
WAR stories
a dawson peace project

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War Stories: A Dawson Peace Project aims to bring into focus the human costs of war. As Canadians, most of our family histories have been touched by war, although most wars we remember happened far from our borders. While we may prefer to avoid thinking about the effects of war, and many of us benefit from the privilege to do just that, our world is interconnected, and our country is formed of diverse peoples: indigenous peoples, European settlers, and immigrants from throughout the world. Wars that take place elsewhere are not as removed from our families and lives as their geography might suggest. In our interconnected world, the wars of elsewhere have significant impacts on our families, our neighbours, our communities, and our country. We are, therefore, compelled to consider the effects of war and violent conflict in our lives and the lives of others.

A collaborative project by Inspire Solutions and the Dawson Centre for Peace Education, this collection of stories and visual art work is the culmination of a winter 2014 initiative called War Stories: A Dawson Peace Project, which invited the Dawson community – students, faculty and staff – to share their stories of war through writing and visual artistic expression. We encouraged stories that promote the interests of peace by revealing the tragedy of war through the lives of real people, who suffered and endured, and often still found the capacity to love and care for others.

The soldiers who have lost their lives may be remembered once a year, but those who survive often don't talk much about what they experienced. Civilians caught up in the world's war zones may show up in statistics of casualties or as numbers of refugees fleeing the violence, but abstract numbers, regardless of how large, often fail to move us. In their abstraction, they allow us to treat the casualties of war casually, assuming we register the numbers at all.

Stories provoke our empathy and deepen our understanding, and in so doing they serve the interests of peace. We invite you to spend some time with this collection. In it you will find a diversity of stories – stories of human weakness and flaws, of resilience and strength, of loyalty and sacrifice, and stories of our human capacity to act with compassion towards strangers and enemies. War destroys and divides, but these war stories remind us of the depth of our connections to others, and our capacity to remain human in the worst of conditions. These war stories invite us all to remember the costs of war and the value of practising peace.

Julie Mooney
Dawson Centre for Peace Education

Pat Romano
Inspire Solutions

# Pride and Humility

**Donna Varrica**
Coordinator of Communications

I have two war stories, both from World War II, but coming from two very different perspectives.

The first story is about my mother, who was born in 1924 and was just 16 when the war became a part of her daily life in a small village in Sicily. As the youngest of 13 children, one of whom had been killed in the First World War at the age of 18, she was the last one left at home, unmarried, tending to a father grieving the loss of his wife, her mother, the grandmother for whom I am named.

My mother never spoke about the war. The hardships, the cruelty they suffered at the hands of the German occupiers who were in fact allies, the shame and humiliation of being on the wrong side of this horrific war, were just too much to bear. She and my father had immigrated to Canada in 1952 and 1951, respectively. My father left for Halifax and then Ontario to work on a farm when my mother was 3 months pregnant with my older sister. She joined him in Montreal when my sister was 6 months old.

We asked her to tell us about the war, but she always said "it was bad, what else is there to say?" The only time she betrayed the depth of her feelings was in the 1970s when my sister came home with a pair of Dr Scholl's exercise sandals. My mother shrieked, "Why are you wearing wooden sandals? That's all we had to wear during the war. Why are you subjecting yourself to this?"

In truth, we were subjecting her to this. We had no idea the depth of her pain because she had worked so hard to keep it from us. Over the years we learned from other relatives about the occupation, how the Nazis took what they wanted and discarded the rest. Though they were allies, the Nazis had as little use for the Sicilian townspeople as they did for those they rounded up in concentration camps. There was no pride in this theatre, but I experienced enormous pride when I learned that my mother's father, my grandfather, an alderman of the town, had refused to wear a black shirt when the Fascists came to power. He lost his position and the home that came with it, but he stood for his principles despite the hardship this caused. My parents are both gone now, and I sometimes wish I knew more about that time in their lives, but I respect their decision of coming to Canada, leaving those memories behind, so we could have a better life.

My second story involves my father-in-law, a kind and gentle Dutchman, born in 1925. At the end of the war, he was 20 and weighed just 85 pounds, having survived the 5-year Nazi occupation of Holland – the last several months of which were called the Hunger Winter where food was so scarce, families resorted to eating tulip bulbs. He was aged 15 to 20 during the war, and like my mother, came into adulthood during that time. He often recalled the darkness and oppression they felt, fearing for their neighbours and even members of the extended family who might be rounded up for being Jewish or resistance fighters. Through movies and newsreels we may have a general sense of the war, but I asked him what daily life was really like in South Amsterdam where he lived, the only child of affluent parents.

He thought for a moment and then painted a picture for me in words that will stay with me forever. He was in high school and they tried to carry on, keeping things as normal as possible. But every evening when they left, they knew there was a chance they would not all return for school the next day, And every morning when they came in, one or two desks would sit empty, and they knew. Their friends were gone.

# Torn Apart

## Helen Krutz, Daughter of Emma Olga Prelip

Labratory Technologist, Diagnostic Imaging Department

Early this year, 2014, my sister Anita called with the news that our cousin Jeannie from Australia would be visiting Niagara Falls. Prior to this, the most recent contact we had had between our continents was the sharing of sad news. Our mothers had passed away.

Jeannie had asked a very Aussie question. "Is Niagara Falls anywhere close to you?" I, living in Montreal, replied to Anita in Gatineau, Quebec, that this could be a very interesting road trip indeed. We joked around with our eldest sister in Quebec City. After the joking was done we investigated the question of how long Jeannie would be here. In fact her whole trip would start in New York City for 3 days and then a one day stop in Niagara Falls, followed by a cruise out of Vancouver!

