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FALL/WINTER 2020

NEW WORLD DISORDER

THE CHINESE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

LAND GRABS IN LATIN AMERICA

# TREK

MIGRATION, NATIONHOOD  
AND HUMAN RIGHTS



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# Editor's Note



## A MORE WELCOMING WORLD

We've already been through a lot of change in 2020, but here's one more – a comprehensive rethink of *Trek* magazine. We're hoping you'll find it one of the more agreeable changes this year has dished up. We've kept the best bits, created some new best bits, and have extended it into a digital-first publication with a much more substantial online presence at [trekmagazine.ca](https://trekmagazine.ca). We've also made the shift to themed issues – in this case, human migration.

People have always moved between countries, and it's estimated that there are more than a quarter of a billion international migrants in the world today. But recent years have seen increasing numbers of people on the move because they have no choice. War, persecution, natural disaster, poverty and other negative forces have displaced approximately 70 million people, with about 26 million of them seeking refuge across borders.

Although the vast majority are hosted by less developed countries, an influx of refugees to wealthier nations has been accompanied by a rise in anti-immigration sentiment and a striking effect on the social and political landscape. While some see immigration as a welcome benefit that can counteract the disadvantages of an aging population and help create a dynamic and prosperous society, there is also a common perception that large numbers of newcomers from different cultures represent competition for work and social services, or a potential threat to security and to the social and cultural status quo.

Immigration has become one of the most divisive issues of this century, and the number of forcibly displaced people is only projected to increase as climate change takes its toll. The human cost has already been shockingly high, leading to calls for international cooperation on a fairer and more compassionate system to manage large-scale migration and allow for the resettlement of millions of refugees. But the challenges are daunting and complex. It's not surprising that migration has become the focus of increasing academic attention.

At UBC, a multidisciplinary cluster of researchers is working to better understand its roots and consequences, to address the challenges it poses and the misperceptions that abound, to help protect human rights, and to create dialogue around the opportunities immigration represents if it is managed well. Over the summer, the migration research cluster learned it was to become a fully-fledged UBC centre of research. And that development must rank as one of the year's best changes of all.

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A group of immigrants are seen in a blue inflatable boat on the water. The scene is set at sunset, with a warm orange glow in the sky. Several people are visible, some wearing life jackets. One person in the foreground is leaning over the side of the boat, holding a black bag. The background shows a pier with streetlights and a distant shoreline.

# Who Belongs?

## THE MIGRATION ISSUE

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the Canada-US border

With today's polarized politics, people may not agree on the terminology – immigrants? refugees? invaders? – but there's little doubt that migration is reshaping the world.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MYRTO PAPADOPOULOS

Cover: A mother and son wait at a refugee shelter in Bulgaria. (Dimitar Dilkorff/Afp Via Getty Images)  
This page: Immigrants land in Greece.

# New World Disorder

Syrians are fleeing. Americans are building walls. Indians are battling brain drain. And Hungary is incentivizing childbearing so that immigrant labour is no longer needed. Antje Ellermann explains why.



IN THE 1990s, when Antje Ellermann first turned her academic attention to the politics of migration and citizenship in liberal democracies, many of her political science colleagues considered it a niche area. Today, as millions of people seek refuge from war, poverty, and violence in their home countries, and anti-immigration sentiment has established itself as a dominating factor in politics and elections, academics are paying much closer attention to large-scale migration and its consequences.

Two years ago, Professor Ellermann founded UBC's Migration Research Excellence Cluster. It's a group of about 60 researchers from various disciplines who collaborate on research that "seeks to understand the causes, consequences, and experiences of global human mobility," everything from forced displacement and statelessness to border governance and refugee integration. This year, the research cluster successfully applied to become a new centre in the Faculty of Arts – a development that she hopes will boost fund-raising efforts in support of its work.

As well as being founding director of the new UBC Centre for Migration Studies, Ellermann directs

the university's Institute for European Studies. Her current focus is on the political dynamics that drive immigration policy, and why countries faced with similar situations have adopted strikingly different policy approaches. Her new book, *The Comparative Politics of Immigration: Policy Choices in Germany, Canada, Switzerland, and the United States* will be published in March by Cambridge University Press. We asked her about the factors at play behind negative receptions of immigrants, and what can be done to promote peaceful and cohesive societies.

## **THE NUMBER OF FORCIBLY DISPLACED PEOPLE IS AT A HISTORIC HIGH. WHAT ARE THE MAIN CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THIS?**

Today, about one in every 110 people on Earth has been forced to flee. Another way of thinking about this is that every two seconds someone is forced to leave their home. Armed conflict is the number one reason for this. Over the past decade, the number of major civil wars has almost tripled, civil conflicts have become more protracted and more violent, targeting civilians. We just need to look at what has been happening in Syria, Myanmar, and Afghanistan, or in Somalia, the Sudan, and Congo. A second driver of displacement is the inability of governments to ensure the political, economic, or physical security of their citizens. Think Venezuela or El Salvador. In future, we will see a lot more displacement as a result of climate change, because of widespread crop failure and the fact that entire regions will become uninhabitable because of heat, desertification, and flooding.

To make matters worse, the historic high in human displacement in the Global South has triggered nationalist responses across the Global North. The wealthy democracies of Europe, North America, and Australasia for the most part have sealed and externalized their borders, which means that those fleeing violence or poverty cannot even make it to those countries who have the fiscal and administrative capacity to offer protection.

There is a drastic imbalance between the need for, and the provision of, protection. More than half of all refugees have been displaced for five or more years, many for several decades. Millions of children grow up in refugee camps, deprived of their childhood. Of all the refugees in UN camps awaiting resettlement to countries in the Global North, only one per cent will ever be resettled.

## **WHAT FACTORS LIE BEHIND THE RISE OF RIGHT-WING POPULISM IN EUROPE AND THE US?**

Explanations of the rise of right-wing populism focus on two sources of insecurity. The first is a sense of economic insecurity, prevalent among those in the lower half and middle of the income distribution. This reflects a pattern of stagnating wages and increases in precarious employment associated with globalization, as the postwar era of sustained economic growth and rising wages came to an end in the 1970s. Increased economic insecurity is not only the result of a structural shift from manufacturing to service sector employment, but it is also the consequence

of political choices made under neoliberal policy agendas that led to the retrenchment of the welfare state and the weakening of trade unions.

The second source of insecurity that is driving anti-immigrant populism is cultural change. It is associated with major societal changes over the past decades, including changes in family structure, increasing female labour-force participation, a decline in religiosity, and, most importantly, increasing social diversity resulting from high levels of immigration from non-Western and, in some cases, Muslim-majority countries.

Social psychologists tell us that humans tend to overestimate differences between “us” (the in-group) and “them” (the out-group), whilst underestimating differences within the in-group. So we end up with an exaggerated sense of difference in relation to those with different social group characteristics from us, whether that is linguistic, ethnic, or religious difference. When this process takes place in a context of widespread feelings of insecurity, heightened by the threat of terrorism, then populist leaders have an easy time mobilizing the public with anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim policy agendas.

#### WHY HAVEN'T WE SEEN THE RISE OF POPULISM TO THE SAME EXTENT IN CANADA?

It is not the case that there is no populism in Canada – think Doug Ford in Ontario or Jason Kenney in Alberta. But, at least outside of Quebec, we haven't seen the kind of success enjoyed by anti-immigrant parties and agendas elsewhere. There are a number of reasons for this. Most important, perhaps, is the fact that no major Canadian party can afford to alienate immigrant and ethnic minority voters. The “ethnic vote” is critical to electoral success in urban ridings, especially in Metro Vancouver and the Greater Toronto Area. Canada's electoral system amplifies the power of geographically concentrated groups such as immigrant communities, at the same time as Canada's high levels of immigration and high naturalization rate combine to give immigrants electoral clout.

There are also other reasons that discourage anti-immigrant populism. Canada has done a better job than most countries at managing immigration. To a much greater degree than is the case in Europe or in the United States, Canada's immigration policy privileges high-skilled immigrants. As a result, many Canadians consider continued immigration to be in the national interest. In addition,



▼  
**ANTJE ELLERMANN**  
 Born and raised in Germany, she is the founding director of the new UBC Centre for Migration Studies.

▼  
**CLAIM TO FAME**  
 She is the co-president of the American Political Science Association's Migration & Citizenship section.

▼  
**NEXT PROJECT**  
 She is leading an interdisciplinary team of UBC migration scholars and local organizations to study how long-term residents and newcomers to Vancouver negotiate belonging in a city built on unceded Coast Salish territory.

Canada's geographic isolation allows for controlled immigration. Unlike the EU and the US, Canada does not share a border with refugee-producing regions, and relatively few refugee claimants and undocumented migrants manage to make their way to Canada.

#### WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE MOST PRESSING ISSUE IN MIGRATION IN CANADA TODAY?

One of the most pressing issues today is the situation of refugee claimants who seek protection in Canada, for two distinct reasons. First, in response to COVID-19, the Canada-US border remains closed to non-essential travel, including refugee claimants. Despite the fact that there is a long list of exemptions to these travel restrictions, they do not include refugee claimants. In other words, travel for the purpose of making a refugee claim is considered “non-essential,” comparable to travel for the sake of tourism, recreation, or entertainment.

A second reason why humanitarian protection is such a pressing issue is the Safe Third Country Agreement between Canada and the United States. The Agreement, which came into force in 2004, rests on the premise that Canada and the US have roughly equivalent systems for adjudicating refugee claims, which means that refugee claimants arriving at a Canadian border crossing can be legitimately turned back to the US to make their claim there, and vice versa.

In July, Canada's Federal Court ruled that the Agreement was unconstitutional, because the US is no longer a safe country for refugees. Refugee advocates have long made the case that the many policy changes that have been implemented in the US since the Agreement came into force have undermined the integrity of the US refugee adjudication system. Even when the border re-opens, the US has in place an asylum transit ban and refuses to adjudicate refugee claims from anyone who has travelled through any country other than their own before arriving in the US. These measures were imposed by the Trump administration to counter the rising number of families from Central America who filed refugee claims in the US. The US also returns refugee claimants to Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador to pursue their claims from there, even though these countries are among the world's most violent. As the Federal Court's ruling recognized, Canada returning refugee claimants to the US amounts to a violation of the rights guaranteed under the Charter of Rights and



Illustration: Margie and the Moon

Photo: Getty Images, Hector Mata

Freedoms. Yet, despite these concerns, the government has decided to appeal the ruling, with the effect that the Agreement remains in place for now.

#### HOW CAN WE PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND COHESIVE SOCIETIES?

Let me share three thoughts. First, I believe that peaceful co-existence and social solidarity will only have space to develop when a society is willing to confront its dark side. If that doesn't happen, conflicts will continue to fester below the surface, ready to erupt. Here in Canada, we are just beginning to face up to the truth about our settler colonial past and the ways in which Indigenous dispossession continues today. Coming to terms with our dark side is not a pleasant process, but it is a necessary one if we want to move forward as a society. In my view, this is the foundation on which everything else needs to be built.

Second, assuming that we want to continue to open our doors to immigrants, we need to do so in a welcoming way, valuing what immigrants have to offer us, and treat them as future citizens. Canada's multiculturalism

▼  
**BETWEEN BORDERS**  
 When one in every 110 people on Earth has been forced to flee, some nations respond with barriers, like “the wall” between the United States and Mexico.

policy has done a better job than most integration policies elsewhere in doing so – even though it struggles to recognize the reality of racism – and we have a relatively open citizenship policy. But Canada also recruits a huge number of temporary foreign workers, many of whom will never be able to transition to permanent residence, and I don't think this is sustainable over the long run without creating societal tensions. The pandemic has exposed how much Canada depends on the work that many of these workers perform, and we should recognize their contributions by allowing them to remain here.

Lastly, I believe that investing in our public education system is critically important. Strong public schools can serve as a kind of equalizer among kids and youth from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, and also nurture relationships that bridge social divides.



# A THEORY OF VIOLENCE

Global sociologist Jasmin Hristov is uncovering the secretive forces at play behind land dispossession in Latin America.

BY ANTHONY A. DAVIS | ILLUSTRATION BY DAG

# THEY SPED AWAY FROM THE VILLAGE, AS FAST AS THEIR CAR COULD GO ON RUTTED ROADS THROUGH SUGAR CANE FIELDS. STOPPING WAS NOT AN OPTION.

AT THE WHEEL that day was a member of a peasant organization who had been driving Jasmin Hristov, assistant professor of sociology at UBC's Okanagan campus, and filmmaker Benjamin Cornejo to a remote village in the Mexican state of Chiapas. Hristov, fluent in Portuguese and Spanish, planned to interview families who had been forcibly displaced from their land by paramilitary forces. Cornejo was there to film the encounter for a documentary he and Hristov are making on displaced peoples.

Nearing the village, their driver was warned by phone that a paramilitary group was shooting at dwellings there. "We turned back," recounts Hristov. "But we worried the group might catch up with us as we were driving away."

It's not a typical scenario for an

academic researcher, yet this wasn't the first time Hristov had been in a dangerous situation.

As part of her research unearthing how corrupt capitalism, hand-in-hand with paramilitary violence, has stolen land from generations of Latin American peasants and Indigenous peoples, Hristov has made many trips to such countries as Colombia, El Salvador, Brazil and Honduras. It's academic work of a courageous nature that connects this professor to activists, victims of land dispossession and journalists in many parts of Latin America.

She recounts her Chiapas experience reluctantly. Not because that particular trip frightened her – she's had more harrowing experiences doing research in Colombia – she just doesn't want the dangers of her research sensationalized. "The risk

I face is minimal compared to the people who are activists and live there," says Hristov.

