The above images are from the Massey College Pride High Table on Nov. 15, 2019 – the first one held at the college. Leah Morris, Junior Fellow and co-chair of the Gender and Sexual Diversity Committee, helped organize the event. “Massey Pride is important because it formally recognizes the acceptance of the college's sexual and gender minority fellows and staff by celebrating them rather than simply tolerating them,” Morris said. “While there has been incredible progress made over the last few decades, discrimination and prejudice against LGBTIQ2S+ people has not disappeared and many of us still live out the legacy of that tragic history on a daily basis. Institutionalizing Pride at Massey is an embodiment of the values the college has espoused for many years.” (Photo: Dewey Chang Photography)
Some were signed over a century ago, but treaties are still considered sacred covenants by many Indigenous people today.

Those agreements were the subject of an all-day treaty symposium called ‘Treaties Talk,’ which took place in the Upper Library at Massey College in late February. The event drew experts on law and Indigenous history to talk about treaties and the ongoing responsibilities to these agreements.

The event was organized by a committee made up of several Indigenous Massey Junior Fellows, Indigenous and settler scholars, and practitioners.

**Treaty of Niagara**

Though historic treaties and sacred items such as the Silver Covenant Chain of Friendship and the wampum belt were discussed, much of the event was aimed at examining the Treaty of Niagara (1764) and its role in reconciliation.

The Treaty of Niagara is based on peace, friendship, and respect and is considered to have set the framework for Indigenous and settler nation-to-nation relationships in North America, or what many Indigenous people call Turtle Island.

For Mia McKie, a Junior Fellow, History student and symposium organizer, there is more learning to do when it comes to understanding...
treaties.

“There is this visualization of the Treaty of Niagara, but I never heard anyone talk about it,” said McKie. “Why are we living with something we don’t really know anything about?”

It was only natural for Massey to hold a symposium about the Treaty of Niagara, given the campus is home to the third Chapel Royal in Canada—a designation given in 2017 by Queen Elizabeth II, the very face of the crown.

In recognition of the relationship between Massey College and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, an Ojibwe (Anishinaabe) nation, located near Brantford, Ont., the Chapel Royal is called Gi-Chi-Twaa Gima Kwe Mississauga Anishinaabe AName Amik. That name means the ‘Queen’s Anishinaabek Sacred Place’ in Anishinaabemowin and is meant to commemorate the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and the Treaty of Niagara, and inspire the ‘Calls to Action’ from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Massey College formed a partnership with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation several years ago, and as of this year they currently have an office at the college.

In the Chapel Royal are images and items displayed including a mural depicting the singing of the Treaty of Niagara, a replica of the Silver Covenant Chain of Friendship Wampum Belt, and tobacco belts.

**Treaty responsibilities**

The one-day symposium featured University of Toronto academics Heidi Bohaker, a professor of History and the co-director of the Great Lakes Research Alliance for the Study of Aboriginal Arts and Cultures, Douglas Sanderson, a professor at the Faculty of Law, and Sue Hill, a professor of History and Indigenous Studies.

The panel talked about the importance of the Royal
Proclamation, the Treaty of Niagara, the Chapel Royal, the Wampum Belt, and other treaties.

Following the panel discussion, the symposium included an interactive activity for attendees to reflect individually and collectively on Indigenous and settler relationships and Massey’s treaty responsibilities. For instance, upstairs in the Ondaatje Hall, various treaties between Canada and the individual Indigenous nations were displayed, with questions posed on the tables such as: How is the Treaty of Niagara related to current political actions in response to pipeline building?

At the time of the symposium, there were intense rallies taking place across the country in support of the Wet’suwet’en hereditary chiefs who were opposing a pipeline project through their territory in northern British Columbia.

Why are events such as ‘Treaties Talk’ important to the college?

For symposium organizer and Musicology student Rena Roussin, it’s because there is still plenty of work to do.

“I think historically there hasn’t been a lot of Indigenous people at Massey,” Roussin said. “When you’re talking to a room that is made up of all settlers, it is important that there are settlers who do this work every day. It’s not exclusively work for Indigenous people to decolonize this country because we can’t do it exclusively on our own.”

The symposium and installation of the office of the Mississaugas of the Credit have both led to a Truth and Reconciliation committee being established at the college, Roussin noted.

The committee is already working on future events, with hopes of having an annual event once a semester.

This year, Massey College also hosted a luncheon event with Dr. Pamela Palmater, an Indigenous lawyer and scholar and Senior Fellow, who led a powerful talk about genocide in Canada.