I have 5 siblings and by now word had spread to the youngest sister in Montreal and our brother in Edmonton. My brother remarked that we would never be able to afford a trip to Australia to finally meet all together. Everyone thought that a weekend trip to New York to meet a cousin only known to us in Christmas cards and family lore was very alluring. Following along in the buzzing emails and Facebook shout-outs was another cousin, Monica, from British Columbia. Monica is the only daughter of the other of my Mom's sisters, Meta, who also is "no longer with us".

Our Mothers were Lithuanian. During WW2 they were evacuated to Germany where they lived in refugee camps. In payment for being "rescued from the Russians" and barely fed and poorly housed in camps, they were obliged into forced labour. Following the end of the war, each of these former Lithuanians were presented with a passport declaring them stateless. My mother made it to Canada. Successful efforts were made to bring Meta over. Lidia the last sister ended up in Australia. People apparently lined up at the Red Cross to find family and see if immigration quotas were filled to Canada or the US. Australia was always available.

I have a clear memory of my Mother crying after she opened her sister Lidia's card from Australia. Her hand written note sent love and expressed how she missed a white Christmas. As young children, my brother and I ran outside to make snowballs and asked Mom if we could send them to our Auntie.

In May, we, the children of three sisters torn apart by war, will meet. If we round off the time frame, it will be 70 years. We didn't realize at first that this gathering will be on Mother's Day weekend. That brings chills of emotion!

# A Typical Story


## Ana-Ioana Ioanas

Student, Law Society and Justice Profile, Social Sciences


For me, war is nothing but a false promise that ruins lives and has marked my family for generations. I come from a small village of 400 people, Gostila, situated in Transylvania (Romania). War has always been part of Romanian culture. Our barbaric ancestors that inhabited the ancient Dacia are still spoken of today. Their legacy glorified war, and unfortunately my people did not escape from this myth. In the First World War, our mothers and grandmothers sent off their husbands and sons to fight alongside the French, who "generously" armed our men with the finest armaments. With their head held high and their impeccable uniforms, my great-grandfather, Isidor, his three brothers and many others marched with the intention of taking down the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

After the war, people joined forces to organize a celebration for the return of their heroes. They went by the river, impatiently waiting for their loved ones to come home. With flowers in their hands and hope in their heart, they waited... But few went back home satisfied. Tears were spread and mothers were condemning the very nation they so feverously encouraged their sons to fight for. They were hopelessly praying to the Lord. People say they were praying for their family to come home. My grandpa says they should have been praying for forgiveness. But not even forgiveness could bring back their men.

Isidor never made it back. He left behind a mother, a wife and a new born baby, George. His brothers, made it out "alright" my grandpa says. One came home with a splinter in his leg, which followed him to his grave later that year. The other two became hunters who walked their body from here to there without any care or sense of emotion. The war had taken away their "pride" towards our nation. But unfortunately, it also took away their smiles, their laughter and any human emotion they once had.

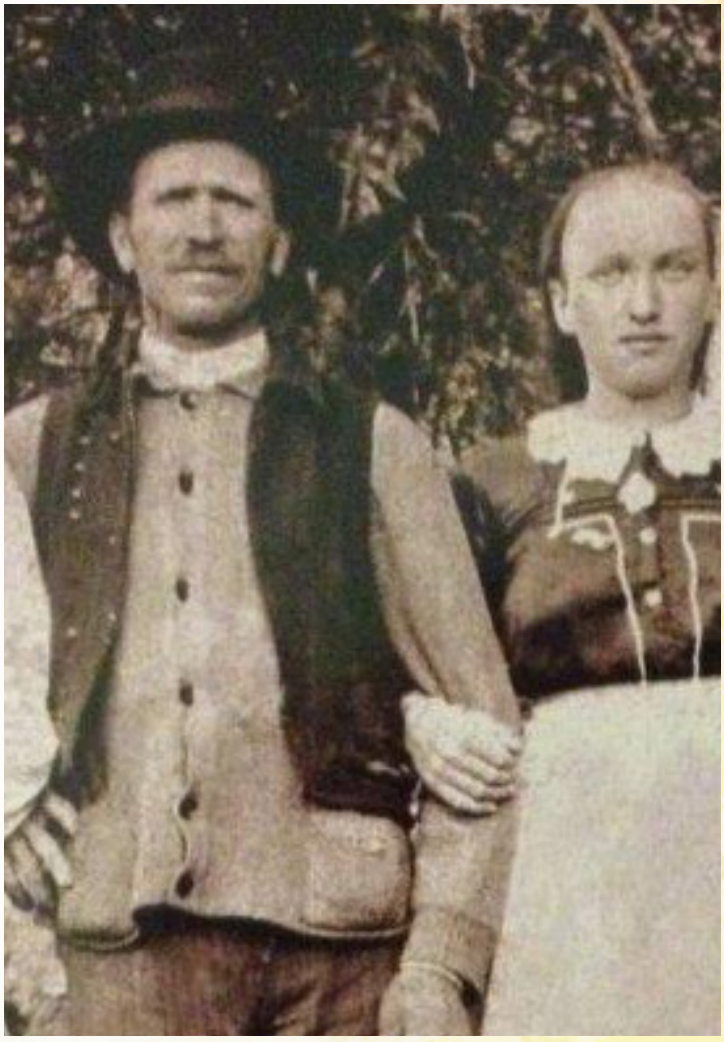
The war had not only affected the people on a personal level, but it also affected our society. It worsened relations between women and men. Their roles in society were now changing due to the increased number of women in the village. But years went by and people adapted. They had to. People tried their best to live with their mistake and losses. The Church was filled every Sunday. People hung on to faith and to the hope that they will meet with their family members again. Men came from across the mountains to marry our widowed women. George's mother remarried as well; that's how my grandpa' was born.

