthly program or lump sum by calling the Alumni Office at 613-533-2060 — or simply scan the QR code to donate online.



Grant Linney
Arts’73, Ed’78

In January, Grant received the King Charles III Coronation Medal for his longtime advocacy in fighting climate change (over 1,000 presentations and counting) and promoting outdoor experiential education as essential learning for a sustainable future.

Ross A. Eaman
PhD’78

Ross is now an adjunct research professor at Carleton University after a lengthy career in its School of Journalism and Communication. His most recent publications are *Historical Dictionary of Journalism (2nd ed.)*, published by Rowman & Littlefield, 2021, and *Architecture as Communication: A Medium Like No Other*, published by McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2025.

1980s

Annette (Saulnier) Bergeron

Sc'87

Annette is pleased to announce that she has been appointed to the board of directors of the Canada Energy Regulator. She joined the board on Jan. 24, 2025, for a five-year term. She currently holds the position of Honorary Guard Commander of the Fort Henry Guard and serves on the board of Synergy North. Ms. Bergeron has twice been named one of the Top 25 Women of Influence in Canada and is a recipient of the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers issued by the Governor General of Canada. She has also taught at Queen's.



collection of original silkscreen prints. She credits Queen's and her professor, J.C. Heywood, for her love of the silkscreen medium. Her work can be found at zoecraig.com.

▲ Adaptive sailor Aaron Wong-Sing was awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal in recognition of his positive impact in his career, in sport, and within the community.

Kyle Lauersen

Sc'08, Ed'09, MSc'11

Since 2019, Kyle has been faculty at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) in Thuwal, Saudi Arabia, and he was just awarded the university's Distinguished Teaching Award in November 2024. He received the award for his innovative approach to bioengineering education, mentorship, and dedication to student success.

Aaron Wong-Sing

Sc'00

Aaron was awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal on Jan. 28, 2025, for being a positive force in his career, sports, and throughout the community. Aaron has been living with cerebral palsy since birth and was diagnosed with ALS on July 1, 2024. For over 20 years, Aaron has excelled as a leader within Public Services and Procurement Canada, leading procurements supporting military personnel and complex health services programs. He championed accessibility in the federal public service. His community involvement spans nearly 30 years in the non-profit and volunteer sectors, particularly in international development and adaptive sports. As an athlete, Aaron excelled in adaptive sailing,

1990s



Zoë Craig

BFA'90

Zoë is thrilled to announce the launch of her artist website, built in collaboration with Kingston Frameworks. After a long career in academic publishing, Zoë has returned to the printmaking studio in Toronto and has a new

2000s

Aris Daghighian

Artsci'08

Aris was appointed senior counsel for the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, leading the national Immigration Division practice group.

Kathryn Lagrandeur

PhD'02

Kathryn received the King Charles III Coronation Medal in recognition of her contributions to Canada and the federal public service on Feb. 18. Kathryn was nominated by the senior management team at Library and Archives Canada for her accomplishments as the director of Cultural Archives. She was honoured for her deep commitment to social justice, equity, and diversity in her work, and to building a more inclusive heritage sector.

co-chairing the Mobility Cup; he earned a bronze medal in the 2013 Canada Summer Games and a silver medal at the 2017 Canada Summer Games.

2010s

Brandon Karonyataty Maracle

Artsci'18, Law'21

Brandon became executive director of Kingston Native Centre and Language Nest (KNCLN) in August 2024. Since graduating, and prior to his time with KNCLN, Brandon gained valuable experience in non-profit and in legal clinic and firm environments – all of which are serving him well in his new role. Part of his role is working with Queen's Faculty of Law, the Queen's Law Clinics, and the Law Foundation of Ontario to launch Indigenous-focused legal services in the Kingston area.



Jess Di Pasquale and Brendan Coffey

Sc'19 and Law'19

Jess recently married Brendan. In January 2019, Brendan was a varsity football player turned coach, while Jess was in the fourth and final year of her undergraduate degree under the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, specializing in civil engineering. Jess and Brendan were set up by mutual friends and met for a blind date at Red House.