Michael O’Shea, a student in Education and another symposium organizer, said these events wouldn’t happen without the strong leadership at the college.

“Hugh [Segal] and [Massey principal] Nathalie Des Rosiers have shown genuine commitment to these endeavors as principals of the college,” said Roussin.

Hugh Segal was the previous principal at Massey up until June 2019.

“It is great to see the college leadership is really taking this seriously.”

This student-led symposium was a success, and there was something that made it even extra memorable.

“One of the things that happened at this event was six different languages were spoken at this event,” said McKie. “Which upon reflection was special and significant.”
Lawyer, Order of Canada recipient and former MPP Nathalie Des Rosiers took the helm of Massey College as its new principal in 2019. Almost a year into her five-year term, Des Rosiers reflects on her achievements; on working through a global pandemic and her favourite spots in the college. Des Rosiers spoke to 2019-2020 Webster McConnell Fellow Sarah Rogers in April 2020.

L
awyer, Order of Canada recipient and former MPP Nathalie Des Rosiers took the helm of Massey College as its new principal in 2019. Almost a year into her five-year term, Des Rosiers reflects on her achievements; on working through a global pandemic and her favourite spots in the college. Des Rosiers spoke to 2019-2020 Webster McConnell Fellow Sarah Rogers in April 2020.

So much has changed for the college in the last couple of months, with Covid-19. As we speak, there are only 18 students living in residence. How has the pandemic affected life at Massey and how has it impacted your role?

I'm the only employee that was left working at the college. The underbelly of how this place works, I had to learn; I've discovered places in Massey I had never been.

The more important piece was to quickly try and reimagine a way of operating for the students who needed to stay here, in a way that was going to be safe for them. How do we make sure they have access to the services they need, with physical distancing? We had to design some kind of financial support for them, because many of them lost their TA jobs. So there were lots of moving parts. The end of March was quite intense.

I think I came in with the vision and the hope of putting Massey a little more online, so I've been given the opportunity to do that in spades. For example, we launched a virtual salon series called The Massey Dialogues. It's been interesting to

Stoking the Massey fires

“To recreate that sense of community where you can only do it online? That’s the challenge.”

By Sarah Rogers
Webster McConnell Fellow

Massey College principal Nathalie Des Rosiers attends a High Table event at the college in October 2019. (Photo: Dewey Chang Photography)
reimagine Massey outside of its physical dimensions. It’s a beautiful place—it’s architecturally a jewel and it’s a really nice residence. But it’s more than that. I think Covid-19 has forced us to reimagine it in its essence.

Pandemic aside, can you talk about some of the goals you had coming into the role of principal and what you feel like you’ve been able to accomplish over your first year?

I came in with the vision to give more visibility to the college, to ensure its sustainability, but also to empower the community to be a force for good, a force for the future, a commitment to equality. And of course, to ensure the junior fellows feel like we believe in them; to support them and enhance their ability for action.

As far as growing our visibility, there’s lots of things we can do; bringing more international people to Massey, enhancing its national scope, inviting partnerships that are not only in the GTA but across Canada. This is important to me.

I’m proud of doing the first-ever Pride High Table at Massey. I thought the program for Black History Month was fascinating and interesting. And I think we did good programming on the Indigenous question, through events like our Treaties Symposium. I think the relationship we have with the Mississaugas of the Credit is really positive for the college.

How much of a priority has it been for you to diversify the Massey community as well as the events and speakers you host at the college?

I think diversity has different forms. There’s the demographic diversity we all want to accomplish. So reaching out and ensuring the last Senior Fellows recruitment actually included 40 per cent of people who identify as racialized minorities, as well as the last person appointed to the board. That’s the minimum that we should do, but it surely must be done.

I also understand diversity as diversity of disciplines; for example, ensuring that there’s lots of scope for the engineers to speak as much as the social scientists and the humanists, who’ve had a bit of dominating place here. So I’m trying to reach out to new departments around the university to ensure that the junior fellowship is representative of the variety of different disciplines.

Obviously, linguistic diversity is important to me, but it’s more a diversity of region. We cannot only be Toronto-centric. I think that’s another role that we should play, to fulfill the mission of serving the public good and being a national institution.

You seem like you’re on the go
**all the time. What’s a typical day for you?**

I’ve always had lots of energy as a person, so that’s a good thing. The first year that you’re in an institution, you have to make yourself available to the community in a very direct way. You have to listen and you have to see what’s going on, and not only when you’re invited. You have to be present.