## ACADEMIC EMPOWERMENT TO THE PEOPLE

Hristov teaches political sociology, globalization and human rights, gender and women's studies, and sociological theory. Her research examines a wide span of political violence in South and Central America, including violence carried out by state forces and irregular armed groups, and the social ailments, such as sex trafficking and other abuses of human rights, arising from economic globalization.

Hristov's research, contrary to much of the existing sociological literature, posits that land dispossession cannot be explained solely as a product of abuse of power or criminality. Neither can the parallels between

the activities of armed groups and capitalist interests be considered coincidental. She has developed a novel theory of "pro-capitalist violence," offering a new way to see and understand the secretive relationships between paramilitaries, large-scale capital, and oppressive governments.

"My fieldwork with different actors involved in these conflicts... shows that violence and legislation work in tandem towards achieving the economic objectives of capitalists, as well as those set out by international institutions such as the World Bank," she says.

Hristov has done more than 100 interviews with victims of land dispossession. She has used those interviews to illustrate – in her books, courses and forthcoming publications – the massive human suffering and injustice that is still taking place in Latin America.

People are dispossessed of their land through market mechanisms (such as free trade agreements), judicial mechanisms (such as the commodification of collectively owned land), or through violence. Land dispossession, says Hristov, is "a process that destroys sustainable rural livelihoods and the social fabric of communities, and generates 'surplus humanity' – people with no livelihood and no job prospects."

Many migrate to nearby urban centres and end up living in slums. "Given the lack of economic opportunities and the extreme food insecurity – as well as being trapped in spaces ridden by gang and organized crime violence – young people are left with few options: mainly to join the criminal world or to be victimized by it."

During her research Hristov heard first-hand stories from people and families involved in land struggles in Honduras and Chiapas, Mexico. Without access to land, they felt their only chance of survival was migrating to the United States and seeking asylum.

Yet the large-scale suffering propelling involuntary migration was largely invisible to the North American public until caravans of desperate immigrants from

Central American countries such as Guatemala amassed at an unwelcoming US southern border, where tens of thousands of them were detained in inhumane conditions.

During the month of May 2019 alone – at the height of this flight to illusory safety – the US made 132,865 border apprehensions. By last fall, that number had dropped by 75 per cent, suggesting the Trump administration's unsympathetic immigration policies, backed by a false narrative that the Central American wave was largely composed of murderous gangs and drug dealers, were having their intended effect.

"We often hear of explanations for the Central American exodus being centred on poverty and gang violence," says Hristov. "While these are certainly key reasons, poverty and gang violence have a deeper structural driver, and that is land dispossession."

## LOCAL RESISTANCE

In Hristov's office, the walls are brightened by a colourful blanket from Chiapas and other craftworks collected from research trips. The walls also sport a red flag with an image of Marxist revolutionary Che Guevara and a poster of Berta Cáceres – one of Hristov's heroes.

Cáceres was an Indigenous Honduran activist trying to stop construction of an internationally financed hydro-electric dam on the Gualcarque River, a river considered sacred by the Lenca people, whose land was threatened by the project. Cáceres was murdered in 2016 by now-convicted former members of the state military and employees of DESA, the company building the dam.

Tragically, Cáceres is one of many. "Some [peasant] leaders are under constant threat," says Cornejo, who met Hristov in Toronto during the early 2000s. "Some of them have been shot, kidnapped and seriously hurt. We have to be careful when we interview them and with the locations we choose."

Just this March, as COVID-19 quarantine and lockdown measures

were imposed in Colombia, local NGOs reported that armed groups had taken advantage of the situation to murder three rural activists – Marco Rivadeneira, Ángel Ovidio Quintero, and Ivo Humberto Bracamonte – and they feared more victims would follow.

Hristov regards herself as part of a small but growing number of "global sociologists." She hopes her particular research, books, and teaching – exposing the veiled mechanisms of greed and profit behind the atrocities of land dispossession – will empower its victims in Latin America and elsewhere to find the lives and justice they deserve.

Both the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization recognize the dire situation peasant populations in developing countries face today because of economic power imbalances and a lack of protection from violence.

In 2018 the UN General Assembly approved the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas. The next step – effective implementation by nation-states – is a "huge challenge," frets Hristov, given that those who hold power in countries such as Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico can still manipulate laws to their own advantage. "Countries in the North should support the will of the popular movements seeking change on the ground in these countries," she says. "They should not recognize illegitimate political regimes, such as the present one in Honduras."

## AN INGRAINED SENSE OF INJUSTICE

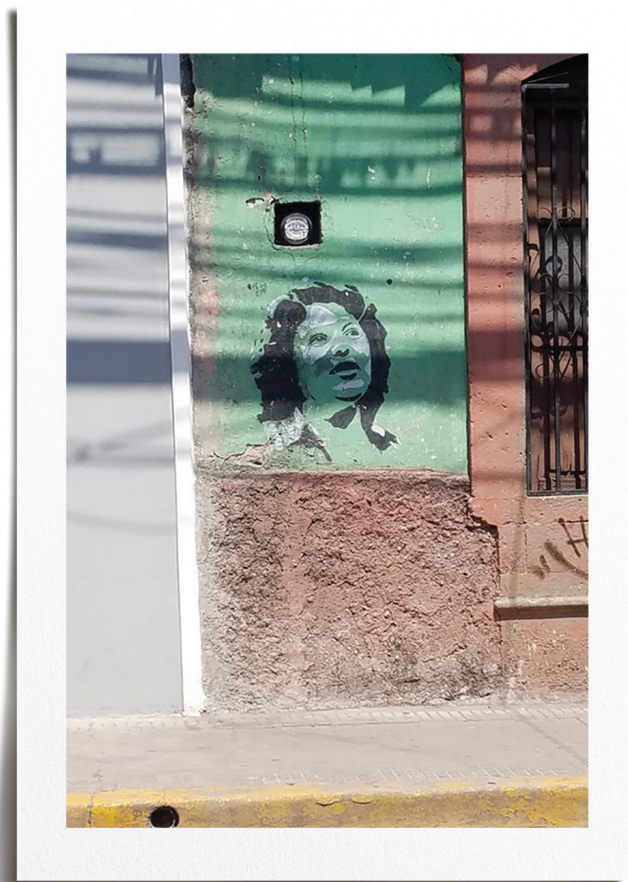
Hristov authored *Blood and Capital: the Paramilitarization of Colombia* in 2009, and followed that five years later with *Paramilitarism and Neoliberalism: Violent Systems of Capital Accumulation in Colombia and Beyond*.

In simple terms, neoliberalism is an economic philosophy that supports a free market, deregulation, government austerity and privatization of business and services.



▼  
**ABOVE THE GROUND**

Paramilitary forces (above left) guard a contentious mining site in Guapinol, Honduras, where in 2018 police and military personnel violently evicted approximately 100 unarmed peasants protesting against the mine's alleged contamination of local water sources. Indigenous Honduran activist Berta Cáceres (depicted above right) was murdered in 2016 after preventing construction of a hydro-electric dam on her people's land.



Yet her preface in *Paramilitarism and Neoliberalism* makes it clear that Hristov sees neoliberalism as a ruthless dog-eat-dog ideology that favours the rich and powerful and locks more and more people into an inescapable cage of poverty.

In Latin America, neoliberal governments and other actors often use paramilitary groups to do their dirty work. Paramilitaries – armed groups organized and financed by sectors of the elites but unofficially supported by the state – have been involved in widespread human rights violations.

Corporations too, including some in developed countries outside South and Central America, have had a hand, wittingly or otherwise, in Latin American land dispossession. Foreign corporations benefit from operating under repressive states that protect their economic interests, and some Canadian, US, and European corporations, says Hristov, “have been directly implicated in land conflicts

in Latin America.” Private security forces working for such companies, as well as state security acting on their behalf, she contends, have “grossly violated” human rights among the local populations, particularly those opposed to the operations of these companies.

Hristov is angered by the misery and injustice created by uprooting people from their land and is fiercely committed to fighting the forces that generate poverty and dehumanization. The roots and impacts of land dispossession is not a field of study Hristov chose for herself. “It chose me,” she says.

She was just five when she began to have a growing sense of the injustice in the world. “When I was growing up, there was a part of me that rebelled against, or felt indignation towards the ways in which poor people in Brazil did not matter and were silenced – and had to, on a daily basis, swallow the humiliation as if they were lesser human beings than

the wealthy. The bloody conflicts over land in the Brazilian north were a product of the landowning elite robbing the rural poor of their human dignity, and having the power to decide who had the right to exist.”

It all left an indelible impression on her. “I know millions of people live in these countries that are very unequal, and are accustomed to the way the poor are robbed of their dignity. And it has become as natural as the air they breathe. But it was never that way for me.”

Even after moving to Canada with her parents as a teenager, part of Hristov always wanted to, one day, have the power to make oppressors pay for what they do.

**THE REBEL IN THE RESEARCHER**

Today, Hristov is the principal investigator for two major projects funded by the Canadian federal government's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

With the “Violence and Land Dispossession in Central America and Mexico” project, Hristov leads an international team that includes three UBC research assistants, two international research assistants, the documentary filmmaker Cornejo, and collaborators in each of the countries where research is being conducted.

The team is documenting the prevalence and core patterns in the relationship between land dispossession and paramilitary and/or state violence in Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Mexico. They have also funded and created a website that the peasant movement in Honduras can use to post news and urgent action alerts.

In her role as principal investigator for the “Human Rights Monitor of Honduras” project, Hristov is working in partnership with a Honduran NGO, the Association for Democracy and Human Rights, and 15 researchers in that country. The team is collaborating with 20 community organizations in Honduras and has conducted more than 220 interviews in the process of creating a database documenting political violence and human rights violations over the past decade.

**“I KNOW MILLIONS OF PEOPLE LIVE IN THESE COUNTRIES THAT ARE VERY UNEQUAL, AND ARE ACCUSTOMED TO THE WAY THE POOR ARE ROBBED OF THEIR DIGNITY. AND IT HAS BECOME AS NATURAL AS THE AIR THEY BREATHE. BUT IT WAS NEVER THAT WAY FOR ME.”**

**– JASMIN HRISTOV,  
UBC PROFESSOR OF  
SOCIOLOGY**

Hristov's research garners wide-ranging attention from the media. In 2019 she received the Early Investigator Award from the Canadian Sociological Association in recognition of the theoretically novel nature of her work and her deep commitment to human rights. But her commitment goes far beyond theory.

The central goal of her research is to contribute to social change, and she wants her work to reach audiences beyond academia. She hopes her findings will be published in journals read by policy-makers from the Canadian government and the World Bank, and wants to raise awareness about the ways economic legislation architected by international entities such as the World Bank create conditions for investment conducive to violence and dispossession.

Hristov has also written expert-witness reports for human rights violation trials in the US and Canada related to incidents in Latin America, and she is not averse to directly challenging those in influential political positions. In December 2017, when Juan Orlando Hernández was installed for a second term as president of Honduras, Hristov gathered signatures for a collective letter to Chrystia Freeland, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time. The letter asked Freeland and the Canadian government to take a stand against what was widely regarded as a fraudulent election. Hristov also was involved in urging Canada to take a stand against a wave of violence, including 30 murders of civilians, by Honduran police and military. The minister, Hristov says, took a year to reply, only to say that Canada is monitoring the human rights situation in Honduras.

Hristov acknowledges that in some academic circles there are those who are uncomfortable with her social justice approach to academic investigation – seeing her as too much the activist, rather than an impartial researcher. “Being a passionate academic seeking social transformation can be harmful to one's career in many ways,” explains Hristov. “But it's not something that I planned for. It's part of me. And I can't change that.”



# Inside Out

UBC's Global Reporting Centre steps away from traditional "parachute journalism" in favour of empowering local voices.



BY CHRIS CANNON  
ILLUSTRATION BY FERNANDO VOLKEN TOGNI

“99.999 per cent of Germans don’t want you here.”

MOHAMED AMJAHID LAUGHS, reading from a piece of anti-immigrant hate mail. Amjahid is not an immigrant – he’s a 32-year-old native of Frankfurt – but that doesn’t seem to matter. His skin is brown. His name is foreign enough. And the emails pile up, sometimes hundreds in a day.

But he laughs, and the audience laughs with him.

This is “Hate Poetry,” an evening of humour and incredulous eye-rolls, where German journalists turn xenophobia into sketch comedy to highlight the growing nativism and rise of the right wing in 21st century Europe.

The scene is hyperlocal – if you weren’t in the room, you wouldn’t have seen it were it not for the digital storytelling project *Strangers at Home*. An initiative of UBC’s Global Reporting Centre (GRC), *Strangers at Home* offers unique, locally told perspectives on the state of attitudes towards immigrants in modern Europe.

But it’s not just the stories that stand out, it’s the way they are told. The short films are authored by the subjects themselves. Rather than going the traditional route of reporting on the subjects, the GRC is reporting with them, providing production and technical support, but allowing

on stories that affect the local community but still carry ripples of international relevance.

Such experiments are unusual in the competitive media landscape. The large companies that dominate the markets are profit-driven, lacking the stomach and the expertise to take risks. Independent media simply lack the funding, relying on donations and grants just to keep afloat. So it falls to rare organizations like the GRC to innovate in the reporting arena.

Built on a three-tier system of studying global journalism, experimenting with reporting techniques, and teaching their findings to the next generation of reporters, the GRC resembles a lean start-up as much as a news organization. “Most media organizations just produce journalism,” says Klein, who officially founded the GRC in 2016 but began creating its content nearly three years earlier. “But because we’re part of a university we want to take advantage of that, to really bring some scholarly rigour to what we’re doing.”