They clicked immediately. After just a few months together, they both graduated and dove into a trans-provincial long-distance relationship. Brendan started articling at a criminal defence law firm in Ottawa, and Jess began her career as a project co-ordinator for a civil engineering consulting firm in St. Catharines. Then COVID hit, and they made the decision to move in together. Jess relocated to Ottawa. Brendan proposed in Niagara-on-the-Lake on Dec. 31, 2022. In late October 2023, they made the decision to pick up and move across the country to Vancouver. Jess and Brendan flew out to Niagara-on-the-Lake for their wedding. Surrounded by their family and closest friends – many of whom were old housemates, classmates, or teammates at Queen's – they were married on Oct. 5, 2024, at Queen's Landing. In May 2025, they will be moving to Toronto.

Johnnie Vu

AMBA'16

Johnnie was recently appointed as an aide-de-camp for the lieutenant-governor of Ontario and commanding officer of the 709 Toronto Signals, Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps (709 RCACC).

IN MEMORIAM

Brian Clare Bailey

BA'64, MD'68

Douglas Bertrand

BSc'66

Catherine Mary Brewster

Longtime staff member

Peter G.C. Campbell

PhD'68

Linda Cochrane (nee Lewis)

BA'77/MBA'79

Randy Fedorchuk

MD'78

Judy Georgijev (nee Beaudry)

BSc'88

J. Ardeth Hill (nee Justus)

BA'52

William Peter Lewis

A member of the Class of Arts and Science 1947

Linda Locke (nee Covey)

Arts'66

Stanley Thomas Locke

MBA'71

Doug MacDonald

Sc'67, MSc'69

John Mattinson

BSc'73

Martha McConnachie (nee McLaren)

BMus'76

Catherine "Cathy" Elizabeth McKnight

BNSc'61

David McLean

BSc'70, PhD'77

John Meisel

Professor Emeritus

Joyce Milligan

BA'57

Stuart Alexander Mooney

BA'81

Barbara J. Mortensen

BEd'56, BA'86

Margaret Ann Nabutete (nee Mason)

BNSc'70

Patricia Jane Scott

BScOT'74

Nancy Elizabeth Simpson

Professor of Human Genetics

Albert Carl Streith

BSc'63



NOTE

Full obituaries submitted by family members and friends can be found on the *Queen's Alumni Review* website.

LEGACY

1939-2025

Thomas R. Williams

Principal emeritus was the steady hand that guided Queen's through tumultuous times.

Last year, on a day when the skies were clear, Bill Leggett wanted to take his good friend Tom Williams up on a flight over Kingston. The two former Queen's principals had known each other for 30 years, but this would be the first time Dr. Leggett, an experienced pilot, would be in a cockpit with his pal.

Dr. Williams' son Glen wasn't so sure about the plan.

"I was just like, 'Is this a good idea? An 85-year-old academic up flying around?'"

Turns out, it was.

Dr. Williams had been battling cancer for a couple of years at that point, but his son says the flight over his beloved city and university invigorated him.

"It was the most energized he had been in two years – and he told us that he actually flew the plane home!"

Maybe son shouldn't have been too surprised that dad was so solid behind the yoke, however. Talk to enough people who knew Dr. Williams, and two words come up again and again: reliable and dependable.

Indeed, they come up for whichever role Dr. Williams held, say family, friends, and colleagues – whether as a husband, father, grandfather, friend, role model, or educator. And they certainly rang true during his 30 years at Queen's, they add,

particularly when he came out of retirement to serve as the university's principal and vice-chancellor in 2008, a time when order and stability were needed.

Dr. Williams passed away in Kingston on Jan. 3. He was 85. He is survived by his wife, Maureen Ball, four children, and seven grandchildren.

Dr. Williams was born in Peterborough, Ont., on Sept. 9, 1939 – the same



"He had a really wonderful, modest way of dealing with problems. He was an extremely pragmatic thinker and was unencumbered by dogma and agenda."

– KATIE MACMILLAN, ARTSCI'78

▲ Thomas Williams came out of retirement in 2008 to become the 19th principal and vice-chancellor of Queen's.

day Canada's House of Commons voted to declare war on Germany – but soon moved with his family to Saint-Lambert, Que., near Montreal. It was there that he learned to play hockey and referee football, and began a lifelong love of the Montreal Canadiens.

He began his post-secondary education at McGill University, where he graduated in 1960 with a



university in Canada and a world-class school, and he loved that the size of Queen's helped create that sense of community that couldn't be achieved at larger institutions."

Dr. Williams remained the dean of education until 1986. He also served as a professor in the Faculty of Education and in the School of Policy Studies. Under Principal David Chadwick Smith (1984–1994), he served as vice-principal of operations and as vice-principal of institutional relations.