I want people to believe that I take the institution seriously. As a person, I’m absolutely committed to the academic projects that people have and the pursuit of their work. And to transmit that, you have to attend when they talk about their work. You want them to feel that it’s important.

On a typical day, I wake up early and sometimes I try to go for a run. And then I do my own work: thinking and writing, early in the morning to have the ability to be present during the day. My children are older now, so I couldn’t have done that the same way if I had the four kids that I had. They’re older and they’re gone. So it’s doable.

**You’ve talked about the physical beauty of the college, a space I’m sure you’ve come to know quite well. What’s one of your favourite spots at Massey?**

Well my office is beautiful. When I was a little kid, I always wanted to have a floor- to-ceiling library, and this is what I have here. So just admiring the wood and the possibility of having all these books around is really quite lovely.

The fireplaces that exist around the college are quite lovely to me as well. When I was a young woman, I dreamed about having a fireplace and I would rent cottages where the only requirement was that there was a fireplace, so I’ve been enjoying the romance of the fire.

It’s an interesting place because it has this romantic beauty, this architectural exuberance...you have a pond with water flowing all the time, it seems quite luxurious. But at the same time, there are huge challenges with ensuring the cement does not fall apart; that we can modernize this place so people can actually work in the 21st century, in a building that was built in the early 1960s. Every time you try to do a bit of renovation it’s expensive. There are a lot of challenges with having a heritage-protected building.

**How do you envision the year to come?**

We are hoping we can re-open. There may be some restrictions, some limitations on how many groups can be at Massey at a time. Maybe we’ll have to operate the residence at lower capacity so we can ensure physical distancing. I think we’re envisioning different scenarios to see how we can continue our programming.

I’m not discouraged at all. It’s the opportunity to think of what’s important; what’s fundamental to the community and what’s less so. We invent some of the traditions so they can be done, or abandoned, and that’s okay too.

Now how to recreate that sense of community and that sense of intellectual engagement in a context where you can only do it online? So that’s the challenge for the next little while.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.
Clockwise from top left: A mini Journalism Bonding trip made by the Journalism Fellows to Niagara Falls (Photo: Martha Troian); As a part of their second bonding trip, the journalism Fellows (pictured here John Perry and Martha Trojan) travelled to Nova Scotia (Photo: Martha Trojan); The Brandenburg Gates – one of the first landmarks visited in the Fellows’ trip to Berlin (Photo: Martha Trojan); A snap of a High Table Selfie (Photo: Joey Coleman); Siobhan Roberts and Dana Gibreel participating in the Gown Run (Photo: Dewey Chang); Fall 2019 Press Club (Photo: Dewey Chang); Journalism Fellows Sarah Rogers and John Perry participating in a print workshop in the Massey College Bibliography Room (Photo: ?); Dana Gibreel celebrates Holi with the Junior Fellows in the College Quadrangle (Photo: Dewey Chang); John Kim Bell and Trina Moyan Bell at the Indigenous Heritage High Table. Table Celebrating Indigenous Cultures (Credit: Dewey Chang)
Clockwise from top left: Artist Nathan Roy performs at the Indigenous Heritage High Table (Photo: Dewey Chang); CBC/Radio-Canada Fellow John Perry at the Founders’ Gaudy (Photo: Dewey Chang); Dana Gibreel, Siobhan Roberts and Joey Coleman, Massey College Remembrance Day Wreath (Photo: Joey Coleman); Martha Troian and Joey Coleman in Berlin, Germany, 2019 (Photo: Martha Troian); A printing workshop keepsake (Photo: Sarah Rogers); Monument to the Battle of the Nation in Leipzig, Germany, 2019 (Photo: Martha Troian); Inside of the Bundespressekonferenz, the Federal Press Conference for journalists that report for the German media (Photo: Sarah Rogers); Massey College Remembrance Day Wreath (Photo: Joey Coleman).
Pyjama Gown is not a single piece of clothing worn to sleep; it is an annual fashion statement at Massey College. This is one of many things you learn living as a senior resident in the college. You also learn that the lint trap in the dryer does not clean itself; that is best left to the senior residents.

One of the junior fellow traditions is to wear their pyjamas to dinner under our gowns once each academic year on a “senior dinner” night. This year, the tradition was marked during the February Quadrangle Society book club dinner. The Don of Hall announced the event a week prior, instructing us not to share our plans. Many of the Junior Fellows dressed in playful pyjamas and nightgowns, I wore a boring set of conservative-looking pyjamas.