To blend scholarship with practice, the GRC teams reporters and academics who work together on stories through every phase of the project – from conception to field reporting to critical analysis of their techniques.

issues, experts on xenophobia and nativism and the rise of the right, and consistently what I heard from them was, ‘Please, please don’t do the predictable story of history repeating itself.’”

As it turns out, Nazi-era Germany is a poor historical analogy for what’s happening in today’s interconnected world, and the various forms of racism and xenophobia throughout Europe are too diverse to be understood in all their complexities by outsiders. Foreign journalists often approach these issues in sweeping brushstrokes, assuming there is little difference between Greece’s Golden Dawn and Italy’s CasaPound, or between anti-semitism in Hungary and anti-semitism in Sweden, chalking them all up under the simplistic rubric “the rise of the right.”

“So we thought, rather than us coming in as outsiders imposing our own view on these issues, why don’t we empower people to tell their own stories?” says Klein. “Why don’t we embrace that complexity and nuance?”

The project was renamed *Strangers at Home*, and the first person Klein tapped was the series’ project manager Shayna Plaut, a PhD student in UBC’s interdisciplinary program who was teaching a class on human rights at the School of Journalism. With Plaut taking the academic

dependency in their community. The powerful documentary reimagined the newsroom as a first-person account rather than a third-person observation, illustrating the need for journalists to transition from gatekeepers of the information to collaborators with their subjects.

“We wouldn’t have done *Turning Points* if it weren’t for the lessons we learned from *Strangers at Home*,” recalls Klein. “Alcohol dependency in Indigenous communities is one of those topics a lot of people in those communities want told, but they don’t want it told in the traditional way of outsiders coming in and – intentionally or unintentionally – perpetuating stereotypes. So we handed the storytelling power over to them. Just like with *Strangers*, it was proof of concept that you can empower people who are not professional storytellers and get really compelling stories out of them.”

But the stories don’t come easily. Empowerment journalism is expensive, risky, and producers give up a lot of control – the occasional failure is inevitable. In traditional newsrooms, people get fired if they fly around the world chasing a story and then come back without one. Staff journalists can’t take that risk, and freelancers can’t afford to – there’s an unspoken pressure to contort

# “99.999 per cent of Germans don’t want you here.”

the subjects to write and direct their own tales.

This new kind of experimental reporting is called “empowerment journalism,” putting control in the hands of the first-person storyteller. “Hate Poetry” is just one of 10 short documentaries that make up *Strangers at Home*, ranging from Roma life in Macedonia, to migration in Greece, to the intersection of fascism and charity in Italy. Born from a desire to challenge traditional methods of international reporting, empowerment journalism is an attempt to overcome the blind spots and bias inherent in having local stories told by outsiders.

“There seems to be a growing sense among journalists that traditional foreign correspondence is antiquated,” says Peter Klein, professor at the UBC School of Journalism, Writing, and Media, and executive director of the GRC. “It has traditional neocolonial trappings that most journalists are unaware of. You’re basically sending a privileged, usually white, western reporter to some far off place to see the poverty or disease or war or whatever, taking something from that place, and bringing it back home and telling everybody about it in a way that’s relevant only to them. There are a lot of missing perspectives and missing voices in that model.”

By supporting locals in telling their own stories about the intersection between immigration and human rights in Europe, *Strangers at Home* uses empowerment journalism to offer a much different, more personal perspective

This replaces the traditional model of reporters simply interviewing academics for a small slice of the story.

One challenge for the GRC has been addressing the issue of “fixers” in the practice of “parachute journalism.” A Western reporter drops into a place they know little about and relies on a local journalist (the fixer) to translate the language and make the connections needed to tell the story. But it’s an exploitative relationship that favours the outsider’s narrative at the expense of the local, often marginalized, community’s perspective. “It’s easy and convenient to use fixers,” says Klein, “but once you take that traditional methodology out of the equation, then you’ve got to come up with new things. You’re sort of forcing yourself to experiment. So we’ve intentionally put ourselves in this awkward position of saying let’s try to do global journalism in a new way.”

When *Strangers at Home* was first proposed in 2013, its working title was *History Repeated*, focusing on the rise of right-wing nationalism similar to that which brought the Nazi party into power eight decades ago. The initial plan followed the traditional path of international journalism: get some funding, go to Europe, interview subjects, and tell the obvious story – the nationalists rise to power, the world looks away, and we unleash another holocaust.

“That was an interesting historical touchstone from a simplistic storytelling standpoint,” says Klein. “But then we started talking to scholars and experts on refugee

lead, and Klein providing the journalistic support, they assembled a team that ranged from journalism students to a Pulitzer-winning producer, ultimately working with two dozen researchers, reporters, producers, technical professionals, and storytellers to help locals deliver their niche perspectives.

But to what end? What is the point of telling stories from a local perspective for an audience on the other side of the world?

Because we are more interconnected than we think. Many North Americans have attributed the rise of the right in Europe to an extension of the emboldened American white nationalists after Trump’s inauguration in 2017. But the *Strangers at Home* project began in 2013, and was completed in 2016, when the political climate in the United States was much different than it is today, and anti-immigrant ideologies such as the Tea Party movement seemed like they might be more of a fashion statement than an established base. These small stories from the corners of Europe revealed the roots of what soon became a global trend in nativism. Traditional foreign reporting wouldn’t have told them until the issues were on our doorstep.

The success of *Strangers at Home* – which has won several awards and was presented at the United Nations – led to other projects such as *Turning Points*, which empowered members of Indigenous communities in Yellowknife to tell their own stories about the problem with alcohol

your story to fit some preconceived idea that may not be accurate.

Because funding for the centre also defies journalistic norms, this issue is easier to sidestep. The GRC accepts no corporate sponsorships or commercials, relying primarily on academic backing and philanthropic support from foundations and individuals. *Strangers at Home* was 100 per cent crowdfunded. But so far the GRC has managed to produce dozens of award-winning projects in partnerships with leading media organizations around the world, including *NBC News*, the *BBC*, the *CBC*, and the *New York Times*.

The GRC’s biggest challenge, Klein admits, is raising operational support. “It’s great for a foundation or individual to have a connection to a documentary or book project,” he says. “I funded a documentary” sounds awesome. “I funded the infrastructure to allow an organization to grow”, well, that’s less interesting, but it’s what we need most. You can’t grow an organization without that kind of funding, and you can’t take the risks.”

“The system isn’t designed for experimentation and failure,” he continues. “But this is the value of a non-profit journalism model – we can take risks, we can fail. As long as we can afford to fail and accept the occasional loss, then we’re learning a lot from it.”

*The Strangers at Home documentary series and more can be viewed at [globalreportingcentre.org](http://globalreportingcentre.org)*



ILLUSTRATION BY GRACIA LAM

# DEAR NOUR

BY DANNY RAMADAN

**Danny Ramadan**, MFA'20, is an award-winning novelist, speaker, and LGBTQ-refugee activist. His debut novel, *The Clothesline Swing*, won multiple awards, and he is also the author of the children's book *Salma the Syrian Chef*. He talked about his experiences as a Syrian refugee in the popular TED talk *The Refugee Tree: A Queer Journey from Syria to Canada*.

Winter here is a freshly cleaned glass  
building no one lives in and I wonder if you would curse  
the clouds the way you cursed me when your husband went to the sea.

There is no open fire in houses here unless it's a decorative fireplace  
on TV with a mysterious hand flipping burning woods I stand by it  
hands extending it offers no warmth.

No one knows how to play backgammon and I haven't  
played since you and I last battled in the living room with heavy tea  
and the dices twirled around like a dervish.

You slam the table with your hand  
and the dices stop twirling they rested on two sixes you won that  
round and made me Turkish coffee that healed my broken soul.

Your home tucked away in the old corners of Damascus  
neighbored by abandoned wooden houses waiting forgotten filled  
With the dust of old souls abandoned waiting forgotten.

Your hair is waiving tales on your shoulders freed  
a nightly sky with a hidden moon you wash it with olive oil  
to keep it nourished and soft.

My hair is humid like a wet cloth. I can clean a  
kitchen floor with it. I can even clean the  
salt and snow off my boots.

Every time I pack for a new place I remember you  
packing my bags  
begging me to stay.

I wanted to tell you that yesterday  
I bought myself a bottle of olive oil made in California  
I called it home.

# A SEAT AT THE TABLE

A new exhibit on Chinese immigration and British Columbia highlights belonging, racism, and resilience

BY MADELEINE DE TRENQUALYE, BA'07



MANY SCHOOLCHILDREN IN BC today (at least those who pay attention in their history classes) are familiar with the milestones of discrimination that Chinese Canadians have suffered: the head tax of 1885, the race riot of 1907, the Exclusion Act of 1923, and segregation in housing and jobs until the 1960s. In 2006, the federal government formally apologized for this omnibus of past wrongs. In 2014, the province followed suit, and in 2018, so did the City of Vancouver.

“You have to remember the parts of the past that did damage in order to move forward together,” says UBC historian Henry Yu. Yu says these public apologies help promote a more inclusive society. Learning about histories of discrimination can also teach us how us-versus-them narratives emerge. As xenophobia takes on new but familiar expressions – including a recent surge of anti-Asian hate crimes related to COVID-19 – that lesson seems more relevant than ever.

But Yu says it’s equally important to learn how victims of racism – both then and now – respond to and fight for justice.

#### STORIES OF RACISM AND RESILIENCE

As the co-curator of a new temporary exhibit that opened in August in Vancouver’s Chinatown, with a sister exhibition opening in November at the Museum of Vancouver, Yu hopes to inspire audiences with stories about how Chinese Canadians battled exclusion and helped to build a better society. Curated with PhD candidate Denise Fong (BA’03, MA’08) and MOV curator Viviane Gosselin (PhD’11), these exhibits, entitled *A Seat at the Table*, are also the launching pad for a new multi-sited provincial Chinese Canadian Museum that will have hubs and spokes throughout BC.

“What we’re trying to do is humanize the stories and not just see Chinese Canadians as victims of racism, but instead to look at stories of resilience,” says Fong, who is completing her PhD on cultural heritage and identity in museums.

“We understand what was done to the Chinese, but often we don’t

understand as well their strategies for resistance, whether it was creating alternative business networks or building partnerships with Indigenous communities,” adds Yu. “97,000 Chinese came to Canada during the head tax era. What motivated them to cross an ocean and be separated from their families?” And what continues to motivate newer waves of migrants?

#### JOURNEYS OF HOPE

Both Henry Yu and Denise Fong can turn to their own family histories for answers. Yu was born at Vancouver General Hospital in 1967, the year of Canada’s 100th birthday. (He was a “Chung baby,” one of over 7,000 infants delivered by legendary OB-GYN Madeline Chung, who was for decades the only Chinese-speaking obstetrician in BC.) Although Yu’s parents had immigrated to Canada

migrants. He paid the \$500 head tax (a fee amounting to two years’ wages) and spent four decades as a cook on a CPR cruise ship, returning to China just once to marry. Because of Canada’s Exclusion Act and the Chinese Communist Revolution, it was 28 years until he would meet his daughter (Yu’s mother), when she immigrated to Vancouver with her husband and children in 1965.

By then, Canadian society had evolved. Although discrimination endured in subtle and not-so-subtle ways, the legal framework of racism was being dismantled. Yu’s father, equipped with an engineering degree from a top Chinese university, quickly found employment in BC’s booming mining sector, despite speaking little English. “Within weeks he’d landed a job that paid three times what my grandfather ever made,”

“My father’s seat at the table was earned by people who fought discrimination, who literally fought for the vote by going to war for Canada. They’re the ones who made Canada a better, more inclusive place.”

– Henry Yu, UBC professor of history

just two years earlier, making him the first the Canadian-born member of his family, he is simultaneously a fourth-generation Canadian whose great-grandfather was one of the earliest Cantonese migrants to arrive in BC in the 1880s.

Like many of his compatriots, Yu’s great-grandfather spent his life isolated from his family, working a string of difficult jobs to send money home. He gradually saved enough to bring his four sons to Canada, one by one. The youngest was Yu’s maternal grandfather, Yeung Sing Yew, who crossed the Pacific in 1923, just before Canada shut its doors to Chinese

says Yu. “That really astounded my grandfather, who until that point had figured his son-in-law was sort of useless as a new immigrant.”

But Yu says it’s only thanks to earlier generations that his father was able to saunter into an industry that had previously been off limits. Until 1947, Chinese Canadians were banned from practicing as engineers, doctors and lawyers. “My father’s seat at the table was earned by people who fought discrimination, who literally fought for the vote by going to war for Canada. They’re the ones who made Canada a better, more inclusive place.”

Yu hopes that’s a lesson people

BRINGING STORIES TO LIFE  
In a new exhibit at the Museum of Vancouver, Henry Yu and Denise Fong trace the histories of Chinese Canadians.



reflect on as they look forward. “If you want to know why BC is a great place to live, but can be an even better place to live, look to those who aren’t enjoying all the privileges of living here. They’re the people who will make Canada a better society.”

#### NEWER WAVES OF MIGRATION

Having migrated from Hong Kong in 1990, Denise Fong’s story reflects a newer wave of cosmopolitan, educated, Cantonese migrants who bypassed Chinatown, settling in affluent places like Richmond and Kerrisdale.

Fong wanted the exhibit to reflect this more recent history of Chinese Canadian migration, but wondered how newer migrants would connect to stories about earlier migrants who built railroads, ran laundries, and endured forced segregation, when their lived experiences appeared to be so different.

But in her interviews with different communities, Fong discovered that while migrants’ trajectories and reasons for migrating have shifted, there are several common threads: belonging and identity, family businesses,

a sense of being pulled between two cultures. The split family is another enduring theme that has found a new expression in the 21st century – with so-called “astronaut families” whose lives straddle Canada and Asia. “There’s been this reversal where now it’s often the families who are here raising their kids so they can have a good quality education and better upbringing, while Dad is overseas making money.”

