

# Sociologically Speaking

Department of Sociology, Trent University

Volume 1, Issue 1

## Important Dates

- March 19th, Sociology Day, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Alumni House, Champlain College
- April 4, classes end
- April 9-22 Peterborough exam period
- April 14-18 Oshawa exam period
- April 18, final date to register for summer courses without a late fee
- May 16, final date to register for summer courses with a late fee
- June 4-6 convocation

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## Welcome to New Faculty

### Dr. Peri Ballantyne

Professor Ballantyne received her Ph.D. from the University of Toronto, and was a Professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Toronto. Her research interests include examining the social determinants of health such as work, retirement, income security, social integration, gender and age. She is also involved in health behaviour studies—for example, how people make decisions about medication and how those with chronic illnesses use the health care system. Her work also focuses on how individuals and populations age and how they experience health and illness over the life course. Her on-going research projects involve a qualitative study examining the



Dr. Rahman & Dr. Ballantyne

relationship between perceptions of health and health-care decision-making and use by Cantonese-, Mandarin- and Portuguese-speaking elderly persons from an urban Canadian city, and a longitudinal health and health care utilization survey of Ontario injured workers.

### Dr. Momin Rahman

Professor Rahman completed his Ph.D. in Scotland at University of

Strathclyde and taught in the Department of Geography and Sociology. His Ph.D. thesis examined gay and lesbian politics and he is currently completing another book on the sociology of gender and sexuality. Professor Rahman also specializes in celebrity culture and is developing a paper on the failure to deal with racism in the last series of “Celebrity Big Brother” in the UK in 2007, and further empirical research on the representations of David Beckham in the USA and the emergence of Sidney Crosby as a media sports celebrity.

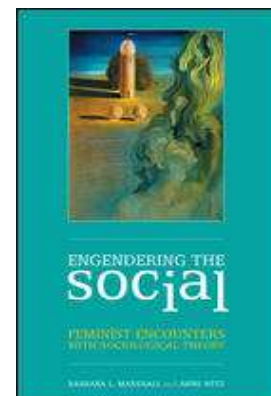
For more information regarding the research and teaching backgrounds of Professor Ballantyne and Professor Rahman, please see their web pages on [www.trentu.ca/sociology/faculty](http://www.trentu.ca/sociology/faculty).

## Message from the Chair

Welcome to ‘Sociologically Speaking’! We have designed this newsletter to keep you informed of what’s happening in the Sociology department and to provide a forum for information about doing a major in Sociology. We hope to publish two editions each year – one in the spring and one in the fall – so let us know what you’d like to see in these pages. We’re particularly

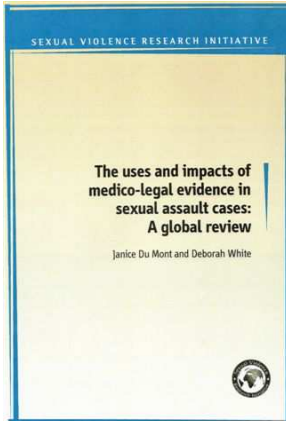
keen to showcase how our faculty, students and graduates are applying their sociological imaginations beyond the classroom, so let us know if you’ve got a story to tell. I hope you enjoy this first edition!

Professor Barb Marshall



# Sociologically Speaking

## Sexual Violence Research Initiative



Increasingly around the world, evidence for criminal sexual assault proceedings is collected in hospital-like settings through medical forensic examination of a victim. Many different protocols and professional groups are involved in this institutional response to rape. However, there has been little evaluation of the role that medical forensic evidence plays with respect to successful prosecution. In the fall of 2007, The World Health Organization, on behalf of the international Sexual Violence Research

Initiative (SVRI), published a landmark report titled “The Uses and Impacts of Medico-Legal Evidence in Sexual Assault Cases” (<http://www.svri.org/medico.pdf>) co-authored by Deborah White of the Sociology Department at Trent and Dr. Janice Du Mont of the Women’s College Research Institute.