Another lesson: the dryer lint trap does not clean itself, I fumed one September evening as a queue grew to use the one working dryer. At least it seemed one of the two dryers (for 60+ residents to share) was not working. I took out the lint trap and counted at least 11 layers!

News of my rant which followed this discovery reached a past Senior Resident, who helpfully noted that as much as I wanted to post instructions on how to clean a lint trap, it was much better and helpful to make a habit of cleaning the lint trap each time I walked by. This was something they did during their senior residency, adding they considered entering the Christmas Gaudy and showing how to clear the lint trap as a “talent”.

People sometimes forget to empty their pockets (but not Senior Residents of course). I definitely didn’t forget to remove my collar stays and was most definitely not trying to unjam a stay from one of the dryer fins when I found an artifact of Massey’s past.

Upon closer inspection, this warped, flattened, and partially melted piece of metal looks familiar, it says “Toronto” and “Commission”. It is a TTC token! The bust of Robertson Davies received it for good luck.

Breakfast has two shifts: an 8 a.m. shift and a 9 a.m. shift. Those who arrive at 8 a.m. eat quickly and leave just as quickly. Ondaatje Hall is quiet between 8:30 a.m. and 9 a.m. The 9 a.m. shift is conversant lively and depending on the day can continue well past 10 o’clock.

As for my cooking ability, which is none, the junior fellows shared many stories of senior residents past who cooked up feasts during Sunday’s and the Christmas Break. The stories were confirmed by shared Instagram posts of years past.

Sundays, I would fry eggs and make pancakes (add water-only mix); meanwhile some Junior Fellows would arrive with spice racks and cook feasts of noodles, roasted potatoes, and Thai food. The Junior Fellows quickly learned I was no Junichi Miyazawa, whose cooking in 2018-19 is legendary; there are those who hope he returns for a third residency at Massey to enjoy his cooking again.

Christmas Break at the college is an
enjoyable time; those who remain tend to focus upon their reading and use the time for reflection. Board games nights are held, and good humour is exchanged. Without the pressures of scheduled events and deadlines, the atmosphere is relaxed. Christmas morning, around 3 a.m., I went through the building delivering small bags of chocolate at each remaining residents’ door. I put one in front of my door as a decoy; when morning arrived, one Junior Fellow came with the suspicion that I was behind the chocolate. Seeing the chocolate at my door almost convinced them that Santa Claus had visited.

Saying goodbye

No record of this year is complete without the defining event, the closure due to COVID-19. March 12 to 18 were some of the most intense days of my life.

On Friday, March 13, many people left the college; a friend offered me a place to stay in Hamilton, I chose to remain to assist the best I could. That evening, many of us gathered in the Junior Common Room for the announcement of the 57th Don of Hall. Following this was a High Table with social distancing in effect.

In residence over the weekend, Saturday was a day of adjustment, everyone was responding to the change in different ways; many people leaving, many people trying to leave, many facing the difficult decision of staying or trying to get home before borders closed. The meal hall transitioned to paper plates, plastic utensils, and staff serving all items.

I said goodbye to my friends and the college. There were goodbyes outside of the library, the stores, the labs, the gym, the dorms, the kitchens, the coffee shops. The hall was empty. The atmosphere was quiet, too quiet in fact. Everyone stayed in their rooms, except to pick up their meals. Things were stable, calm. At this point, I learned it was time for me to leave for a friend’s place. Massey needed me to leave, one less person to take care of if they became sick, and my Senior Suite with its washroom was well suited to self-isolation if someone became infected with COVID.

I packed for the next day, returned library books, and sorted out my personal admin. I had all the cleaning supplies to disinfect my room and spent Saturday doing this. Saturday night was cold, I lit my fireplace, filled a glass of wine, and toasted to friends I will see again soon.

Sunday morning, I took essentials that could fit in my friend’s car and left. I converted the Journalism Study carrel into a storage space for my other items. Much like everyone who had to leave early, I will return.

This is senior residency in one piece. Of course, maybe it is best summed up by how one Junior Fellow described it to their parents – he lives here, but with a fireplace.
Walking by Massey’s Bibliography Room and College Presses in the Lower Library, one could never help but stop and linger long enough to read the latest printed offerings—a poster or a postcard, and many sizes between; each with a pithy or heady or funny quotation—neatly presented by Nelson Adams, our beloved College Printer, who died on September 20th. He was 77.