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Fong says the exhibit and Chinese Canadian Museum broadens the idea of Chinese Canadian by incorporating a tapestry of stories from diverse communities while highlighting these universal themes. Visitors will also be invited to share their own stories of exclusion, belonging and resilience.

Yu says that reflecting the diversity of Chinese Canadian experiences is critical. “It’s no longer from eight small counties in southern China,” says Yu. “We have Chinese Peruvians who speak Spanish as a first language; Chinese from Malaysia or Trinidad or South Africa; Sino-Vietnamese

and Sino-Cambodians who spent four generations in Southeast Asia before coming to Canada as refugees. Surfacing that complexity and creating an ongoing mirror is crucial.”

To that end, Yu has empowered his own students at UBC to expand on textbook histories of Chinese Canadians. For the past 15 years, instead of only assigning scholarly articles and exams, he has sent students into the community to conduct oral history media projects. The relationships they have built form a network of knowledge exchange that Yu and his colleagues have drawn from for projects like the Chinese Canadian Museum. Many of his former students now work as filmmakers, museum curators, journalists and digital storytellers, continuing to expand the story of Chinese Canadian history.

Yu emphasizes that it took 15 years of capacity-building to get to this point. “We don’t just collect histories, exhibit them, and archive them. It’s a continual process of reciprocal relationships. That’s what community engagement has to look like.”

Title page: The Lee family sitting down for dinner, Albert Lee, Saint Mary’s University, Gorsebrook Research Institute, GRI\_134 (1958)

Photo: Kyran Kanavaros

# Racism and Resilience

The story of Chinese Canadians – from boycotts to beauty queens.

CAPTIONS BY PROFESSOR HENRY YU



1

## 1. AIRBRUSHED FAMILY PHOTO

Early Chinese migrants to BC were often separated from their families for years or even decades. This made family photos, like this one of the Wong Chew Lip family, particularly precious. The photo uses an early form of airbrushing to stitch together family members who were split across the Pacific – a common practice at this time.



2

Empress of Asia in dock at Vancouver B.C. Sept. 1926



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## 2. THE CANTONESE PACIFIC (1926)

From the 1840s to the 1930s, Cantonese migrant networks connected ports such as Victoria and Vancouver to Yokohama, Melbourne, Sydney, Honolulu, San Francisco and Hong Kong. Chinese merchants and labourers moved across and around the Pacific as well as throughout Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, South America, and Africa. The transcontinental Canadian Pacific Railway, which

Cantonese workers helped build in the 1880s, was part of a global transportation network that included ships such as the *Empress of Asia*, which carried many Cantonese migrants between China and Canada.

## 3. THE CHINESE SOCCER TEAM (1926)

The Chinese students' soccer team won city championships in Vancouver year after year. After a victory, players like Quene Yip, William

Lore, and Tong Louie would be celebrated in Vancouver's Chinatown. At a time when they were treated as second class citizens and considered inferior, soccer provided a set of rules and a level playing field that allowed Chinese Canadians to prove that they were inferior to no one.

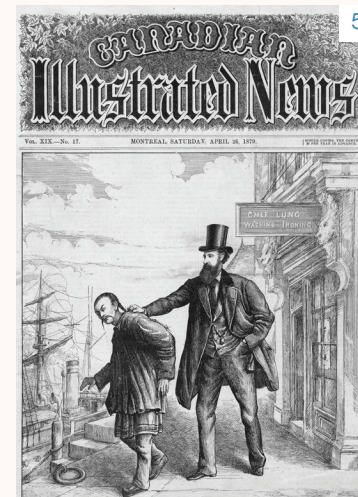
## 4. CITY-SANCTIONED RACISM (1890)

In its grant to the BC Sugar Refining Co. Ltd., or Rogers Sugar, the City of Vancouver stipulated that it would

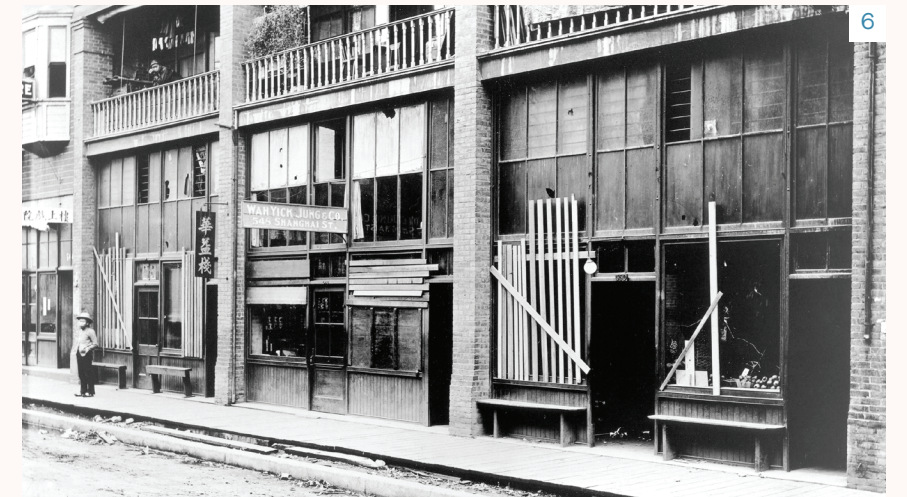
grant land for the establishment of a sugar-refining business "on the condition that the said Company shall not at any time employ Chinese labor in and about the said works..."

## 5. A WHITE MAN'S PROVINCE (1879)

In 1872, one of the first legislative acts in the newly formed province of British Columbia was to disenfranchise Chinese and Indigenous residents. The politics of white supremacy imagined a "white" Canada that would be



5



6



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cleared of Chinese and of Indigenous peoples who were already here. Struggling alongside other people of colour, Chinese Canadians fought to be treated fairly, forcing Canada to become a more equitable and inclusive place to the benefit of everyone.

## 6. ANTI-ASIAN RIOT (1907)

Anti-Chinese legislation was one tool to prevent Chinese people from entering and surviving in Canada. Another was organizing unions

around white supremacy to drive Chinese workers out of industries such as mining, logging, fishing and manufacturing. By the 1890s, these techniques were also targeting Japanese and South Asian communities in BC, under a broader category of "Oriental," "Asiatic," or "Asian" exclusion. The 1907 anti-Asian riots targeted Chinese and Japanese residents and businesses in Vancouver, especially those in Chinatown and the Powell Street area.

## 7. BUILDERS OF BC (1900s)

Most early Cantonese migrants began their lives in Canada as labourers who worked in mines, logging camps, canneries, farms, restaurants, and laundries – nearly every industry. They built the railroads that allowed mass migration from the Atlantic coast, and they cleared trees and grew food for others to eat. Despite the discrimination they faced, early Chinese migrants played a vital role in the building of BC and Canada.

Photo: 1) Yucho Chow Archive: Ming Wo/Wong Family Collection; UBC LIBRARY, THE CHUNG COLLECTION; 2) RBSC-ARC-1679-CC-PH-04092, 3) RBSC-ARC-1679-CC-PH-10725, 4) RBSC-ARC-1679-CC-GR-00010, 5) Canada Illustrated News, RBSC-ARC-1679-CC-GR-00009, 6) RBSC-ARC-1679-CC-PH-00217

Photo: 7) Vancouver Public Library, VPL 3542

## SEE FOR YOURSELF

One exhibit, two locations:

Hon Hsing in Chinatown, Museum of Vancouver at Kits Point



This UBC and MOV collaboration is the launchpad for a new multi-sited provincial Chinese Canadian Museum that will have hubs throughout BC.

[museumofvancouver.ca/a-seat-at-the-table](http://museumofvancouver.ca/a-seat-at-the-table)



**8. HOLLYWOOD CAFE OPENING DAY, PRINCE RUPERT (1946)**

Many Chinese restaurants and cafés across Canada employed white and Indigenous waitresses. In 1919, after years of lobbying from moral reformers who considered the mixing of Chinese with white women and children to be immoral and dangerous, the provincial government passed the Municipal Act for the protection of white women, which prohibited Chinese restaurants from employing them.

When the City started to enforce the Act strictly in 1937, waitresses held a public march outside City Hall.

**9. W.K. GARDENS CHINESE RESTAURANT IN VANCOUVER'S CHINATOWN (EARLY 1950s)**

Why do so many small towns and cities in Canada have a Chinese Canadian cafe or restaurant? The exhibit's title, *A Seat at the Table*, refers both to the fight for inclusion as well as Chinese Canadian culinary history. It highlights the importance of food and restaurant culture as a strategy for success and



explores how family-run Chinese restaurants and other small businesses spread into nearly every town across the country.

**10. MISS CHINATOWN (1961)**

In the 1950s and 1960s, when beauty pageants were popular and yet non-white contestants were almost never included, alternatives such as the Miss Chinatown pageant became a way for young Chinese Canadians to experience a parallel form of acceptance and belonging. The

pageants were the creation of a supportive and close-knit community.

**11. LOCAL FOOD NETWORKS (1939-1951)**

Most Chinese people who came to Canada in the 1800s and early 1900s left farming villages in southern China, and many knew how to grow food crops. Chinese Canadian farms grew much of the fresh produce sold in BC supermarkets and Chinatown stores, delivering it to every neighbourhood by hand

12



basket, and then truck. In the 19th and 20th centuries, Chinese market farms helped feed growing urban populations all around the Pacific, and established sustainable and locally-sourced fresh food industries that still endure.

**12. EDMOND LEONG ON HIS FAMILY FARM, MUSQUEAM (1964)**

From the turn of the 20th century until the 1970s, Chinese migrants from Guangdong farmed on the Musqueam reserve, supplying

produce throughout the Lower Mainland. Close ties were formed, and the social and economic impact of Chinese farms became region-wide. Many farms in the Big Bend area of Burnaby, BC, started out on the Musqueam reserve. One of them is Leong's Nursery, owned by Edmond Leong, who grew up at Musqueam in the 1960s.

**13. PROTESTS THAT SHAPED BC (1970s)**

For over a century, Chinese Canadians have fought discrimination. Their struggles have

shaped who we are, where we live, and even what we eat. During the 1960s and 1970s, Chinese Canadian residents of Strathcona organized to successfully block a proposed freeway downtown, thus ensuring the survival of Vancouver's vibrant and livable core. When health inspectors shut down Chinese BBQ shops, Chinatown merchants and protesters fought back, proving the food was safe by serving it at a banquet whose guests included cabinet ministers from Ottawa!

Photo: 8) Prince Rupert City & Regional Archives & Museum of Northern BC, Wrathall Collection, JRW1125B, 9) Photo Courtesy of Imogene Lim

Photo: 10) Province Newspaper, Vancouver Public Library, VPL 41619, 11) Library and Archives Canada/Ronny Jaques; © Ronny Jaques, 12) Photo courtesy of Edmond Leong, 13) UBC Library, Jim Wong Chu fonds, RBSC-ARC-1710-PH-3379 (31-16)



# MOVEMENT

BY DORETTA LAU

**Doretta Lau**, BFA'01, BA'03, splits her time between Vancouver and Hong Kong. Her collection – *How Does a Single Blade of Grass Thank the Sun?* – was shortlisted for the City of Vancouver Book Award, longlisted for the Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award, and named by *The Atlantic* as one of the best books of 2014.

Birds migrate according to season.

Long musical compositions are divided into movements, sound stretching across time.

When I moved to Hong Kong, for two months I lived on the street where my father spent his childhood. I was steps away from the escalators that appear in Wong Kar-wai's *Chungking Express*. The song "California Dreamin'" runs through that film – "I could leave today" – fantasies of other times and places.

The five-thousand-year history of China can be summed up in a single word: migration. The phrase for overseas Chinese contains the word bridge.

That cold winter in Hong Kong I wrote an unauthorized biography of the actress Keke Palmer, listened to her song "Keep It Movin'" on repeat.

In the movie *World War Z*, Brad Pitt's protagonist says, "I used to work in dangerous places and those who moved survived."

Aristotle knew it too, said: character is action.

I think of my friends who came to Canada as children, refugees from war and genocide, who travelled so far to become professors and writers and parents.

We leave. We live. We know nothing of inertia.



# Changing the locks on the Canada-US border

In a post-COVID world, UBC legal research may help illuminate a once-unexamined Canada-US border

BY RICHARD LITTLEMORE | ILLUSTRATION BY FEDERICO GASTALDI

THERE WAS A TIME, it seems years ago now, when the Canada-US border was something you could almost ignore – when the average Canadian could wheel through a land crossing without showing so much as a driver's licence. Then came the turn-of-the-century terror attacks – 9/11 – and the border suddenly became a tangled net of complexity and inconvenience, a place of growing paranoia, where the whole range of laws, customs and operational practices from two diverse legal regimes collided, sometimes to ill effect.

Canada and the US may be friendly neighbours, but we have conflicting priorities at our doorstep. We both want an international border that is functionally unobstructed, but still secure – one that is easy to cross for goods and people, but impenetrable for terrorists and disease.

As individuals, we might also hope that our countries are protecting the rights of every traveller, businessperson, tourist, migrant or refugee. But, really, at the instant that you choose to cross the border – the very moment when you surrender the certainties of one jurisdiction and expose yourself to the vagaries of another – you can never be sure whether you are stepping onto a bridge or off a cliff.

To some degree, that mystery is understandable. In the words of UBC Allard School of Law professor Efrat Arbel, the Canada/US border is “under-examined” from a legal perspective. Sociologists and criminologists have spent lots of time thinking and writing about border policy and practice, but the written record shows that, until recently, the lawyers had walked right by.