This global review examines what is known with regard to the effectiveness and the practices surrounding the collection and processing of this form of corroborative

evidence, especially in relation to the health care needs of sexually assaulted women. It is currently being used as the basis of policy discussions and development across a number of industrialized and developing countries.

## Trent In Oshawa

*“For me, the intimate classroom setting in Oshawa coupled with the friendly staff in the Trent Office in Oshawa was comforting after many years spent away from academics.”*



**Oliver Cooper**  
Trent in Oshawa Graduate

Trent University offers a full Sociology Program at the University Centre at Durham. Courses are offered during both the day and evening in the fall/winter and summer sessions, allowing students to complete a degree solely with courses taught in Oshawa.

Students graduating with degrees in Sociology from Trent in Oshawa have pursued a variety of opportunities. Some have entered the workforce in a range of occupations, such as working for insurance companies examining claims; for government agencies assisting the unemployed and potential employers; for community agencies counseling those in need. Other sociology graduates from Oshawa have continued their education by entering programs such as Masters in Social Work, Bachelor of Education, and doctoral programs.

Oliver Cooper, a Trent in Oshawa Graduate returned to university after being out of school for eight

years. He comments that “I was excited by the course material, and the passion of my instructor Jim Cosgrave. For me, the intimate classroom setting in Oshawa coupled with the friendly staff in the Trent Office in Oshawa was comforting after many years spent away from academics”.

This combination of a close-knit learning environment and the approachability of Trent faculty enabled Mr. Cooper to discover his path in life. “I found a passion for Sociology which became my major with a minor in Psychology. I was able to connect with many other like-minded students who were on similar life paths as myself, and meaningful relationships were developed as a result of this,” he said, adding, “I am still in contact with many of these people today.”

Fully immersing himself in the Trent experience in Oshawa was

something he truly enjoyed, noting “the coursework was both challenging and rewarding and I would look forward to my lectures. The quality of instruction was top-notch and I found most instructors to be engaging and genuinely interested in the well being of the class.”

During his final year of study at Trent, Mr. Cooper decided to apply to law school and is now taking his first year of Law at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. “My experience at Trent has afforded me an opportunity to compete with some of the brightest students from across the country here at the U of A Law program.”

For full story see: Mature Student Discovers Passion for Sociology at Trent University in Oshawa, Friday, February 29, 2008 by Brittany Cadence.

<http://www.trentu.ca/newsevents/>

## Doing an Honours Thesis

In their fourth year honours students who wish to investigate a specific topic in depth have the opportunity to write an honours thesis, which is weighted as two full credits. While an honours thesis is not required for a single-major honours degree, it is recommended for students who are self motivated to conduct independent research on a topic of mutual interest to themselves and their supervisor(s). Normally, theses are 50-100 pages in length.

You must submit an Honours

Thesis Request Form and a brief one to two page written statement of your research interests to the Sociology Department by the end of May in order to be approved to register for a thesis (Sociology 402). This form can be downloaded from the Resource page of the sociology website ([www.trentu.ca/sociology](http://www.trentu.ca/sociology)).

A student interested in doing an honours thesis should first identify a topic of interest, and then in consultation with the Sociology Department Chair, find a profes-

sor who can act as a supervisor. The Chair of the Department will co-ordinate the assignment of thesis students to supervisors. Please arrange to see her as soon as possible, and certainly before you leave campus.

Some examples of past theses:

2006, Once Upon a Time...An examination of the social factors that influence family-provided literary experiences, by Susan Joy Scoffin.

2004, Taylorism & Health-Care Work with Special Reference to SARS Outbreak, by Bridget Leslie.



**Criminalizing Women (2006), edited by Professor Gillian Balfour and Professor Elizabeth Comack.**

## Careers:What Can I Do with a Sociology Degree?

Sociology is a multi-disciplinary field, and within this field, many career options are available. For example, Darren Murphy who graduated in 1996 and majored in Sociology is the publisher and general manager of *The Peterborough Examiner* and *The Lindsay Post*. He also is a recipient of Trent University's inaugural Young Leader Award.