His personal favourite was “Perseverance”:

*All the performances of the human art, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance...*

—Samuel Johnson

Nelson also loved W.B. Yeats’ poem “The Lake Isle of Innisfree,” Christina Rossetti’s “When I am dead, my dearest,” and Alfred Tennyson’s “Ulysses.”

And he was particularly delighted by: *Dinosaurs didn’t read. Now they’re extinct. Coincidence?*

A Massey alumnus (JF, 1976-77), Nelson joined the college presses as a volunteer in the fall of 2012. He was then a retiree, formerly a typesetter and book designer at Coach House Press—where he helped produce the limited edition (three hundred copies) of Michael Ondaatje’s 1969 novel, *The Man with Seven Toes.*

For an account of Nelson’s career, see his profile in the “Rogues’ Gallery of the Canadian Book and Printing Arts,” on the Devil’s Artisan blog by the publisher Porcupine’s Quill.

Nelson is survived by his partner P.J. MacDougall, his sons, Spencer and Alex, and his sister, Sandra Adams.
On February 16, 2020, the Massey College community lost a dear friend. After a short illness, Ivan McFarlane left us. But he left us many gifts as well. Ivan was a founding member of the Quadrangle Society which is now a thriving and important part of the Massey community. As a Senior Fellow, he was the inaugural chair of the Community Liaison Committee that focuses on better connecting the different College constituencies. Both of these initiatives are illustrative of what Ivan did so well – build community, connect people who might not otherwise meet and foster inclusion and understanding.

With his dear departed Harriet, Ivan opened his home to many a Junior Fellow over the years (and Senior Fellows, Quadranglers, alumni... you get the picture) for food, laughter and incisive curiosity about our work, our politics and our efforts to engage in the world. Ivan had boundless curiosity and a deep commitment to egalitarianism, inclusion and robust conversation. With grace and kindness, he and Harriet welcomed strangers into their home and fostered those qualities in others, building community within our communities.

Ivan was a man of prodigious academic chops – he was a graduate of Kingston College, Jamaica; Trinity College at the University of Toronto (BA, 1964); Carleton University (MA, 1969); York University (MEnv, 1972); OISE (MA, 1982); University of Toronto Law School (MSL, 2007); OISE/University of Toronto (PhD, 1995) – but he was also a bon vivant who shared his love of the good life with the love of his life, Harriet, for many happy years. Together they were enthusiastic Massey College book club attendees and devoted members of the Massey and Trinity college communities. He was a dapper figure in the quadrangle, a fedora on his head and Harriet by his side, telling stories and checking in with the many Junior Fellows who were fortunate to experience his mentorship. Whether over dinner or one of his favourite single malts, you might have had a challenge getting a word in edgewise but you would also feel seen and heard by Ivan – he always remembered what your latest projects were and inquired as to their progress.

Ivan was a lifelong learner but he taught us so much about how to approach life with clarity, love and inquisitiveness, and of course, how to foster community. It is a wonderful legacy and while we will miss him dearly, we will also honour him in our continued efforts to make Massey inclusive and dynamic, with high academic standards and joie de vivre. Thank you, Ivan. Thank you.
The 2019-2020 William Southam Journalism Fellows introduce themselves to the Massey College community on Oct. 23 at an event called "On Background: Ask the Journalism Fellows Anything." (Photo by Dewey Chang Photography)
‘Like Stasi 4.0’: Surveillance today compared to former East Germany

“We don’t have a wider discussion in our society about this issue”

By John Perry
CBC / Radio-Canada Fellow

In December, the fellows travelled to Germany where citizens were marking 30 years since reunification. They met politician Gisela Kallenbach, 76. In the 1980s, she participated in the so-called Monday demonstrations, a series of peaceful protests held inside Leipzig’s St. Nicholas Church (Nikolaikirche). In an interview with CBC/Radio-Canada Fellow John Perry, Kallenbach reflects on the Stasi era and how monitoring by state security compares to mass surveillance we see today.

In the 1980s, what was happening inside Nikolaikirche?
There was a movement to prevent a new armament. And young students in Leipzig wanted to have a peace prayer on Monday because official protests were strictly forbidden. You could be taken to prison if you organized public protests. But the church, they were allowed to decide under their roof what people could say and express.

I was convinced it was my right as a citizen to fight for our living conditions [and] the environment. And I could not believe that this was taken as a criminal act. Afterwards, we realized that this was in some way, naive. We underestimated not their power, but how the state considered us dangerous enemies.