Arbel and her Allard colleagues, professor Benjamin Goold and former dean Catherine Dauvergne (now a VP, Academic and Provost, at SFU), have been working to change all that. In 2016, they began a SSHRC-sponsored study to shine a light on the legal issues surrounding the world's longest undefended border. But there were few early revelations. There are so many moving people and parts, so many interlocking pieces of legislation, and so many agencies with overlapping or conflicting jurisdictions that, Arbel says, “We have yet to arrive at a coherent and complete understanding of how the law operates and applies.” And for legal research, “Usually, that's a starting place.”

Still, by early this year they were making some headway. Among a mix of security agencies that are, by nature and necessity, reticent to share information or provide access to critical infrastructure, the Allard team was building trusting relationships and developing protocols for security and data protection – all while guarding the importance of academic independence. Having conducted significant documentary and institutional reviews, they were also negotiating with border agencies to gain access for what Goold describes as “boots-on-the-ground” research.

Then came COVID-19 – a global health pandemic that might have looked like a clarifying event. On March 20, the Canadian government simply slammed the door. At least, they closed it for most of us. Heavily invested in continuing to trade, both countries did everything possible to ensure that the trains and trucks kept crossing, while halting all but “necessary” travel for individuals.

For most people with friends, family or favourite diversions on the other side of the border, that has created varying levels of disappointment or dislocation. But, Arbel says, for the most vulnerable, and especially for precarious migrants and refugees, it has created a whole new threat to people's rights and personal safety.

It was the human rights issue that originally attracted Arbel to this work, and it was Dauvergne who sparked the interest. Back when Arbel was a new student at Allard, and Dauvergne was then an up-and-coming professor and the Canada Research Chair in Migration Law, Arbel signed up for Dauvergne's class and was immediately hooked. Returning to Allard as a professor after master's and doctoral studies at Harvard, Arbel also found common cause with Goold, whose focus is on privacy rights and the use of surveillance technologies by the police and intelligence communities.

Accordingly, when the three researchers began this project, Goold says, “We were thinking about people,” and particularly how people react, interact and are affected by the laws and practices prevailing in the border environment. But as they dug into the work, connecting with the Canada Border Services Agency and the RCMP in Canada and with Customs and Border Protection in the US, they found that, even before the COVID disruption, those agencies were more focused on the mutual benefits of commerce. “They're trying to reduce border friction,” says Goold. “They want to know what they need to do so the trucks don't slow down.”

For refugees, however, an agreement between Canada and the US has created a situation on the border that is dangerous (according to Arbel) and unconstitutional (according to the Federal Court of Canada). The Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) was negotiated in the unnerving period after 9/11 and implemented in 2004. The treaty holds that Canada and the US are both safe havens for refugees, who should therefore have to make their claim wherever they land first. So, for example, if they try to pass through the US and claim refugee status in Canada, Canada will turn them back.

But, Arbel says, “For decades now, the US treatment of refugees, both at the level of law and practice, falls far below internationally recognized standards of human rights protection. The US is not a safe country for refugees.” Twice since the treaty was implemented, public interest groups have challenged its validity in Canada's Federal Court, and twice they have prevailed. In 2006, a decision was overturned on a legal technicality. But on July 22 this year, Federal Court Justice Ann Marie McDonald ruled that the US is not a safe country for refugees who are sent back from Canada. She wrote: “I have concluded that imprisonment and the attendant consequences are inconsistent with the spirit and objective of the STCA and are a violation of the rights guaranteed by section 7 of the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms].”

As is typical in such cases, Justice McDonald gave the government six months to implement the decision, or to appeal – and the government chose to appeal. That, Arbel says, has left refugee claimants at risk, on both sides of the border. “It is a certainty, not even a likelihood, that more asylum seekers are being placed into detention in truly atrocious conditions. Detention is harmful in itself, but especially now, it is virtually impossible for detainees in the US to protect from the spread of COVID-19,” Arbel says, adding that it is a blot on Canada's reputation and detracts from its stated commitment to protecting refugees.

Privacy is another issue under threat, and again COVID tends to make the situation worse, says Goold. Privacy, he says, is a “weak right,” easily overwhelmed by concerns for security and public health. And when weak rights are eroded during perceived emergencies – as during the pandemic – it can be difficult to re-assert those rights afterward. In the current circumstances, with fewer people crossing the border, Goold says, border officials have a much greater opportunity to search crossers and little restriction on how they use any information they might come across. The border agencies are, he says, “not very transparent.”

Transparency – or at least the increased information that Arbel, Goold and Dauvergne are ultimately able to gather – may be the greatest takeaway from the research project. As Dauvergne says, “No border agents set out to do nasty things; people are just trying to do their jobs. But it's important to understand how individual rights are being impacted by those jobs.”

In this previously unexamined space, policymakers may find real benefit from whatever light the UBC team is able to shed.



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Christopher Derickson,  
BA'12 (Okanagan), JD'11



Chief of  
Westbank  
First Nation



Next challenge:  
Nsyilxcen  
language  
immersion  
school

Read his story  
on page 32. >>

Photo: Darren Hull

# CHANGE/ MAKERS

## MAN OF THE PEOPLE

Chief Christopher Derickson is strengthening the foundations of self-governance

BY ERIC DAVENPORT

“A good ɥlmixʷm [chief] is there for the people.” Christopher Derickson cites a lesson from his grandfather, who was Chief of Samson Cree Nation. Now 41 and the recently elected Chief of Westbank First Nation, Derickson finds himself in a position to apply it.

His approach to leadership is at once old and new. He values tradition and is committed to strengthening communal bonds by affirming and preserving the culture and traditional knowledge of the Syilx (Okanagan) people. At the same time, he’s shepherding his 850-strong community through a relatively new era of self-governance, facilitating economic development and setting his sights on a financially independent future for the Nation.

Derickson’s education and career focus have prepared him for the task. He holds degrees in politics and law from UBC’s Okanagan and Vancouver campuses respectively, as well as an MBA in Aboriginal leadership and business development from SFU. In 2017, he co-founded Alderhill, a company specializing in Indigenous community planning. He also lectures about Indigenous community management at SFU, the University of Arizona Native Nations Institute and at the Banff Centre.

For Chief Derickson, preserving culture begins with encouraging the growth of Nsyilxcen, the traditional language of the Syilx. As with many Indigenous languages, the number of fluent Nsyilxcen speakers has steadily declined as a result of Canadian government policies that forced assimilation and threatened to wipe out Indigenous cultures. To reverse this decline, Westbank First Nation approved and financed renovations that brought Syilx art and architecture and a brand-new language and culture room to its sɛnsisyustɛn House of Learning elementary school. Derickson wants it to become a full Nsyilxcen immersion school in the near future.

In an increasingly uncertain world, Derickson says he places a lot of hope in the next generation, and youth engagement is another one of his priorities. He’s found that one of the most effective ways of achieving this is to listen to them and involve them in efforts to protect the environment, as they tend to be its most passionate advocates. When they’re not chatting with him about video games, Derickson says, they’re often discussing climate change.

“The younger generation sees their relationship with the natural world very differently than our generation, than past generations have understood it,” says Derickson, who has raised a son. “They’re less ideological and much more open to collaborative approaches to problems.” But he still sees a lot of overlap, and this opportunity for inter-generational collaboration not only strengthens cultural identity, but creates a solid foundation of leadership for the future of his community, and more broadly, for the future of Indigenous self-governance.

Westbank First Nation became self-governing

just over 15 years ago, and Derickson suggests that the current system still has flaws. For example, tax revenues generated by the Westbank First Nation economy still go exclusively to the Canadian government. Derickson wants to see that change – the government has promised autonomy to Indigenous communities, and he says that financial independence has to be part of the deal. “You could argue that Westbank First Nation has built up a foundation for financial independence,” he says. “It’s just a matter of the federal government and the provincial governments catching up to where Westbank is at now.”

Like his other priorities, Derickson’s plans for further economic development ultimately serve the broader goal of strengthening the foundations of self-governance. As a chief, an entrepreneur, and a teacher, he has the influence, knowledge and resourcefulness to secure a successful and sustainable future. And the lessons he learns along the way will no doubt be passed along to the next generation of community leaders.



► Sauder grad Ian Fichtenbaum and the zero-gravity oven

Ian Fichtenbaum, MM’06

◀◀

Designing a zero gravity kitchen for use in space

◀◀

Next challenge: Space blender

## SPACE COOKIES

Experimental Baking on the ISS

BY RACHEL GLASSMAN, BA’18

Last November, five balls of raw chocolate-chip cookie dough made history. The cookie dough was delivered to astronauts in the International Space Station (ISS), where – after several hours of trial and error to gauge how outer space changes cooking times – it became the first food ever baked in a zero-gravity oven. The oven is a new innovation from Zero G Kitchen, founded by alum Ian Fichtenbaum and his wife Jordana.

The cookies may have made history, but no one yet knows how they taste. Since nothing has ever been baked in space before, this first batch had to be sent back to Earth for testing by food scientists. Inhaling the scent of baking cookies without being able to eat them is surely a torture

only a psychopath could devise – so Zero G Kitchen launched a tin of pre-made cookies to the ISS as well, as a snack for the pioneering space bakers.

Fichtenbaum, who graduated in 2006 with a master’s degree in management from the Sauder School of Business, hopes that freshly baked foods will someday be routine in space. Currently, the ISS is equipped with a food warmer and a re-hydrator to resuscitate pre-made or dried meals, respectively – not an especially appetizing prospect for a year-long tour in space. To improve the menu and promote astronauts’ well-being, Fichtenbaum aims to create a full zero-gravity kitchen, one piece at a time.

In addition to nourishing astronauts, Fichtenbaum hopes that Zero G Kitchen will give the public a relatable way to engage with space systems science. “We asked ourselves, ‘What’s the laboratory that most of us have in our home? It’s the kitchen.’” An oven in space, he and Jordana decided, would help the average person to connect with the science behind the ISS in a way that more esoteric equipment could not.

Besides, says Fichtenbaum, the project is undeniably fun. He and Jordana began the company when they were engaged, the way a less imaginative couple might have signed up for community centre salsa lessons: they were looking for a new, creative challenge to take on together. With Jordana’s background in hospitality industry communications and Ian’s in spacecraft systems, the project made full use of their complementary skill sets.



## ZERO-WASTE GROCERIES

Building a supply chain to make groceries package-free

BY ALIA DHARSSI, BA'09

For a class assignment during her last year at UBC, Alison Carr created a map of where Vancouver's garbage ends up. She was shocked to learn much of it was transported more than 300 kilometres northwest to a landfill in Cache Creek.

"That spurred something in me," says Carr, who thinks the notion of "away" in "throwing away" is flawed. The garbage that is trucked away from our homes still persists in the environment, decomposing slowly in landfills and emitting greenhouse gases. At the same time, many cities, including Vancouver, scramble for landfill space to accommodate discarded items, many of which could have been composted or recycled.

Today, Carr is fighting plastic pollution and other waste, one grocery shopper and container at a time, as the co-founder and COO of Nada, Vancouver's first zero-waste grocery store.

"Just Food," proclaim big red-and-white letters painted on the store's back wall. Customers can shop with their own containers, although during the covid-19 pandemic Nada is offering goods in deposit jars and recycled paper bags instead. In addition to items often sold by weight, like nuts and fruit, the store sells many other package-free products, from maple syrup to frozen berries to turmeric. Only a handful of items, such as milk in reusable glass bottles, are pre-packaged.

Carr leads Nada's sourcing efforts. As well as minimizing the use of packaging, she considers the social and environmental footprint of everything they stock, balancing concerns like workers' wages and greenhouse gas emissions.

Photo: NASA

Photo: Guy Ferguson

Making culinary history may have been fun, but it was no easy task. The engineers at Nanoracks, with whom Zero G Kitchen worked to design the oven, grappled with an array of technical challenges. Because the ISS has limited energy to spare, for example, the oven must run on only 90 watts, whereas an average oven uses around 2000 to 5000 watts. And the zero-gravity environment brings its own challenges. Hot air behaves differently in space, so the oven must rely on conductive heat transfer, rather than convection. There are also unique safety considerations: an escaped crumb from a baking cookie could float around

the ISS and damage delicate equipment. To prevent this, the cookies are baked sealed in silicone pouches – with filtered air vents, otherwise "the thing blows up like a balloon."

After months of testing, the result is a cylindrical, energy-efficient oven. The process of creating the zero-gravity oven, says Fichtenbaum, has proven to him that "if you are smart, and think creatively, and have a certain amount of persistence, things do happen."

What's on the horizon for Zero G Kitchen? "We'd like to have a blender up there," Fichtenbaum says. In the meantime, "the oven is open for business" – and the milestone moment of eating the first cookie baked in space still awaits a hungry astronaut.

▼ Astronauts take part in a cookie-baking experiment on the ISS.

Alison Carr at the counter at Nada. ◀



"It's case by case," says Carr. "We're not 100 per cent organic. We're not only sourcing local. We're not only sourcing 100 per cent package-free." An organic item, for example, might not score highly enough on labour standards to be sold in the store.

Nada's most resourceful suppliers turn waste into food. The store sells organic crackers made from imperfect vegetables left behind in Okanagan fields after harvest, and its café features baked goods made of spent grain from beer breweries.

Carr oversees educational events at the store, because she wants people to think critically about their food and choose products with the planet and their community in mind. She became conscious of such issues while growing up on Vancouver Island, where her parents focused on making the most of what they had and wasting as little as possible. "We always had a garden, always had a compost," recalls Carr, whose early jobs in grocery stores prompted her to begin questioning how food was grown and made.