Then came the Second World War. Rumors had it that the Germans were after every single Jewish person. Our village had nothing to fear for everyone was Christian orthodox -- everyone, but Okman and his family. People say he was the most genuine person in the village. He was quiet, but so generous and sincere. One day, the Germans came with their tanks and guns. Everybody ran out to the street to see what was happening. They had a list with all the names and addresses. The mayor approached them and they rapidly pointed at "Okman". And, like that, Okman, his wife and his son were kicked out of their house. The officer in charge stuck a Star of David on their arm and, in front of the entire village, the family was dragged away. What happened to them nobody really knows, but one can figure it out since they never returned.

At first, our people did not volunteer to fight. But the Romanian government imposed conscription. My uncle George had heard about what happened in the First World War. His own father had lost his life on the battlefield. Nevertheless, George was a courageous man and was very excited to go fight. At that time, he was engaged to a beautiful young lady, Maria. He wanted to marry her before joining the army. But his mother, who knew what it was to be a widowed, did not approve. And, she was right. During the war, George came back once, but, like his father, he never came back again. After the war, George's half-brother, my grandpa, went looking for him. He went all around Romania to all the places where George's platoon had fought. But, he did not find anything. Once home, he went to see a man who had made it back from the war. The man said he had fought side by side with George until the last battle, but afterwards George was nowhere to be found.

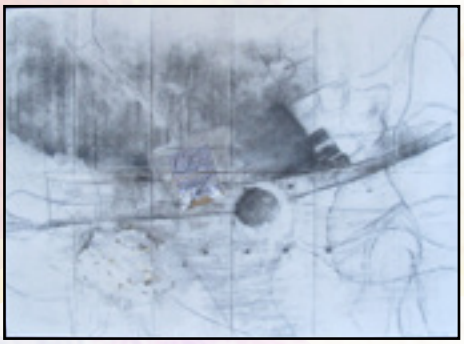
Growing up, I heard about George a lot. Going to kindergarten, we had a Remembrance Day for which we would prepare crowns and banners made out of flowers. With lit candles, we would march towards the Church where a statue with all the names of our village's losses had been built. My uncles, aunts and cousins would then gather at my house and my grandpa would tell his brother's story. Year after year, it was the same story. With the same tears, he would tell it again. Although I am no longer beside my grandpa on Remembrance Day, my dad keeps the tradition alive, as I will too when I will have my own family.

This is only one war story… my war story. But it is one too many. It is crucial to understand the significance of it because it is a typical story that can be easily multiplied by millions. It is a story that exists in my village, but can easily exist in all countries, in all families. And, for this reason, it is important to grasp the impact it has not only on those directly involved, but also on the generations to come. There is nothing courageous or satisfying about war. After war peace does not come. Because the true tragedy linked to war is not only the blood spread in battle, but the wounds of the broken families and the broken hearts. Roads and houses can be rebuilt, but broken hearts will always crack.



# Encounter with the Graf Spee

**Julianna Joos**
Faculty, Fine Arts



My drawings are of an armoured ship called the Admiral Graf Spee and how I came across a life-changing story. My mother had told me about a lost cousin living in Buenos Aires ever since the German ship on which he was doing his military service had sunk along the coast of South America during World War II.

In 2010 during a trip to Buenos Aires for a solo exhibition at the Centro Cultural Borges, I decided to search for my mother's lost cousin. I had a few clues: the name Kurt Krebs, an old phone number and fragments of a mailing address. I tracked down Kurt who was then ninety years old, married to Norma, an Argentinian woman, and had two children, German and Gisela.

From Kurt I heard for the first time the story of the Admiral Graf Spee. As he flipped through a well-documented photo album, he told me that in 1939 in Germany, at the age of 19, he had to enlist to do military service. He chose the navy and was assigned to the Admiral Graf Spee, which was a Deutschland-class heavy cruiser – the best in her class – designed to outgun any enemy cruiser fast enough to catch her. The ship was deployed to the South Atlantic in the weeks before the outbreak of World War II in September 1939; between September and December she sank nine ships before being confronted by three British cruisers at the Battle of the River Plate on December 13, 1939. The Admiral Graf Spee suffered severe damage, loss of life and many casualties and was forced to put into port at Montevideo in Uruguay.

What Kurt told me resembles the generally accepted historical version of the incident; historical accounts debate the reason Commander Hans Langsdorff ordered the ship to be scuttled. According to Kurt, the Commander was unwilling to risk the lives of his crew; he was aware that, although Uruguay was neutral, the government was on friendly terms with Britain. Under Article 17 of the Hague Convention, neutrality restrictions limited war vessels, such as the Admiral Graf Spee, to a period of 72 hours for repairs in a port such as Montevideo. Considering the damage suffered by the Admiral Graf Spee, this was too short a time to repair the ship and elude the British. On December 18, 1939 the ship moved into the outer roadstead to be scuttled. A crowd of 20,000 watched as the scuttling charges were set, the crew was taken off by an Argentine tug and the ship was scuttled.

Commander Hans Langsdorff showed human compassion by protecting his crewmen who were safe in Argentina, but he later committed suicide in a Buenos Aires hotel. Kurt never returned to his home country Germany, even after the war, except for a short visit to see his dying mother. His children grew up in Buenos Aires having no contact with any family from their father's side; his son, German, was 38 when we met for the first time and shared common family stories.