How aware were you of the surveillance operation being waged against you at the time?
We didn’t know. We could only guess that there would be surveillance among our groups, not knowing the methods they would use. This also caused mistrust between each other because we thought who might be the one who is going to report after our meeting.

It was finally clear at the end of 1988-89 that there were cameras around Nikolaikirche to see who was meeting there.

What effect did this level of surveillance have on you and others, your day-to-day life?
As usual in German Democratic Republic (GDR), people were reluctant to speak openly. They made a distinction between home, close friends and family, and public discussion. There was this double-tongue. This is what I wanted to avoid, I didn't want to do this. I was suffering because I thought it’s not honest. You always had to look at how far you could go, how open you can be, how much you can trust the members of your group.

Years later, you gained access to the file that the Stasi kept on you. What did you learn?
You must know, the Stasi tried to destroy as many documents as they could. When I got a copy, I learned that in 1983 they already started to have files on my activities. They had given me a codename. They had scheduled who is responsible for me and on what dates. There was an informant in my institute, another “resource” from the apartment where we used to live, and another informant among my friends and so on. I could also identify a colleague of mine, members of our group at the church, but luckily they were not in our inner circle.

They also wanted to watch my apartment but I haven’t been able to prove that they did this because they were quite clever. They did not leave traces.
Later on, I discovered a plan [by the Stasi]: about 150 people in Leipzig should have been taken into a camp. I was on this list. That’s why I said we were naive. They had plans to really eliminate us. The aim was, and this was written in incredible language; they want to destroy your personality, to destroy this person. And to eliminate the influence on others.

**What was that moment like, reading your file?**
I simply couldn’t believe it.

You know there are examples where people learned even their husband or wife had been reporting. Many terrible examples of the Stasi intervening in their personal life up until they were taken to prison.

**You mentioned the codename the Stasi gave to you. What was it?**
My codename was Emerald (laughs). So I thought, OK, I’m a very important person. Or, my eyeshadow was too green.

**When you look at advances in technology today – the devices we use, the cameras around us – how does this level of surveillance compare to what you experienced?**
None of us could imagine then what is going on today with surveillance and recording of all this data. We should do everything to avoid it. But, on the one hand, by using our mobile phone, by being in a social media environment, I voluntarily give my personal data to maybe four or five big companies: Apple, Amazon, Facebook, etc. That’s why it’s important to restrict the amount of data we voluntarily give.

We have to be highly alert, to prevent a state of surveillance like we see in China – maybe also in North America, with this facial recognition used by police. All of this is not acceptable. We should really consider it a human right to prevent this state recording. To fight against it.

Sometimes I wonder if people don’t think about this. People are becoming so transparent there is a danger we are becoming like China and Russia. This is like Stasi 4.0, with a decisive difference; our fight today is not seen as a criminal act—we enjoy human rights and we can fight for them.

**You, in a sense, won back your right to privacy when the wall came down. Do you think there will be a time when we can win back our privacy from these companies? Or, are they too powerful?**
We don’t have a wider discussion in our society about this issue. There are too many people that say, I have nothing to hide so why not. In the last 20 years, we have seen amazing developments in technology. But we did not develop at the same speed, our moral and ethical understanding. That’s what I mean when people simply aren’t aware of what it means to have total surveillance.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.
Haroon Siddiqui is Editorial Page Editor Emeritus of the Toronto Star and a Senior Fellow at Massey College. Gordon N. Fisher/ JHR Fellow Dana Gibreel spoke to him about media bias and reporting through the lens of Orientalism, imperialism and religion.

For many years, you wrote in The Star on East-West relations, the perception of the Islamic world, developing countries and conflicts in the Middle East. What are the most prominent features of that in the media?

Media in the Western world reflect Western values and also Western views of the world. This is but natural. Every media outlet serves its clientele, its home audience. In authoritarian states, media reflect what the state tells them to. In democracies, media have the freedom to decide their content. Still, they have a parochial, local bias to serve their audience.

The media debate in democracies is around two issues: The United States, Canada and the European nations are no longer Christian-majority nations. They are also multicultural – in the case of Canada, constitutionally multicultural, and in the case of others, liberal entities with equal rights for one and all. Yet some media slip back into a presumption of Christian-ness in their coverage, and in demanding that immigrants follow (Christian) majoritarian mores, culturally and otherwise.