Dr. Leggett first met Dr. Williams just after Dr. Leggett was named Queen's 17th principal. It was the spring of 1994, and Dr. Leggett and his wife were house hunting in Kingston when Dr. Williams invited them for dinner.

"Our conversation went well into the night – it was a wonderful evening – and it was the beginning of a strong and lasting friendship," says Dr. Leggett. "He didn't have to be that generous, but he was – that's who he was."

He also had a tremendous sense of humour, adds Dr. Leggett. "One thing that everybody who talks of Tom remembers – from students right up through alumni and others – was that he had a wonderful ability to see the light in the darkest of days and bring some humour to it, which made everybody feel good."

That ability was on full display after Dr. Williams came out of retire-

ment to become Queen's 19th principal and vice-chancellor on May 1, 2008, following the resignation of Dr. Karen Hitchcock.

"That was a tumultuous time, and a bit of a scary time for the university's board of trustees," says Katie Macmillan, Artsci'78. She was on that board when she first met Dr. Williams, who would become a close friend. "But it was very reassuring for us that Tom came in. He had a really wonderful, modest way of dealing with problems. He was an extremely pragmatic thinker and was unencumbered by dogma and agenda. He calmed the place down at a time where there was a lot happening."


As principal, Dr. Williams focused on addressing the university's growing budget gap, in part by leading a three-year budget strategy developed with vice-principals and deans. He engaged the campus community in numerous discussions as well and set up a series of task forces to tackle issues such as cost control, revenue generation, communications, and technology use.

Dr. Williams also oversaw renaming the Policy Studies Building to Robert Sutherland Hall, honouring Queen's first Black student and graduate and a key early benefactor, and secured funding for a new medical school building and the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts.

When he finally fully retired from Queen's in August 2009, Dr. Williams had more time to devote to his other passions, such as golf, travel, and a disdain for the Toronto Maple Leafs. But he kept teaching right up until the end, including giving a lecture at Queen's Medical School and leading a photography course for seniors in his final months.

Through it all, his reliability and dependability never wavered, says Glen, especially for his family.

"He was the one we all turned to for advice and guidance, and he had an amazing knack for getting at what was really important in a situation."

And as for his dad's legacy, he needs just eight words: "Father, grandfather, husband, role model, educator, Queen's guy." 

– By Jordan Whitehouse

Thomas Williams
and his wife,
Maureen Ball



bachelor's degree in chemistry. He stayed on at McGill to complete two degrees in education before working at the University of Chicago. He then earned his doctorate in education from the University of Michigan before work took him to the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto.

In 1977, Dr. Williams was offered the job of dean of Queen's Faculty of Education. It was a big change for him and his first wife, Sherrill Williams, who predeceased him in 1991, to move from Toronto to a smaller city, says Glen, especially with three kids in tow ranging from five to 11 years old.

But Dr. Williams immediately connected deeply with the Kingston and Queen's communities, says Glen. "He firmly believed it was the best



◀ April and Steve Gougeon met as students at Bader College in 2010.

▼ The Gougeon family, from left to right, Oliver, April, Wesley, and Stephen, had looked forward to a vacation together, which ended in tragedy.



The couple met in England in 2010 when April and Steve, a Dalhousie University student, were studying international law at Bader College at Herstmonceux Castle.

“I don’t think either of us were really expecting to meet anyone at that time in our lives,” Mr. Gougeon recalls. “But she was just a wonderful, positive person. I really gravitated toward her. She was funny and just so lovely. She loved life.”

They married in 2013. Ms. Gougeon articulated with a small Ottawa law firm, then worked for Competition Bureau Canada and the CRTC before joining the Office of the

Privacy Commissioner of Canada. In 2022, she joined the Toronto firm Fogler, Rubinoff LLP. Though she loved the law, Ms. Gougeon’s real passion was her family.


“More than anything else, she loved her family and her friends. Her boys were the most important thing in her life. She would do anything for them.”

She also loved craftwork and karaoke – and baking cakes.

The Dominican Republic trip was a last-minute booking, a chance to relax before Ms. Gougeon was to start a new job with the Toronto firm Norton Rose Fulbright. A lawsuit filed by the family alleges April and Oliver died from “secondary causes related to food poisoning” and that resort staff weren’t properly trained in food safety.