The question here is why did Kurt cut all connections with his home country Germany and his past? In 1939, when the German Army came to Buenos Aires searching for the surviving crewmen of the Graf Spee to send them back to war, only a few men showed up. Kurt and the other young men went into hiding for most of the war; I guess we can say that they deserted from the army. In 1944 Kurt was captured and interned in a picturesque village south of Buenos Aires, called Sierra de la Ventana, where he picked berries till the end of the war. But what happened after the war? I can only guess and try to imagine how it must have felt to be German after 1945.

# An Unnecessary Death

**Michael Loghin**
Student, General Social Science

My parents have lived through and heard of many stories about war. My father has many stories about his years doing mandatory service in the Soviet army, but he never fought in a war. Therefore, I will share a family war story about my great grandfather Nikolai Blajko.

Although my mother grew up in Russia, her family originates from the Ukraine. Since Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union, Nikolai was fighting against the German Nazis. He served as a "Razvedtchik", a member of a small group of usually five soldiers who moved ahead of the army in order to gather information about the enemy. They were soldiers highly trained for hand to hand combat.

One day, Nikolai's group was moving through a forest in the Ukraine, when they decided to take a rest. While the others were eating, Nikolai left them to look for an appropriate area to go to relieve himself. Once Nikolai found a good place to do "his business", he began to admire the forest when he noticed a Nazi soldier about 20 meters away from him doing the same thing. My great grandfather's initial reaction was to drop down and hide. He wanted to stay low in order to observe the Nazi's next move. Suddenly, he realized that the German soldier had already noticed him and it was too late to try and hide. They locked eyes and stood still while not making any sudden moves. By reflex, he quickly reached for his weapon, but at the same time several thoughts rushed into his head. "If I shoot him, it will make a loud noise which will attract attention. If I call for backup it too will make noise. Are there many more Nazis? Should I throw a knife?" They made eye contact for only a couple of seconds, but apparently it felt like an eternity. It was then that he did not see an "enemy" but simply another soldier who, like himself, was tired, scared and having the same human needs as he. He thought to himself that the man must have a family of his own, waiting for him to return home just like his own family. It was towards the end of the war and everyone was already tired from fighting. Without making any sudden moves or even speaking, they nodded at each other and started to slowly back away, each going in his own direction.

My grandfather told me that, when Nikolai came back to see the others, he did not tell anyone about his encounter. If the others had found out that he had let an enemy soldier go unharmed, Nikolai would have been arrested and put on trial. Nikolai simply said that he heard German soldiers in the proximity and told the group to head back since the enemy was closer than they thought. Apparently, he felt extremely relieved that he did not have to kill on that day. It would have been an unnecessary death and, when he saw the other man looking right at him that day, he was not able to kill. He was happy to see that his enemy had felt the same way about him.

# A Losing Battle

**Louise Arsenault**
Faculty, English

I never knew my mother's father because he died in the Veteran's Hospital in Ste. Anne de Bellevue, a few months before I was born. He spent twenty-seven long years incarcerated there, a victim of shell shock from WWI.

I never knew my grandfather but I knew of him. He was in the famous "Van Doos" (Vingt-Douze) Regiment out of La Citadelle in Quebec City and fought at the battle of Vimy Ridge. He was one of the lucky ones to come home in one piece or so they thought. What he left behind were some grainy photographs of a handsome man in uniform with an aqualine profile, a few medals and a battered Amati violin. By all accounts he was a gentle educated man who liked to play classical music on the piano as well as the violin.

During "The Great War", there was no treatment for what today would be called PTSD, except some rest and comfort so that one could be "heartened" and then sent back to the frontline to do battle again. Shell shock victims were considered weak of character and could even be executed for cowardice. The "old vets", some just young teenagers, lived in muddy dank trenches for months at a time with rats for company and under the rain of constant bombardments. Was it any wonder that good men fell prey to the symptoms of shell shock: the dissociation, the long stares into space, the rattled nerves?

My grandfather Paul-Emile was francophone and from a well-to-do family of lawyers and judges from Quebec City. One summer, after returning from the war, he visited the town of Perce Rock and met Evelyn Meagher, my grandmother, a tall Black Irish beauty who played the piano as well. She didn't speak French fluently and his English needed a lot of improvement but they had each other and they had their music. He seemed normal on all counts with a few troublesome bouts of "nervousness", a hero returned from the war, a survivor of Vimy Ridge. His family never told my grandmother the full story. They made their home in Perce and had three children, my mother, her brother Jerry, known as Sonny, and my aunt Rosalyn.

My grandfather struggled with his "condition" and over time grew worse, bordering on dementia. My mother was the eldest and she recalls at the age of five, men in coats coming for her father and fitting him in a straightjacket with her brother and little sister looking on. He never came back. I picture my mother as a child looking at her father disappearing into the distance, bound in white, a small dot on the horizon. I imagine how she must have waited eagerly by the screen door for his return, her grey green eyes all lit up.

My mother did see him once again. She recalls visiting him in the Vet's Hospital when she was ten and how he bowed to my grandmother and called her by the wrong name. He thought her name was Mrs. Robertson. He not only didn't recognize his wife but his daughter as well. They were strangers to him. My grandparents were Catholic and my grandmother could not get a divorce so as a twenty-seven year- old woman she was left to make a living as a single parent and bring up three small children. The Depression was right around the corner. But she survived, taking over my grandfather's job as a land surveyor for the government. She only remarried after my grandfather's death.

Oddly enough his son Jerry, known as Sonny, my mother's younger brother, joined the Merchant Marines and fought in WWII and recently ended his days at the Veteran's Home in Ste-Anne's as well. He often told us of the time he was fighting the Germans and almost perished at sea but was saved because he was an experienced rower, having grown up on the coast. Some other marines in a boat asked him if he could row worth a damn and of course he jumped aboard and as others perished in the rough seas, he rowed to safety.