She didn't realize this interest could turn into a career until 2015, when she was wrapping up her UBC arts degree and got wind of a marine biologist named Brianne Miller who was testing the idea of a package-free grocery store by coordinating zero-waste pop-up shops in Vancouver. Before long, Carr was interning on the project. She became indispensable and, eventually, an equal partner.

Nada opened its doors in June 2018 and has since diverted an estimated

650,000 containers or more from landfills, while building a strong following among eco-conscious Vancouverites. Perhaps most importantly, by breaking even just nine months after opening Nada has demonstrated that package-free groceries are a viable business.

But Carr and Miller are just getting started. They dream of opening more stores. There are also smaller-scale challenges – like sourcing package-free potato chips. Every company Carr has approached so far says it's impossible. But that won't stop her from trying.

"I'm not giving up," she says with a grin.

**Alison Carr,**  
**BA'16**



COO of  
Vancouver's  
first zero-waste  
grocery store



Next challenge:  
package-free  
potato chips

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## A World of Difference

A message from UBC President and Vice-Chancellor Santa J. Ono



In this issue, *Trek* is exploring the topic of migration. I have a particular interest in this topic, both as the president of an incredibly diverse university and as the child of immigrants.

I was born in Vancouver in 1962, some years after my father and mother had emigrated from Japan to North America with little more than a suitcase. At the time, my father was a professor of mathematics at UBC. We didn't stay long in Vancouver. During my childhood, my family moved first to Philadelphia, where my father taught at the University of Pennsylvania, and then to Baltimore and Johns Hopkins University.

My own academic career has taken me to three different countries – Canada, the United States and England. I have not only lived in and experienced different cultures, I have had the privilege of meeting people from all over the world, and I learned a lot from them. My travels also had an unexpected bonus; it

was while studying at McGill University in Montreal that I met my wife, Wendy.

But travel for work or study also brings disruptions and requires a degree of adjustment.

Even coming back to Vancouver, after many years away from the city of my birth, required adjustments, and I don't just mean needing to pack extra rain gear! Or adjusting to the fact that Canadians seem to be more interested in hockey than in college football and basketball.

I encountered different values, different attitudes, even different food. I had to learn what was meant by poutine and a double-double. More seriously, my daughter had to adjust to a new school with a very different curriculum. And we had to make new friends and say goodbye to old ones. But over time, we made those adjustments. We made new friends and discovered new neighbourhoods.

And now, as president and vice-chancellor of UBC – which was recently ranked the most international university in North America – I have the honour to lead a very diverse institution. Our faculty, students and staff come from many different countries around the world – more than 160 – bringing with them different cultural, socio-economic, and political perspectives.

Leading such a diverse institution brings challenges. As university administrators, we have to be aware that our international students face pressures in addition to the normal ones that all students face: being far from their homes, their families and their friends; adapting to a different culture and perhaps a different language; and getting used to different ways of studying and learning. Some may have visa, funding or health care issues, as well.

As an institution, we must be welcoming and do our utmost to accommodate religious observances, dietary restrictions, and social and cultural mores. As scholarship becomes more global and the university more diverse, this becomes ever more important. But these

are good challenges to have. Countries, cultures, individuals, and institutions such as UBC benefit from immigration and emigration.

Not only does UBC attract international students, but our faculty, staff and students are able to take advantage of opportunities outside of Canada – enriching those institutions with their UBC experiences. Right now, of course, such opportunities are on hold, and most of our international students are taking their classes virtually. But they are still a vital part of our community, and their participation enriches us all. Someday, when the pandemic is over, we look forward to welcoming them back in person.

As Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, author of *The Little Prince*, pointed out: Those who are different from me do not impoverish me – they enrich me. Our unity is constituted in something higher than ourselves – in Humanity.

# REWIND

## The knoll: a hill to die on?

BY RACHEL GLASSMAN, BA'18

To outsiders, it's an unassuming grassy slope, but for those in the know, the knoll is a beloved campus landmark – the place friends sprawl in the shade to study, or the enticing hill to which first-years flock on snowy days with cafeteria-trays-turned-sleds. Given the knoll's halcyon vibe, few would guess that this lump of earth has periodically been the centre of roiling controversy.

Today's knoll is actually UBC's second: the first was unceremoniously razed during the 1975 construction of the Aquatic Centre. Students bereft of their hangout spot called to have their green space restored, and eventually the knoll (phoenix-like!) was reborn with dirt left over from the construction that had consumed it in the first place.

All was then peaceful for our humble hill until the mid-2000s, when UBC proposed bulldozing the knoll to make way for a condo, store fronts, and an underground bus loop. A ferocious backlash ensued. Anti-development groups occupied the knoll for weeks, signed petitions, lit bonfires, and staged concerts – Knoll-aid and Knoll-aid 2.0 – during which, amid chants of “F—k the man!” and “Save the knoll!”, 19 students were arrested. Inevitably, a handful of (not-so-serious) counter-protesters emerged, too, bearing signs that said “Kno to the knoll!”

The story ends happily for the knoll, of course: administrators heeded students' calls for green space and community over commercialism, and the Nest (built by students in lieu of the original proposals) incorporates and even celebrates the knoll by extending the slope into an indoor amphitheatre.

At last, the knoll is presumably safe from bulldozers. Should anyone try to raze it again, however, it's a fair bet that students are willing to make a mountain out of this molehill.



Photo (L-R): David Zhang; AMS Archives





# Living with Rats

Rats are part of the urban ecosystem, and an urban ecology approach to managing their populations may involve learning to share the city.

BY **CHELSEA HIMSWORTH**,  
Regional Director for the Canadian  
Wildlife Health Cooperative at UBC

Rats! They eat our food, chew through our property and spread all sorts of nasty diseases. And they are gross (right?), with those naked tails and quick, unpredictable movements. Rats invade our homes – our castles! – the one place where we should be safe and in control.

Over the millennia that we have lived with them, rats have proven themselves virtually impossible to expunge. They are so adaptable that they can exploit and infest virtually every corner of our cities. They avoid traps and poisons and reproduce at such a staggering rate that extermination attempts usually end up being a game of whack-a-mole... or, rather, whack-a-rat.

Is it any wonder that many cities seem to be plagued by rats? Or do the cities themselves bear some responsibility for their rat problems? This is what I have been exploring over the past 10 years as a wildlife and public health researcher with the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative and the University of British Columbia.

## CHALLENGES OF MANAGING URBAN RODENTS

For the most part, when it comes to dealing with rats, cities have it all wrong. For example, rat-related issues are addressed using a hodgepodge of unrelated policy and programming. At best, municipal leadership is highly fragmented; at worst, it's absent altogether.

Municipal governments may address rat infestations that occur on public properties or in buildings scheduled for demolition. Local health authorities may address infestations in food establishments or where there is a demonstrated health risk.

For the most part, people are left to fend for themselves.

Another problem is that we know very little about urban rats. There is simply not enough information about them to answer even the most basic questions like: How many rats are there? Where do they live? Why are they there? Is the problem getting worse?

Despite this lack of knowledge, cities are often willing to invest tremendous amounts of time and resources into pest control interventions, such as New York City's \$32 million "war on rats."

It means that cities have no metric to determine the return on their investments, because without knowing what the rat problem looked like beforehand, there is no way of knowing whether an intervention made the problem any better.

## THE COHABITING SOLUTION

The key to solving this problem may lie in simply changing our perspective. Rather than viewing the city as a place entirely under human control that's being invaded by rats, we need to recognize that the city is an ecosystem and that rats live here too.

This does not mean that we should love rats, nor does it mean that we need to leave them alone. Rather, it shifts the focus to managing the ecosystem of which rats are a part, rather than focusing on the rats themselves.

Once we recognize that we are managing a system, it becomes clear that leadership and strategic planning are critical. The very concept of a system is that the whole is more than the sum of its parts; this is the antithesis of the reductionist approach that we're accustomed to that deals with infestations on a case-by-case basis.

Instead, we need to understand the urban ecosystem, just like we would if we were trying to manage polar bear populations in the Arctic or elephant populations on the savanna.

This means substantive, long-term investments in collecting data on rat populations and the specific conditions that support them, as well as the impact of any implemented interventions.

It also means understanding the interface between rats and humans. For the majority of urban centres, rats pose a relatively minor threat to people. The threats are certainly not in proportion to

impoverished, inner-city neighbourhoods, and residents of these neighbourhoods are particularly vulnerable to the physical and mental health impacts of living with rats. By identifying and focusing on these highly vulnerable scenarios, cities can start to make meaningful changes in how we perceive and deal with rats.

This is not to say the rest of the urban landscape should be ignored. Rather, the identification of particular areas of vulnerability needs to take place within a larger framework that uses ecosystem-based principles to address rats specifically. Examples include

To manage rat populations, “we need to understand the urban ecosystem, just like we would if we were trying to manage polar bear populations in the Arctic or elephant populations on the savanna.”

the amount of negative attention rats receive. This means we need to understand why we find rats so disturbing, and what can be done to reduce that fear.

## URBAN ECOLOGIES

An ecosystem lens also directs us to look at areas of vulnerability and resilience within the system. When it comes to rats, our homes are the most obvious place of vulnerability, where the relationship between rats and people is least acceptable. However, private residences are often the areas most ignored by municipal powers.

Also, rats and rat-related issues disproportionately affect

changing the way that garbage cans are designed and enacting tougher bylaws that enshrine the right to live in a healthy and rat-free environment.

These sorts of policies and programs that increase the resilience of the system have the potential to curtail the physical and psychological damage done by rats. The result is that co-existence with rats will come to seem no more unthinkable than our co-existence with, for instance, squirrels.

This article was originally published in *The Conversation*: [theconversation.com/living-with-rats-involves-understanding-the-city-as-an-ecosystem-118383](https://theconversation.com/living-with-rats-involves-understanding-the-city-as-an-ecosystem-118383)

**THE CONVERSATION**

Illustration: Margie and the Moon



# When the Airplane Landed at UBC

How Brock Hall came to host the international debut of one of the hottest bands of the Sixties

BY ERWIN WODARCZAK  
ILLUSTRATION BY MARGIE AND THE MOON

What we now think of as “the Sixties” arguably didn’t appear at the UBC campus until the decade was half over. But by January 1966 it had definitely arrived, in the form of the “Camp Campus.”

“Camp” can be defined as “a social practice” that functions “as a style and performance identity for several types of entertainment.... Where high art necessarily incorporates beauty and value, camp necessarily needs to be lively, audacious and dynamic.... [It] opposes satisfaction and seeks to challenge.” (Wikipedia) – or, as more succinctly defined by *The Ubysey* in its January 21 edition, “things so far out they’re in.”

The camp phenomenon at UBC was enabled by the Alma Mater Society’s Special Events Committee, which had a reputation in those days for innovative programming. “We’re special because we bring things which wouldn’t otherwise come to UBC,” committee chairman Murray Farr once boasted to *The Ubysey*. “We appeal to only a segment of the campus with each event, but in a given year, everybody finds something to enjoy.”

During the Camp Campus craze, Special Events staged avant-garde performances and art exhibitions; movie nights featuring obscure cult films, Johnny Weissmuller’s *Tarzan of the Apes*, and “the first Porky Pig cartoon ever made”; and a “Happening” in the Auditorium: “an allegorical and artistic atrocity” featuring free-style painting with audience participation. Perhaps Farr and the committee’s biggest coup, however, was bringing one of the top new bands of the burgeoning California popular music scene to UBC, not once but twice in one month: Jefferson Airplane.

The band had only formed the previous summer in San Francisco, yet were already one of the hottest groups in California. They were signed to record for RCA Victor, for which they received a substantial \$25,000 advance. However, they had not yet released any recordings. They had also not played any concerts outside the San Francisco Bay area.

To attract out-of-town performers to UBC, Murray Farr had two standard procedures. One was to contact their management directly, book the show, and then contact other organizations and convince them to also book the act for either just before or after the UBC date. He would then arrange a package deal with the act’s management to lower costs. Alternatively, Farr would hear that an act was already booked elsewhere in Vancouver and make a deal either with the venue owner or the performer’s management for an additional show on campus. Based on surviving records, the latter is most likely what happened to bring Jefferson Airplane to campus.

The band was booked to play three shows from January 14 to 16 at The Afterthought, one of the first psychedelic nightclubs in Vancouver, located at the Kitsilano Theatre on

West 4th Avenue (now the Russian Community Hall). The opening act was to be local group The Tom Northcott Trio. These shows were intended to introduce the Airplane to the world outside San Francisco – their international debut.

It is likely that Murray Farr contacted the Airplane's manager, Matthew Katz, to book additional shows either immediately before or after the concerts at The Afterthought. Their agreement was documented in the AMS minutes for January 20. The student council approved "the contract... between the Alma Mater Society and Mr. M. Katy [sic], representing the Jefferson Airplane, to provide entertainment at the Special Events Dance on January 22, 1966 at the U.B.C. Armouries at a cost of 50 percent of net."

But that wasn't the end of Farr's deal-making. What exactly happened is unknown, but in the Friday, January 14 edition of *The Ubysey* there appeared a small advertisement

Kaukonen (lead guitar), Paul Kantner (rhythm guitar, vocals), Jack Casady (bass), and Skip Spence (drums). The show was a preview of their three-night stand at The Afterthought that

## "The Jefferson Airplane lands today noon in Brock. Will Brock survive? Only for those who are out of their heads. 50 cents."