The April Gougeon (Stoker) Award in Law is a way to honour his wife’s love for the law and her love for Queen’s, Mr. Gougeon says.

He is grateful for the support and contributions the endowment has received from Ms. Gougeon’s Queen’s classmates and her employer. To be self-sustaining, the fund must reach \$125,000.

“A lot of people want to see this happen,” he says. “I’m very confident that we’ll get to where we need to be and that my wife’s name will live on.” 

Honouring April

New award in Law ensures alumna’s name will live on

BY BLAIR CRAWFORD

A Caribbean holiday for Steve and April Gougeon (nee Stoker, Law’12) and their two young boys, Oliver and Wesley, turned into unimaginable tragedy.

Within hours of arriving at their Dominican Republic resort in December 2023, all four fell ill with food poisoning. April, 41, and eight-year-old Oliver would not recover.

Now, Steve Gougeon is turning his grief into giving.

The April Gougeon (Stoker) Award in Law that has been established by

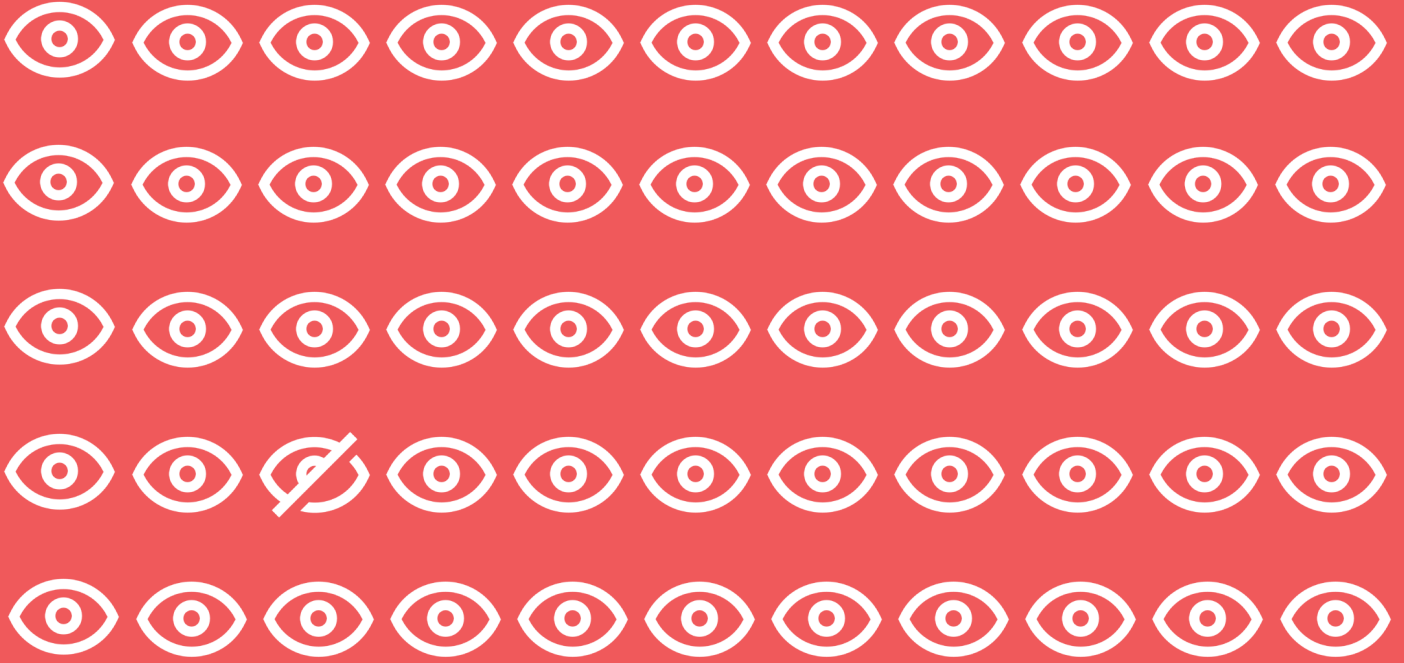
Mr. Gougeon will help ensure future Queen’s law students can access the same “exceptional education,” regardless of financial barriers.

The endowment will be awarded with a preference for law students studying privacy law, Ms. Gougeon’s speciality.

“I want to honour my wife and her legacy and I want to make sure that her name lives on,” Mr. Gougeon says. “She was such a giving person. She always put others before herself.”

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