When I attended my uncle's funeral last summer at the Last Post, I finally saw my grandfather's grave for the first time. It was a small plaque in the ground commemorating him as a WWI soldier. It was a stone's throw away from my uncle's grave. A nephew sang an Irish lament for Sonny and then we walked away in the golden sun of a July afternoon. I imagine no one sang at my grandfather Paul-Emile's funeral but as we walked away, I pictured myself in a white billowing dress playing a classical tune on his old Amati violin and giving him a fitting send-off.


**The Little Girl in Red,** Stéphanie Alexandra Leprohon, 2010, Student, Illustration and Design

This painting is a representation of the horrors that happened in World War II. I've depicted a little girl wearing a red dress, walking through the streets of Germany. In this image, the girl walks carelessly through the streets as countless Nazi soldiers comb the city for Jewish people. She is a symbol of innocence, completely out of place and lost in the crowd of pain and anger. This composition was influenced by the movie, Schindler's List.

# My Father's Story

**Noeul Kang**
Alumna, Illustration and Design

My father was born in 1951, barely a few months after the beginning of the Korean War. He was born to a young couple who were both about 19 years old. Being the eldest, he took care of his 4 younger siblings and had many responsibilities. When his mother passed away from a lack of medical care due to the poverty and collapse of social institutions in a country emerging out of war, he began working to support his family of 6 people. Starting at age 12, he was working as a newspaper delivery boy, waking up at 4 or 5 in the morning to walk from house to house, for hours on end. He also worked delivering heavy items like bags of rice on foot or cleaning and sweeping people's front yards. While working, he also tended his family's home garden, learning everything as quickly as he could. At 14, he moved by himself to a different city to attend high school. Staying home wasn't an option, since that meant he would have to walk 4 hours to get to his school. From the new room he was renting by himself, it would only be a 2-hour walk! A few years passed and he successfully entered a good university, studying in material engineering while working and sending money to his family. He met my mother who worked in a library and married her a year after.

Although my parents are kind hearted and warm, my father doesn't speak much. Growing up and having to hold in all his emotions and provide for others, he has a "my opinion isn't important, what's important is you guys growing up right" kind of attitude. I never even asked about his life until a few years ago, when I found out something that he had never told me simply because I didn't ask. He was sent to the Vietnam War to assist the US military for a few months as part of the obligatory military service that all Korean men had to do. Maybe that's why he is so silent and seems somewhat sad inside.

I really started to think about my relationships with my parents and how I was raised when I began working after finishing Dawson. To be honest, I didn't meet the greatest people. Many seemed ungrateful and self-absorbed. I met people who didn't believe in anything but their own personal goals and who chose voluntarily to shut themselves off from the world they lived in, preferring to watch *Toddlers and Tiaras* while sipping their 7$ lattes.

I began to think about what my parents had sacrificed for me. As a kid, I had been encouraged to participate in whatever activity I wanted or was curious about. During my elementary school years, I did archery, ping-pong, swimming, horseback riding and piano. When time came to choose my high school, my family moved our home just so that I could go to the public arts and music high school that I wanted. Once I decided to attend Dawson, I consulted my parents and asked if they would mind that I go – once again – into an arts program. They told me to do "whatever it is that you like". With their blessing, I pursued a career in arts and am currently still working in design, doing what I love.

In a way, the "lessons" that they taught me were not via grand discussions of ideas on war or politics. So I think it's natural that I don't have a specific theory or a grand word to describe how it affected me. All I have are stories and my imagination and understanding. War, to me, is the reason that whenever we had flour-noodle soup for supper (which I love), my mother cooked something else for my dad because that's all he ate for a whole year as a child when his family was going through a tough time.

The Korean War turned a whole generation of men and women who just wanted to go to school, date and travel into a generation having to forget all this to carry the weight of the entire country on their backs. It meant that my parents' generation took their own dreams to an unknown place and worked day and night to see that their kids would never know what it was like to be hungry. My parents did not sacrifice their passions and their lives because they were better than other people, but because they had no other choice. But this is the reason that they have allowed me to flourish and chose my own path.

So indirectly, through them, I learnt quite a few lessons. Life is hard for everyone but war makes it much, much harder. Give back to the community, be kind to yourself and others, educate yourself and enjoy the privileges and opportunities that are given to you.

# Spleen à Ramallah

**Simon Massicotte**
Student, Languages Profile, CALL

Ne leur dites pas, je vous en prie,
Ne leur dites pas que ça recommencera.
Pas aux boulangers de Manara Square;
Pas même au jeune Amir, du stand de maïs, Arafat Square;
Ni à la vieille dame aux épices, Place des Martyrs;

Ne leur dites pas, je vous en pris,
Que la guerre recommencera,
Qu'il y aura une troisième Intifada, une quatrième aussi peut-être.

Ne leur dites pas,
Surtout pas à Ibrahim, 9 ans, rencontré dans un camp de réfugiés ce matin,
Il ne parle plus depuis que les soldats sont entrés chez lui,
en pleine nuit,
pour arrêter son père.

Ne leur dites pas,
Pas à Salim, du stand de falafels à Jérusalem,
amoureux d'une juive du cartier voisin.
Ne leur dites pas leur amour brisé,
Le mur de haine qui les séparera,
Lorsque la guerre reprendra;

Pas aux enfants de Bethléhem,
ni ceux de Qalandia.
Ne leur dites pas, non, je vous en pris,
ils ne verront jamais l'autre côté du mur,
et s'ils sortent, un jour,
Leurs coeurs y resteront prisonniers,
Prisonniers de l'histoire.
Ne leur dites pas les sacrifices qui les attendent;
Ne leur dites pas, je vous en pris,
Que Jérusalem est déjà perdue,
et des colonies, il y en aura de plus en plus,
de nouveaux murs aussi.