In their geo-political outlook, the Western media tend to reflect an old-fashioned Western view of the third world, and, on contemporary Middle Eastern issues, mostly in favour of Israel, the West’s ally. How can we make the coverage more balanced, more cosmopolitan, or at least as cosmopolitan as the Canadian population has become? That’s the challenge.

What do you think are the main factors that play a role in writing and reporting on the Middle East, Arabs and Muslim communities?

The ugly stereotypes of Arabs and, especially, Muslims have been historic. The Malignant and Turbaned Turk. The Evil Ottoman. The Wahabi Indian. The Wild Algerian. These stereotypes of Muslims have come from the Crusades to colonialism, Shakespeare to Orientalists, the latter memorably described by the late Edward Said as the court poets of Western imperialism.

The media are as still mired in what French philosopher Maxime Rodinson called the “theologocentrism” of seeing Muslims solely or mostly through the prism of their religion. Thus “the Islamic Bomb” but not the Christian bomb, the Buddhist bomb, the Jewish bomb or the Hindu bomb.

That was before 9/11. The Islamophobic hysteria since has been of a different scale altogether – pervasive and potent.

Today, the world is facing the Covid-19 pandemic, which in many ways does not distinguish between the First World and the developing world. Do you think this will affect relations between the Eastern and Western parts of the world?

I doubt it. Donald Trump is blaming China. Some people in Europe are starting fires under G5 towers, believing that China is sending the virus down the G5 cellular network. Others are blaming Chinese American and Chinese Canadians. Canada’s Chief Public Health Officer is Dr. Theresa Tam, an immigrant from Hong Kong. Senior members of the Conservative Party of Canada have openly and shamelessly questioned her patriotism.

In 2015, you wrote an article about the challenges facing Canada, including how the justice
system serves Indigenous peoples, building a Canadian identity that includes cultural pluralism and the integration of immigrants. Five years later, do you think things are going in the right direction? How do you see media coverage of these issues? Canada remains the only OECD country with national consensus on immigration as a building block of our economy. This is quite an achievement at a time of xenophobia, nativism and narrow white nationalism in the United States and across Europe. Canadians are also the only people who, in poll after poll, rank pluralism and diversity as our number one achievement.

On other issues, we take two steps forward and one back. Or one forward and two back. Change takes time.

As a Senior Fellow, how would you describe Massey’s performance in accepting and being open to all people? What do you think we can do more? With the changing demography of Canada, especially Ontario, the roster of junior fellows has been changing. With the new principal, Mme. Nathalie Des Rosiers, the college is making sincere efforts to broaden diversity, both in personnel and, more important, in programming. The process is well underway.

In your last column in the Toronto Star before retirement, you said: “There was no column that could not have been improved.” What advice do you offer to other journalists and columnists to encourage them to produce their best work?

Rewrite, rewrite, rewrite. Keep polishing the prose and sharpening the story lines and the arguments. Good reporting, good writing is tedious work. But there’s no reward greater than knowing that you’ve written something that might make a difference.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Down the green mountain I go at dusk
The mountain moon follows all the way
On gazing back at the path in distance
Green slopes are slits of twilit gray
You lead me off to your farmer cottage
A boy holds a thorn gate open to you
My passing clothes brush greening vines
On a path secluded in emerald bamboo

We talk in delight — what a place for resting
Together we savor a gorgeous wine
Songs we sing of wind through the pines
And cease to sing as the stars decline
I am drunk and you so happy
In rapture forgetting the world and the times

Wenyi Qian is a PhD student in art history and Junior Fellow at Massey College. Qian is also a painter, a writer and enjoys ink-brush calligraphy. Pictured here, a calligraphic transcription she made of a poem by Li Bo, as a parting gift for outgoing journalism fellow Dana Gibreel.
Nana aba Duncan

Nana aba Duncan is an award-winning broadcaster, and an advocate of underrepresented perspectives in journalism. She currently hosts CBC Radio One's Podcast Playlist as well as Fresh Air, Ontario’s top-rated weekend morning show. In 2015, Nana aba launched Media Girlfriends, a podcast that features women in media discussing bad-ass accomplishments, intersectionality, and Beyoncé. Media Girlfriends has grown to include events, student scholarships and a peer network supporting racialized and LGBTQ2+ women/non-binary people working in media. Previously, Nana aba was country director with Journalists For Human Rights in Ghana. She won the Influencer Award at the 2020 International Women of Diversity Awards. Nana aba holds a Master's degree in Journalism from University of Western Ontario and an Honours BSc. in Psychology (double major in Philosophy) from University of Toronto. Nana aba has been laughing loudly for a very long time.