Sociologists can be found in the

Human Services, such as social work, women's health care, non-profit organizations, and the Children's Aid Society. More business oriented sociologist can be found in the area of Human Resource Management, and conducting market research. Sociologists are also employed doing social research and data analysis. A career in this field would be good for the student that enjoys the analytical and

research aspect of sociology.

Some students may want to go to graduate school so that they may teach sociology, or do advanced research. Students who think they might want to attend graduate school in Ontario are encouraged to apply for the Ontario Graduate Scholarship at the beginning of fourth year. For more information see Trent's Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

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## Sociologists In The News

**Professor Barb Marshall** was interviewed by Trish Crawford of the Toronto Star on November 29, 2007 for the article "Performance anxiety; Perfect sex every time, any time blame Viagra for today's unrealistic expectations". She was also interviewed by Rita Celli on a phone in program on 'Viagra Undressed', CBC Radio, Ontario Today, February 7, 2008. **Professor Momin Rah-**

**man** was featured in an article by Lauren Gilcrest,, "New Trent prof is expert on the cult of celebrity", Peterborough This Week, July 20, 2007. **Professor Jim Conley** was interviewed in an article about the negative public reaction faced by Hummer owners: "Off the road, big boys" by Patrick White, in the Globe and Mail, September 7, 2007. **Professor Stephen Katz** was interviewed

by Trish Crawford of the Toronto Star, September 22, 2007. The article, "Help Wanted" was about time-crunched people who must turn increasingly to the service sector to take care of themselves and their households. He was also interviewed by Ruth Dempsey, for the Aging Horizons Bulletin: "What's Wrong With Our Current Images of Aging?", on March 19, 2007 .

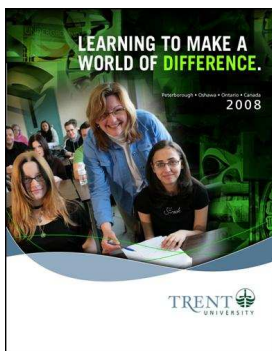


**In the Shadows of the Holocaust & Communism: Czech and Slovak Jews Since 1945 (2006), by Professor Alena Heitlinger**



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**Lesley Hulcoop**  
Academic Coordinator

## Trent University Sociology Undergraduate Collective

**TUSC** is both an academic and social club. All sociology majors are members of **TUSC**. Each year a group of students take a leadership role in leading the club. Throughout the year, the **TUSC** executive organize events such as movie nights, guest speakers, book sales and exchanges and study groups.

If you want to become more involved or have questions about **TUSC** contact us at soc-club@trentu.ca or drop by the sociology office. Check out our webpage on the sociology website ([www.trentu.ca/sociology](http://www.trentu.ca/sociology))

### Get Involved in the Sociology Department

The sociology department is always looking for volunteers to help on various committees. If you are looking for a chance to get involved in the Department, or if you want to have a say in what goes on in the following year, you can. There are opportunities to get involved in decisions regarding things such as Departmental policies, the hiring of new faculty, selection of Department heads and the selection of future guest speakers.

Generally your professors will announce when these committees are looking for students, but if you don't hear anything, come by the Department office and talk with the Administrative Assistant, Cynthia Budgell, the Academic Coordinator, Lesley Hulcoop, or e-mail inquiries at: sociology@trentu.ca

## Sociology Day

On Wednesday March 19th, Sociology faculty are presenting "Sociology Day", at Alumni House, Champlain College.

Are you wondering what you can do with your sociology degree, or would like further information about doing an honours degree, or would just like to chat about sociology? Then you should plan on attending "Sociology Day".

### Schedule of Events:

10:00 to 11:15 a.m.

#### "What Can I Do with a Sociology Degree?"

11:30 to 12:45

#### "The Sociological Experience"

12:45 to 2:15 **Lunch** (catered by the Seasoned Spoon) All welcome, even if you cannot attend all/any of the panels.

#### 2:30 to 3:00 **Honours Information Session**

Information on fourth-year courses, Honours theses, and degree requirements will be provided in this session. Open to all students; those entering fourth year in the Fall are especially encouraged to attend.