A note in the "Tween Classes" section of *The Ubysey*, January 14, 1966.

saying simply "The Jefferson Airplane Loves You." Students thinking that the ad was plugging the group's shows at The Afterthought were likely surprised to see a much larger one on page 12 that read: *There's Still Time Brother! – To Hear The Jefferson Airplane – Today – Brock 50c 12:30 – a special event.* A note in the "Tween Classes" section confirmed it: *The Jefferson Airplane lands today noon in Brock. Will Brock survive? Only for those who are out of their heads. 50 cents.*

No records survive of whatever arrangement Farr had made for this last-minute show, but the band might have arrived early in Vancouver and had time to kill before their Afterthought shows, and it may have been a simple handshake deal between him and Katz. The write-up in UBC's yearbook, *The Totem*, published later that year complained that the show "was a sudden decision and the promotion was virtually nil." In the end, according to *The Totem*, Jefferson Airplane ... scored a direct hit at a dance-concert in Brock. All flocked to the new kings of camp on campus – no one else on campus wore cord bell-bottoms, necklaces, a profusion of rings. Despite the loudness everyone assimilated all the fresh material the group presented.

The band's membership at that time consisted of Signe Toly Anderson (vocals), Marty Balin (vocals), Jorma

weekend, which inspired a near-incoherent rave by *The Ubysey's* Ian Cameron published the following Tuesday:

*Last weekend, in a small, dingy, smoke-filled, ill-lit hall, a new religion came to Vancouver.*

*The high priests at these initial rites were six young people who call themselves the Jefferson Airplane, and three even younger men who pass under the collective cognomen of The [Tom] Northcott Trio.*

*The scene outdid the most bacchanalian orgies of the long-gone but not forgotten Black Masses of the dark ages.*

*The parishioners writhed in convulsive spasms to the erotic pulsation of 5,000 torturedecibles [sic] being forced through spaces that were obviously never made to accommodate them....*

*The music itself was wild. The Jefferson Airplane, from Frisco, are a great, great group....*

*The dancing was something else. It combines the thrust and counterplay of flamenco with the motions of a sailor's hornpipe gone berserk.*

Wow. Between reviews like that, more substantial advertising in the following Friday's *Ubysey*, and likely word-of-mouth among the student population, the show at the Armouries on Saturday, January 22 was an even bigger hit. The student newspaper later reported that "600 turned up to writhe along with [the] mop-haired pop group." The year-end

financial report of the Special Events Committee recorded a profit on both shows: \$71.70 (presumably Brock Hall) and \$141.22.

To put the UBC shows in historical perspective, only a few months later singer Signe Toly Anderson and drummer Skip Spence would be replaced by Grace Slick and Spencer Dryden, respectively. It was with that line-up that the Airplane would go on to record such classics as "White Rabbit" and "Somebody to Love."

The Afterthought concerts are today well-documented online with set-lists, copies of posters, and even bootleg recordings. The shows at UBC, not so much. In Jefferson Airplane's semi-official biography *Got a Revolution!* they warrant only a passing mention as "a university gig also scheduled." Inquiries made by this writer to the band's official website for additional documentation were unsuccessful. However, fans of Sixties music, and in particular of Jefferson Airplane, should remember that UBC and the "Camp Campus" did indeed host the international debut of one of the top bands of the era.

### HIGHS AND LOWS

Whether performing as Jefferson Airplane or the late-period Starship, the band's #1 songs hit rock's highest highs – and lowest lows.



**BEST**  
"Somebody to Love" and "White Rabbit" (1967)

500 Greatest Songs of All Time: Rolling Stone



**WORST**  
"We Built This City" (1985)  
Worst Song of All Time: Blender



This fall my 18-year-old daughter enrolled in my alma mater. Where did the time go?

If a new season of life has you thinking about buying or selling a home, let's talk. We can grab coffee and reminisce about the days when UBC was mostly parking lots.

Give me a call or text 604-329-3288



I'm a UBC grad.  
Now I'm a UBC dad.

homesbydavidyoung.com young@dexterrealty.com

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Heather McCaw, BCom'86

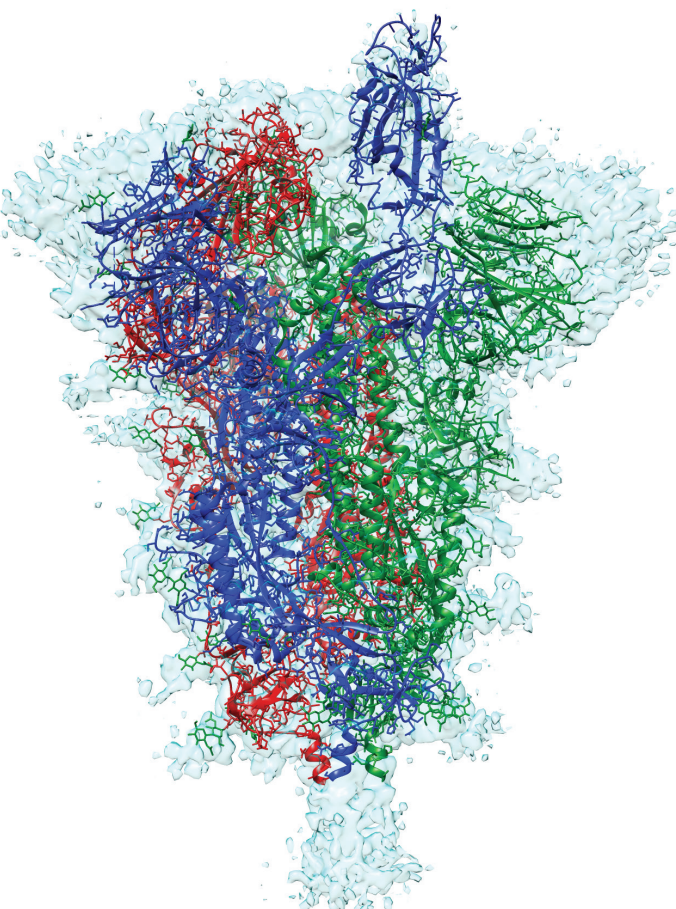
**Associate Vice-President / Executive Director, alumni UBC**  
Natalie Cook Zywicki





# COVID-19 Close-Up

Powerful imaging technology is revealing the COVID-19 virus in all its atomic detail, providing blueprints for the design of more effective drugs and vaccines.



Atomic model of the COVID-19 spike protein, captured using cryo-electron microscopy technology at UBC.

**THE RESEARCH:**

**Sriram Subramaniam**, a professor in UBC's department of biochemistry and molecular biology, is capturing pictures of the COVID-19 spike protein at near-atomic resolution to see how well various antibodies bind to and block the virus.

**THE BOTTOM LINE:**

The work has already helped to uncover how one antibody-based drug, known as Ab8, prevents and neutralizes the virus.

**HOW DO YOU CREATE THE IMAGES?**

The SARS-CoV-2 virus is a hundred thousand times smaller than the size of a pinhead, making it undetectable using a regular light microscope. The proteins on the surface of a virus are even smaller.

To visualize the detailed shapes of viruses and proteins, we use cryo-electron microscopes. This powerful imaging technology uses beams of electrons to visualize shapes of tissues and cells using ultra-cooling, or "cryo" techniques – essentially, the imaging of samples at liquid nitrogen temperatures.

**WHAT EXACTLY DO YOUR SNAPSHOTS CAPTURE?**

We're generating structural images of the viral spike protein, which enables the coronavirus to enter human cells. Ultimately, we'll be able to better understand the "hotspots" on the spike protein and provide information on how to improve the potency of treatments.

In our lab at UBC, we are able to determine the structures of proteins, such as the viral spike, at atomic detail in less than a day, providing powerful blueprints for drug and vaccine design.

For example, cryo-electron microscopy might be used in evaluating immune responses elicited by early vaccine candidates by characterizing how they bind to the spike protein. The antibodies may also be used as therapeutics themselves in patients actively suffering from COVID-19.

**WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO DEVELOP ANTIBODY-BASED THERAPIES TO TREAT COVID-19?**

Most experts estimate it could take almost a year before there's a vaccine that is effective and widely available. In the meantime, there's an urgent need for antibody-based therapies to stem the progression and spread of COVID-19.

Understanding how these antibodies bind, and neutralize the virus, is crucial because it can be used by researchers who are developing treatments to understand and ultimately reduce drug-related side effects.

This is not just a critical element for treatment though. Knowing which types of antibodies provide protection against virus spread – and which ones are ineffective – will be essential in the evaluation of antibodies produced in vaccine trials.

Motion-activated cameras are monitoring wildlife presence on the trails in and around BC's South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park.



**YOU RECENTLY HELPED TO UNCOVER HOW ONE ANTIBODY-BASED DRUG, KNOWN AS AB8, PREVENTS AND NEUTRALIZES THE VIRUS. WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS FINDING?**

Working with a team of scientists from the US, we employed our electron microscopy and advanced computing infrastructure at UBC to help evaluate and understand how this particular drug – constructed from an antibody component 10 times smaller than a full-sized antibody – neutralizes the virus in animal models. We have similar information emerging from our studies with other antibodies. Our expectation is that we will be able to use the structural information we derive about the precise footprints of antibody binding to develop more effective ways to stop SARS-CoV-2 in its tracks.

This particular finding has potential implications for both the prevention and treatment of COVID-19. The drug's tiny size not only increases its potential for diffusion in tissues to better neutralize the virus, but also makes it possible to administer by alternative routes – including inhalation. Importantly, it only binds to the virus, leaving human cells untouched, which is a good sign that it won't have negative side effects in people.

“In our lab at UBC, we are able to determine the structures of proteins, such as the viral spike, at atomic detail in less than a day, providing powerful blueprints for drug and vaccine design.”

– Sriram Subramaniam

Photo: Robin Naidoo

**HIDDEN CAMERAS MONITOR WILDLIFE**

**THE RESEARCH:**

Forestry professor **Cole Burton** and **Robin Naidoo**, adjunct professor at the Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability, are observing how human activity is affecting wildlife in protected areas.

**BOTTOM LINE:**

Wildlife avoids areas recently visited by humans.

UBC researchers placed motion-activated cameras on the trails in and around BC's South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park as part of a multi-year study of the region. Overall, they found that environmental factors – like the elevation or the condition of the forest around a camera location – were generally more im-

portant than human activity in determining how often wildlife including grizzly bear, black bear, moose, mule deer and wolf used the trails.

However, deeper analysis of trail use captured by the cameras showed that all wildlife tended to avoid places that were recently visited by recreational users. And they avoided mountain bikers and motorized vehicles significantly more than they did hikers and horseback riders. The researchers hope their longer-term research will eventually be used to inform public policy.

**SURVIVAL ODDS**

**THE RESEARCH:**

**Dr. Brian Grunau** of UBC's department of Emergency Medicine led a study to compare survival rates of cardiac arrest patients treated at the scene with those of patients transported to hospital.

# FINDINGS

## BOTTOM LINE:

The chances of surviving a cardiac arrest among patients transported to hospital are slim compared to those treated at the scene.

## WHAT DID YOUR STUDY FIND?

Our study, which included nearly 44,000 patients from across North America including British Columbia and Ontario, found that cardiac arrest patients who are transported to hospital during resuscitation had a greater chance of dying than patients treated at the scene. Among patients who were immediately transported to hospital, only 3.8 per cent survived and were discharged compared to 12.6 per cent for patients treated at the scene.

## WHY ARE SURVIVAL RATES HIGHER WHEN PATIENTS ARE TREATED ON-SCENE?

Paramedics are experts in cardiac arrest resuscitations, and can apply nearly all cardiac arrest treatments at

the scene of the cardiac arrest that are available in hospital. Secondly, transporting a patient with cardiac arrest to hospital can interfere with important ongoing treatments, such as CPR, defibrillation, and medications. Thus, there is often no advantage of transporting a patient with ongoing CPR to hospital, but rather paramedics should dedicate their efforts and expertise at the scene.

## LIVES ON THE LINE

### THE RESEARCH:

Civil engineering professor **Tarek Sayed** explored how the size of road markings affects collision rates.

### BOTTOM LINE:

Increasing the width of road markings substantially reduces collisions.

A study of multiple highways in Canada by UBC civil engineering professor

Tarek Sayed suggests that increasing the width of longitudinal road surface markings from four inches to six or eight inches can be a simple and cost effective way of preventing accidents and saving lives.

The research was based on an analysis of eight years' of traffic and collision data for 38 rural highway segments in BC, Alberta and Quebec. After edge lines, median lines and centrelines at the sites were widened between 2012 and 2013, total collisions were reduced by 12 per cent, and run-off-the-road collisions by 19 per cent.

Previous research indicated that increasing the width of pavement markings can enhance visibility and driver comfort, but the few studies that analyzed real-world collision data had not been conclusive. "More Canadian road authorities should consider widening their pavement markings, particularly in areas where run-off-the-road collisions are common," says Sayed.

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# THE SCOOP

## Pranks, punks, and prizes

1. HOW MANY STUDENTS HAVE GRADUATED FROM THE OKANAGAN CAMPUS SINCE IT OPENED 15 YEARS AGO?

- a. More than 6,000
- b. More than 13,000
- c. More than 19,000
- d. More than 28,000



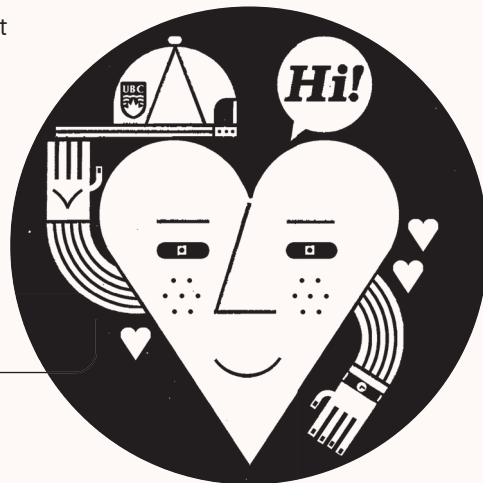
2. WHICH TERM WAS COINED BY SCI-FI WRITER AND UBC ALUM WILLIAM GIBSON, BA'77?