Ne leur dites pas,
pas à ces parents endeuillés,
leurs fils s'étant sacrifiés,
Ni à ces 26 prisonniers,
libérés aujourd'hui après plusieurs années.
Ne leur dites pas,
leur libération aura coûtée 1000 nouveaux logements dans les colonies.

Ne le dites surtout pas aux habitants de Bil'in,
ni à ceux de Budrus,
Ils peuvent bien protester, manifester, gagner quelques batailles,
ils ont déjà perdu la guerre
et leur histoire est déjà écrite.

Ne leur dites pas,
pas à tous ces parents,
ne leur dites pas qu'un jour on leur ravira leur terre,
qu'il n'y aura plus rien pour leurs enfants,
plus rien que quelques cailloux.
Ne leur dites pas qu'ils s'en serviront,
les tireront de toute leur force,
et qu'ils se défendront en vain.
Ils tueront, peut-être.

Que peuvent-ils bien faire devant la plus puissante armée du monde?

Ne leur dites pas,
Ils savent déjà.

**Lest We Forget,** Alina Cara D'Amicantonio, 2008, Student, Illustration and Design

I drew this piece several years ago as Canadian troops were returning home from Afghanistan. It consists of the profile of a Canadian soldier as he is standing at attention and remembering a lost comrade. The work illustrates the two sides of soldiering: the close friendships formed off duty and the pain of losing comrades while on duty. This drawing is meant to show that soldiers are no different than you or I, only that they have chosen a career of service, a path that often leaves then holding the blame when wars chosen by others become unpopular.

Soldiers do not have it easy. I think we all tend to forget that.

# Marie Denise Dubois, ou l'autre visage de l'Église

**Ovide Bastien**
Faculty (retired), Economics

*La religion Catholique s'est infiltrée en Amérique Latine lors de la colonisation. Tout comme en Europe et en Amérique du Nord, l'Église Catholique en Amérique latine fut alliée, pendant très longtemps, avec ceux qui étaient au pouvoir. Suite au Concile Vatican II dans les années 1960, débute un nouveau mouvement au sein de l'Église catholique, la théologie de la libération, qui transforma l'approche de plusieurs religieux et religieuses. Selon cette théologie, l'amour du chrétien ne saurait se limiter à l'évangélisation et l'apport de nourriture et vêtements aux masses de pauvres; il doit, s'il est authentique, s'exprimer aussi dans le combat pour tranformer les structures politiques et économiques qui sont à l'origine de cette pauvreté. C'est ainsi que plusieurs religieux et religieuses en Amérique Latine se sont engagés dans la lutte contre l'oppression et la violence et ont travaillé d'arrache-pied à créer des changements sociaux. Voici l'histoire d'une religieuse qui, comme Mgr Oscar Romero au Salvador, s'inspirait de la théologie de la libération.*

### Le mars 2013

L'Église catholique est secouée par une crise profonde. Le pape démissionne, salué par une foule immense devant les médias du monde entier. Au même moment, une grande Québécoise de 79 ans s'éteint actuellement dans une infirmerie à Montréal, loin des médias. Elle a consacré toute sa vie à l'Amérique latine.

J'ai rencontré Marie Denise Dubois, sœur de la Congrégation Notre Dame, au Chili après le coup d'État qui renversait Salvador Allende le 11 septembre 1973. Elle nous rendait visite dans notre petit appartement d'un quartier populaire de Santiago, et nous donnait de l'information sur les victimes de la dictature de Pinochet: le nom des personnes qui avaient subi de la torture, qui étaient portées disparues, etc. Comme sévissait dans le pays une censure absolue, elle voulait à tout prix transmettre à l'extérieur cette information qu'elle obtenait au jour le jour dans son travail au Comité Justice et paix organisé par les Églises chrétiennes.

De santé fragile, elle n'hésitait pas à mettre sa propre vie en danger pour venir en aide à celles et ceux qui vivaient dans la terreur et la marginalité.

En 1998 j'ai rencontré de nouveau Marie-Denise à Tegucigalpa, au Honduras. Dans un pays où la majorité vit dans une pauvreté considérable, elle venait en aide aux gens marginalisés. Dans le quartier populaire où elle oeuvrait, elle nous racontait le travail qu'elle faisait avec les femmes qui subissaient de la violence conjugale. « Je reçois souvent des menaces des hommes; ils n'apprécient pas toujours ce que je fais », nous expliquait-elle calmement. Peu de jours auparavant, un homme était entré dans leur résidence, avait pointé un révolver en leur direction en exigeant de l'argent.

### Engagée et courageuse

Peu de temps après notre départ, l'ouragan Mitch inondait Tegucigalpa. Marie-Denise demeura là-bas avec les siens et mit toute son énergie à venir en aide aux victimes, notamment en obtenant du financement pour la construction de maisons.

Dans un courriel à des amis, le 28 avril 2008, elle décrivait « la situation alarmante de San Marcos et aussi de Santa Rosa de Copán, au Honduras, là où les compagnies canadiennes exploitent les mines d'or. Au Honduras, la cible du crime organisé est centrée sur les dirigeants syndicaux. La semaine dernière, deux dirigeantes syndicales ont été assassinées et un jeune chauffeur de 24 ans, étudiant en médecine. » Elle ajoutait : « Ce n´est pas encore l´heure de dormir sur nos lauriers...! »

En juin 2009, elle vit un deuxième coup d'État, qui renversait le président du Honduras, Manuel Zelaya. Comme au Chili et malgré une situation de danger et de grande violence, elle reste présente pour défendre les plus démunis. Courageuse, engagée dans le combat pour la justice et animée d'une foi simple et profonde, Marie-Denise impressionne par la rigueur et la profondeur de son analyse politique et sociale.