Nancy Emefa Dzradosi

Nancy Emefa Dzradosi is a Journalist in Ghana specializing in field reporting, anchoring and production. Her works focus on Human rights and Environment. Nancy currently leads Joy FM and Accra Metropolitan Assembly’s Clean Ghana Campaign. In 2018 and 2019, her stories on abandoned lepers and a mentally pregnant woman reignited national conversation on social exclusion. Away from work, you’ll find Nancy cheering on her beloved Liverpool FC. She also volunteers as a member of the Board of Directors of DYC, a non-governmental organization working to support the youth living with diabetes in Ghana. Nancy has a bachelor's degree in Sociology and linguistics from the University of Ghana. She lives in Accra, Ghana.

Keith Gerein

Keith Gerein is an Alberta-based journalist who has covered a wide range of stories about life and politics in Canada’s most enigmatic province over the last two decades. His current assignment is as a politics columnist for the Edmonton Journal, but he is also known for his past reporting on health care, post-secondary education and municipal affairs. In 2011, he was sent on assignment to Afghanistan as an embedded journalist with the Canadian Forces. His career highlights include a CAJ award nomination for an investigation into crumbing hospital infrastructure, in-depth stories of the Fort McMurray wildfire in 2016 and coverage of two Alberta elections.
Wa Lone

Wa Lone is a reporter at Reuters News where he has covered ethnic and religious conflict in Myanmar. He was arrested in December 2017 and sentenced to seven years in jail over his reporting that exposed a massacre of Rohingya Muslims in his country by the Myanmar military and civilians. He has won numerous awards for his work on exposing these killings, including the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting and the Polk Award for Foreign Reporting. Before joining Reuters, he worked at the Myanmar Times where he focused on environmental and political issues. Prior to that, he worked at The People's Age, a news journal.

Duncan McCue

Award-winning journalist Duncan McCue is the host of CBC Radio One CROSS COUNTRY CHECKUP. McCue was a reporter for CBC News in Vancouver for over 15 years. Now based in Toronto, his news and current affairs pieces continue to be featured on CBC's flagship news show, THE NATIONAL. McCue's work has garnered several RTNDA and Jack Webster Awards. He was part of a CBC Aboriginal investigation into missing and murdered Indigenous women that won numerous honours including the Hillman Award for Investigative Journalism. In 2017, he was presented with an Indspire Award for Public Service. McCue teaches journalism at the UBC Graduate School of Journalism and Ryerson University, and was recognized by the Canadian Ethnic Media Association with an Innovation Award for developing curriculum on Indigenous issues. He's also an author: his book The Shoe Boy: A Trapline Memoir recounts a season he spent in a hunting camp with a Cree family in northern Quebec as a teenager. He was awarded a Knight Fellowship at Stanford University in 2011, where he created an online guide for journalists called Reporting in Indigenous Communities (riic.ca). Before becoming a journalist, McCue studied English at the University of King's College, then Law at UBC. He was called to the bar in British Columbia in 1998. He has an honorary doctorate from the University of King’s College. McCue is Anishinaabe, a member of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation in southern Ontario, and proud father of two children.
Kyaw Soe Oo

Kyaw Soe Oo joined Reuters at the height of tensions around the Rohingya Muslim population in his native Rakhine State in Myanmar. His reporting on the ethnic cleansing of Rohingya Muslims in 2017 won him and his colleagues several journalism awards including the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting. During his reporting on the Rohingya, he and a colleague were arrested on December 12, 2017 by Myanmar police and sentenced in September 2018 to seven years in prison on Official Secrets Act charges. Kyaw Soe Oo was freed in May 2019 in a presidential amnesty after an international outcry over his incarceration.

Leslie Young

Leslie Young is an Emmy award-winning journalist who has spent most of her decade-long career writing online. Her work has tackled many topics, including refugees and immigration, the environment, public infrastructure, politics, rats, weird noises and most recently, science and health as a health specialist for Global News. Her reporting has taken her to Germany, India and Jordan, where she taught data journalism workshops with Journalists for Human Rights.
YOU PIERCE MY SOUL.

I AM HALF AGONY,

HALF HOPE.

From Persuasion, by Jane Austen
S. Pelletier & J. Warren
Robertson Davies Library
Massey College, Toronto 2020

A passage from Jane Austen’s Persuasion, printed by S. Pelletier and J. Warren in Massey College’s Robertson Davies Library Bibliography Room.
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