Alors que les cardinaux se réunissent à Rome dans un décor grandiose, on peut se demander si le Jésus de l'Évangile n'est pas davantage présent et parlant dans la vie de cette femme tout à fait extraordinaire que dans les apparats de la basilique Saint-Pierre.

*Je soumettais l'article qui précède au Devoir vers 10h00 le 5 mars 2013. Une demi-heure plus tard je recevais un appel téléphonique d'Antoine Robitaile m'annonçant que l'article serait publié dans le Devoir du lendemain. Dans l'après-midi du même jour je visitais Marie-Denise à l'infirmerie et lui lisais mon témoignagne. Elle m'embrassait et, fidèle à elle-même, se lançait dans une longue discussion dans laquelle elle insistait sur l'importance pour l'Église d'être proche du monde ordinaire.*

*Marie-Denise s'éteignait le 12 mars 2013. Le lendemain, les cardinaux élisaient le premier pape latino-américain, François I. Contrairement à ces deux prédécesseurs, ce pape incarne l'esprit de la théologie de la libération.*

# Hope in the Untold Story

**Tanvir Kaur Dhoot**
Student, Health Sciences

*In 1984, after the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her two Sikh bodyguards, anti-Sikh riots began in Delhi, and, over a four day period, thousands of men, women and children were killed. As the riots intensified, it became clear that there was organization behind the attacks, but to this day very few of the perpetrators have been brought to justice. Tensions between the Hindu and Sikh communities had been increasing in India prior to the assassination of Gandhi. Four months before, the Indian Army had launched a raid on the Golden Temple in Amritsar in Northern India. Armed Sikh militants, suspected to be separatists encouraging an independent Sikh nation, had occupied the temple. The attack took place on a religious holiday and the temple was filled with innocent worshippers. While the Indian government considered the raid against Sikh separatists a success, hundreds of innocents were killed and the Golden Temple – a centre of the Sikh religion – was in ruins.*

The Sikh riots started in Delhi. Sikhs were beaten and murdered. They were easily spotted, due to a long beard, a turban, and for baptised Sikhs, a kirpan (dagger). Hence, many Sikh walking in the streets were targeted, beaten, and killed by violent mobs burning them alive. The crimes though were much more organized than that. Groups of rioters were supplied with weapons and had voter's lists in which the names and addresses of Sikh families residing in Delhi were listed. Sikhs nearly always include Singh or Kaur after their first names; hence they were easily identified again. Rioters would go to the house of a Sikh, shoot or burn the entire family, and then burn down the family's house, cars, and other properties. It is especially hard to describe these events without a certain feeling of fear and sadness emerging in me, because had I been born during that time, I could have been a person killed by a senseless desire for revenge.

In the aftermath of the riots, the tension between Hindus and Sikhs persisted and lasted for years after. However in the midst all of these terrible events, a story gives me hope. My mother told me of a Sikh family related to my aunt. A non-Sikh rickshaw driver heard that the rioters were heading towards a Sikh house in Delhi. The man knew the family and proceeded in the direction of their house. Once he reached them, he told them about the approaching mob and brought them to shelter in his house. In this time of need, the man did something very human and touching. When the rioters did arrive at the house, they burnt it down, but thankfully it was empty. The family had been saved by the rickshaw driver, who was not Sikh, nor Hindu. I do not know his religion, but I do know that he risked his life to save members of my family. For him, human compassion was much stronger than religious difference which proves that even in midst of destruction we can hope for peace.

# Terrifying Birds

**Ahmad Al-khatat**
Student, Continuing Education

*I am washing a plate for my sorrowful neighbour.*
*His wife was raped, beaten, tortured then killed*
*and dumped in a bathtub to marinate in her own blood.*

*He is hungry and dreaming of how she used to cook*
*his favorite meal. So I'm preparing it.*
*The regime cut our water supply but I'll use my own tears,*
*their bitterness does not spoil the meal.*

*I glance out the kitchen window as a flock of terrifying birds*
*soar through the sky and cover the sun. I start weeping then*
*turn to my own husband and say,*

*"I think we will be eating this meal in heaven".*

*We hug each other, trying not to cry,*
*hoping for a few last moments of peace.*

*Closing our eyes we kiss as the birds start bombing.*

*They bomb all over town... they're the regime's.*

*They are replying to our calls for justice,*
*freedom and a peaceful end to this bloody war*

*where bullets are cheaper than a peace rose.*

*Minutes later, our bodies now mere husks,*
*we make our way to heaven with other spirits from our town.*

*We hope God will find a solution, because every day thousands*
*more will die while the rest of the world only plays dead.*

# Le capitaine. L'architecte. Le petit fils.


## Luc Parent

Department Chairperson and Program Coordinator, Graphic Design


Au début de juillet 1944, quelques jours après le débarquement de Normandie, mon défunt père, Guy S.N.Parent (1922-2004) alors âgé de 22 ans et officier dans le Welsh Monmounthshire Battalion de l'armée britannique, fit prisonnier un officier nazi et ses soldats qui se cachaient dans une église du village de Cuverville en France.

Guy S.N. Parent qui était accompagné que de son assistant Arapis, un soldat d'origine Grec, tira deux coups de feu en l'air et ordonna en allemand aux ennemis de sortir de leur cachette, ce qui a pu créer un doute chez eux. Aussitôt sortis, ils furent désarmés. L'officier nazi avait en sa possession des documents secrets que mon père récupèra. Quelques jours plus tard, le 19 juillet 1944, toujours sur le front, Guy S.N. Parent fût gravement blessé lors un bombardement ennemi et Arapis tué sur le coup. Il fût le seul officier survivant de cette féroce contre attaque allemande.

Mon père n'a jamais été empreint de nostalgie ou de souvenirs militaires, c'était pour lui un devoir de parti-ciper à la deuxième guerre. Quand tout ça fût terminé il en parla peu sauf pour dire avec humour qu'il avait sauvé l'empire.

Il dira des ses compagnons d'armes du bataillon Welsh : «Ils sont comme des soldats canadiens français, ils ne cèdent jamais d'un pouce».

À son retour au pays il resta quelque temps à titre de capitaine dans le Royal 22e de l'armée canadienne et épousa Denise Marcotte, artiste peintre qui lui donna cinq enfants. Il étudia l'architecture et fit une carrière passionnée jusqu'à quelques jours avant sa mort.

Guy S.N. Parent fût le petit fils de Guy Simon Napoléon Parent, maire et premier ministre du Québec de 1894-1906.


Guy S.N. Parent 1922-2004 Denise Marcotte-Parent 1927-1993

# The Captain. The Architect. The Youngest Son.*

In early July of 1944 just days after the Normandy invasion (D-Day) my 22 year old father, Lt. Guy S.N. Parent an officer in the Welsh Monmouthshire Battalion of the British Army, discovered and took prisoner a Nazi Officer and his unit hiding out in a church in Cuverville, France.

My father accompanied by his batman Arapis, a soldier of Greek origin, achieved the surrender of the German soldiers through a very simple tactic. Lt. Parent and Arapis discharged two shots from their weapons into the air while barking orders in German to exit the Church hoping that the ruse would confuse the German soldiers about their true identity as Allied soldiers. Once they exited the hiding place they were quickly captured and disarmed. As it turns out, the Nazi Officer was in possession of secret documents which my father quickly relieved from his prisoner.

July 19 1944, while still battling on the front, my father was seriously injured in a German bombing counterattack and his batman Arapis was instantly killed. Lt. Guy S.N. Parent was the only surviving officer of that German bombing.

My father was never nostalgic or prone to collecting war memorabilia. He considered his participation in the Second World War a duty. When the war was over he spoke little of his experiences except to humourously jest that he had saved the empire.

Of his fellow soldiers, he proudly said, "they are like French Canadian soldiers, they never yield an inch".

Upon his return home he spent some time as a Captain in the Royal 22nd of the Canadian Army and married Denise Marcotte with whom he fathered five children. He studied architecture and was always passionate about his career until the end of his days.

Captain Guy S.N. Parent was the youngest son of Guy Simon Napoleon Parent, Mayor and Premier of Québec from 1894-1906.


Guy S.N. Parent, in center Soldier Arapis, at right


* N.B. Please note that this is a translation of the original story pg.22.

# True Hero

**Gabrielle Morrissette**
Student, Literature Profile, CALL

*Why war, why fight?*
*It's not right*
*A hero is not someone who causes pain*
*Nor someone who tries to control in vain*
*A hero is someone who understands*
*Someone who holds our hands*
*And gives us hope*
*It can be the Pope*
*It can be the Queen*
*It can even be a teen*
*A true hero does not war or fight*
*He knows it's not right*
*He plants the seeds of Hope and Love*
*And brings peace on the wings of a dove*

# My Father's Journey through a Revolution

**Alina Abedi**
Student, Psychology Profile, Social Sciences

*The Iranian revolution in 1979 started as a democratic movement opposed to the oppressive government of Shah Reza Pahlavi and ended with the development of the first Islamic state. Under the Shah, power was shared amongst a network of relations and friends and in the years before the revolution the gap between the rich and the poor was worsening. In the late 1970s, anti-Shah protests increased and violence crippled the country. The Shah left Tehran in January of 1979 for a vacation and never returned. In February Ayatollah Khomeini, who had long worked to overthrow the Shah, returned from exile promising a return to traditional religious values. All over Iran battles raged between pro-Khomeini supporters and supporters of the Shah. The opposition prevailed and Ayatollah Khomeini won a huge victory in a national referendum. Iran was declared an Islamic republic.*

My father's family were Armenians living in Iran. In 1979 my father, Varoojan, was 9 years old and his brother, Victor, 11. To protect them from the violence, their family sent them to an Armenian boarding school in Venice, Italy called Collegio Armeno Moorat Raphael. After arriving at the airport in Italy, Varrojan looked at his brother and cried, never knowing if he would see his family again. Victor never did, but, in 1983, missing his family, Varoojan returned to Iran and was shocked to find how his country had changed with the Islamic religion being implemented through strict rules. He continued in school until the age of 18, when he was required to do his mandatory military service. But by then Iran was at war with Iraq and, as Varoojan's family were immigrants from Armenia, he would be on the front lines. He decided he wasn't going to participate in the war and at 18 left his family once again. He travelled with smugglers by truck and trekked through the mountains to get to Pakistan. At the Iran-Pakistan border he was arrested for crossing illegally, but he was let in and remained in Pakistan for 3 years. During this time, Victor had migrated to Montreal, Canada, where he was able to help his brother get a visa. My father arrived in Canada in 1991 and, to this day, he has never seen the rest of his family again.


**Love, Peace and Hope**, Steven Gee, 2012, Student, Illustration and Design

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