- a. Steampunk
- b. Cyberspace
- c. Internet
- d. Ipad



3. "FREE LOVE COMES TO CAMPUS" IS A NEWSPAPER HEADLINE FROM...

- a. 1928 (when the UBC Social Sciences Club organized a controversial debate about birth control)
- b. 1968 (when UBC students skinny-dipped in the faculty club pool)
- c. 1969 (when a Woodstock-esque concert took place on the Main Library lawn)
- d. 1967 (when UBC students started living on "Love Street" in Kitsilano)



4. WHEN DID THE UBC THUNDERBIRDS FOOTBALL TEAM FIRST WIN THE PRESTIGIOUS VANIER CUP?

- a. 1962
- b. 1972
- c. 1982
- d. 1992

5. ON APRIL 1, 2019, A SENIOR UBC OFFICIAL ANNOUNCED...

- a. that an annual jousting match was set to take place between students from UBC and SFU
- b. that classes about 16th century English Literature would be replaced with classes about 20th century American sitcoms
- c. that a new satellite UBC campus was set to open in Hawaii in 2021
- d. that the position of president of the university would henceforth be passed down hereditarily

1: C. UBC Okanagan now has 19,028 alumni.

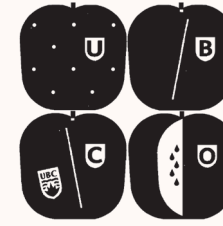
2: B. Cyberspace. Although he was a central figure in the cyberpunk literary movement, Gibson didn't coin that term.

3: A. In a 1980s booklet of student memories, Samuel Leonard Simpson, BA'28, recalls his membership in a little-known Social Sciences club that caused a major fuss with its debate on birth control. "Big headlines hit the front pages of both city papers," he claimed. "FREE LOVE COMES TO CAMPUS and much more of the same."

4: C. TSN commentators said it was the best team in Canadian history  
5: C. Hawaii campus. President Santa Ono posted the April Fools' joke on his Twitter account last year. He also promised that faculty, staff, and students moving to Hawaii would be given free sunscreen.

Illustrations: Raymond Beisinger

## NEWS FLASH



## VANCOUVER

## OKANAGAN

### FACING UP TO SYSTEMIC RACISM

In June, President Ono announced plans for a UBC advisory committee on systemic racism, and his intention to first consult with the UBC Black Caucus – followed by other marginalized groups – on a strategy for addressing racism and bias at the university. The Black Caucus itself was established early this year, after Black master's student Shelby McPhee was racially profiled and wrongly accused of stealing at a major conference on the Vancouver campus. It unites and advocates for Black faculty members, staff and students, and is bringing dialogue and education about racism in Canada to the broader community.

### DESIGNS FOR LIVING

UBC's School of Architecture & Landscape Architecture (SALA) is relaunching its \$50,000 Margolese National Design for Living Prize, which celebrates a Canadian citizen who has made a significant contribution to the built environment and the people within it. It highlights creative solutions to address issues involving urbanization, climate change, the natural environment, social equity, and human health and well-being. Nominations open in February: [margoleseprize.com](http://margoleseprize.com)

### BOOST FOR SPINAL CORD RESEARCH

An international research team co-led by researchers at UBC and Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute has been awarded a \$48 million CAD grant by the US Defence Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA). The team's five-year project aims to revolutionize treatments for patients with spinal cord injury using innovative, implantable technologies.

### DOWNTOWN DIGS: 550 DOYLE AVENUE

This summer UBC and the City of Kelowna announced plans for a mixed-use development that combines academic space to support community-facing programs and services, as well as office and residential space. It will strengthen existing connections with community partners working in health, tech, business, and arts and culture, as well as allow for new ones. While the building remains vacant, it will be made available for this year's Emergency Winter Shelter program, with approximately 40 beds operated by the Kelowna Gospel Mission.

### UNCORKED: NEW WINE CENTRE HQ

The Okanagan Valley now boasts a new research hub, after a shift of headquarters for UBC's Wine Research Centre (WRC) from Vancouver to the vineyard-laden region of Kelowna. First established in 1999 on the Vancouver campus, the WRC is dedicated to interdisciplinary research, education and development, with a core mission to support a sustainable Canadian grape and wine industry.

2.4%

Increase in UBC student enrolment numbers as of September 21 – even as the university transitions to offering most of its classes online

3,000+

Number of UBC courses now being taught in virtual classrooms

13/19%

Current occupancy of student residences on Vancouver and Okanagan campuses, respectively



### STEVEN POINT

The Honourable Steven Lewis Point, former Lieutenant Governor of BC, was appointed in June as the university's 19th Chancellor. As well as holding two UBC degrees, he was awarded an honorary degree in 2013 for his exceptional commitment in the field of law, legal and Aboriginal education, and his leadership in the Indigenous community. Mr. Point is a member of the Skowkale First Nation and has an outstanding record of service to the people of British Columbia.



### LESLEY CORMACK

Lesley Cormack began her role as Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Principal of UBC Okanagan on July 1. She was previously Dean of arts at the University of Alberta. Professor Cormack is an historian of early modern science, specializing in geography and mathematics in 16th-century England. "UBC Okanagan has built a well-earned reputation as an innovative research university with an entrepreneurial spirit, and I can't wait to contribute to its success," said Cormack, upon her appointment.



# Thinking Like an Entrepreneur

Is an entrepreneurial mindset an advantage in times of change and job uncertainty? And is it something that can be learned? The following edited highlights are from an interview on this topic with **Grant Munro**, BSc'01, co-founder of Flashstock Technology, which in 2017 was acquired by Shutterstock for CAD\$75 million. More recently, Munro founded a B2B venture studio aimed at launching three to four new software businesses a year, and this fall he joined the board of *alumni UBC*.

**OBSERVATION**

## IT'S ABOUT BEING PROACTIVE

An entrepreneurial mindset means creating your own opportunities versus filling an existing role. It allows you to think a little bit differently and be tactical.

What stands out with entrepreneurs is that they have, at a relatively young age, a good perspective in terms of what they want to do. Most do things that they're interested in and passionate about. Others aren't happy with just getting a day job and want a certain lifestyle. And so they come to this realization that starting their own business is the path forward.

**TAKEAWAY**

## FIND YOUR NORTH STAR

If you don't have conviction in your direction, you don't have a career plan. If you don't have that North Star, then you're never going to have that framework to make those types of decisions.

Figuring out what you want to do should be your priority, because if you do something that you don't generally want to do, you will not be successful at it. As soon as you figure it out, it gets so much easier. When you're a new graduate, the one thing that you have as an advantage is time, so try different things.

The more breadth of experience you get, both professional or personal, the more you're going to start to notice what you naturally gravitate to. What are the things that don't require a lot of energy? What are the things that you can work on much longer than others? What are the things you get excited about? Use those signals to tell you what you actually like, and from that derive a better plan.

**OBSERVATION**

## IT'S NOT ABOUT EGO

There's no ego involved. A lot of entrepreneurs are interested in fields in which they may not have expertise, and they'll go out and learn as much as possible and be really humble. They won't assume that they know everything. And then, when they've identified something that they think is meaningful, they don't sit on it for months and years – they actually go out and do something about it.

**TAKEAWAY**

## HAVE A PLAN

And so what if you take that mindset into any capacity, whether you're looking for your first job, or you've lost your job and you're looking for another?

No matter what position or what role you're interested in, there are hundreds of people out there who have done it already. Go and introduce yourself. Say: *Hey, I want to learn about all the stuff that you do.* People love talking about themselves.

To achieve something meaningful, you have to break it out into big blocks. Know what you want to do, and then work backwards from there. Most people go through life just taking one opportunity at a time, and not thinking about what's next and what's next and what's next. But if you're able to do that, I think it gives you way more perspective in terms of your career choices.

Once you've realized what your goal is, there are tangible steps that you can take every week to move the ball forward to get you to there. A planning mentality, coupled with a long-term perspective on your life and how long things actually take, is really powerful.

**OBSERVATION**

## IT'S HIGHLY CREATIVE

I think starting a business, building a product, is one of the ultimate manifestations of creativity. The general folklore around startups on the tech scene is that someone's walking down the street, and this light bulb appears over their head, and they run off to start this amazing world-changing company. But that's not how it works. I've interviewed more than 50 founders in the last three or four weeks about how they came up with their idea. In most cases, it's derived from the identification of a problem.

Entrepreneurs are not visionaries, generally. They are people who take these sideways glances, and they notice problems. They ask questions like: *Why is it like this? And what if it was like this? And how would I do that?*

**TAKEAWAY**

## PAY ATTENTION

You can't read a book or take a course and become an entrepreneur. It's much more of an apprenticeship. The acquisition of an entrepreneurial mindset takes practice and time and mentorship. Once you're thoughtful about it and you do it in practice, it becomes really straightforward.

There's always a mindfulness component. Instead of sticking your nose in an Instagram feed, keep your head up and observe the things around you – simple things. If you're waiting in line to order a coffee, for example, observe what the interaction is like and ask: *Why is it that way? Are there opportunities to make it better? Maybe not.* But if you practice asking those types of questions, it will become your default mindset and you'll start to see problems everywhere. And I think that's the point where it gets really interesting for people.

“Entrepreneurs are not visionaries, generally. They are people who take these sideways glances, and they notice problems.”

– Grant Munro, BSc'01, founder of Flashstock Technology

🔊 TO LISTEN TO THE FULL PODCAST, VISIT [alumni.ubc.ca/careers](http://alumni.ubc.ca/careers)

# Things to Do



## BOOKWORMS UNITE!

Join the *alumni UBC* Online Book Club. Books discussed focus on lifelong learning, leadership, harnessing creativity, communication skills and much more. It's free, exclusive to UBC alumni, and more than 1,800 are already participating. Next pick:

### *Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less* by Greg McKeown

Do you ever find yourself at the end of a work day wondering what you've accomplished? Caught in a loop of Zoom calls, endless emails and trivial tasks, our core work can sometimes get lost in the weeds. In *Essentialism*, Greg McKeown shows us how to focus on what really matters. Regain control of your own choices and redirect your energy toward "the right thing, in the right way, at the right time." Start 2021 on the right foot.

➔ **READING AND DISCUSSION**  
BEGIN JANUARY 7  
[alumni.ubc.ca/online-book-club](http://alumni.ubc.ca/online-book-club)



## VIRTUAL VIRTUOSITY

### **Black Artistic Expressions in BC: Dawn Pemberton**

*December 16, 2020, 4:30-5:30 PM*  
The last in a four-part series celebrating of Black lives, Black culture and activism, and Black musical and poetic expression in BC. Sign up for this live event featuring the "new Queen of Canadian soul," at [equity.ubc.ca](http://equity.ubc.ca)

### **PostSecret and the Pandemic: Struggles, Successes & Strategies**

*January 28, 2021, time and details TBD* ([alumni.ubc.ca/events](http://alumni.ubc.ca/events))

Frank Warren is the sole founder of the *PostSecret Project*, a growing collection of over a million artful secrets, mailed anonymously to him on postcards. Known as "the most trusted stranger in the world," Warren's all new interactive presentation reveals our true feelings about how the pandemic has disrupted our lives, while providing evidence-based tools to aid young people and adults as they navigate through this challenging, but temporary crisis.



## TOP UP YOUR KARMA

Score karma points by lending a helping hand. You can apply for the following two volunteer opportunities at [alumni.ubc.ca/volunteer](http://alumni.ubc.ca/volunteer)

### **Support K-12 students**

As a result of COVID-19, students across BC are experiencing a very different academic year. UBC students founded *Mentoring the Stars* to provide academic support to grade K-12 students by organizing free virtual tutoring. Volunteer tutors are matched with students based on preferences, availability, and areas of knowledge. No previous tutoring experience required.

### **Help job seekers**

Job seekers often aren't aware how their resume and interview style is perceived by a potential employer. Help out students and other alumni by providing resume feedback and online interview practice. Volunteers must have at least two years' experience supporting hiring decisions.



## Explore an Exhibit

### MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY

#### *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience*

*Running until January 3. Book your ticket at [moa.ubc.ca](http://moa.ubc.ca)*  
Kent Monkman's *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience* is an 80-piece exhibit of paintings, installations and sculptures, in dialogue with historical artifacts, that takes you on a journey through the past 150 years of Canada. It is a journey that reclaims and reinserts Indigenous voices into the collective memory of our country, challenging and shattering colonial ideas of our history. The artist's gender fluid, time-travelling alter-ego, Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, is the narrator of this story, told through the lens of Indigenous resilience.

### BEATY MUSEUM OF BIODIVERSITY

#### *Fire Followers* by Megan Majewski and Sharon Roberts

*Online exhibition: [beatymuseum.ubc.ca/firefollowers](http://beatymuseum.ubc.ca/firefollowers)*  
Painter Megan Majewski and writer Sharon Roberts wanted to create an exhibit that can show both the destruction and the great beauty that comes from wildfire. By providing a forum for those who have witnessed this cycle, but also to give a voice to the forests themselves, the artists aim to bring greater awareness of the necessity of wildfire in building a healthy forest. They hope to shape the public perception of what a healthy forest looks like, why it can be helpful to let fires burn when there is no immediate risk to a community, and how individuals can contribute to decreasing wildfire risk.

## DID YOU MISS?

### **A Discussion with Claudia Rankine**

The UBC Phil Lind Initiative hosted a discussion with Claudia Rankine as part of its *Thinking While Black* series. Rankine is a *New York Times* bestselling poet, MacArthur "Genius" Award recipient, National Book Critics Circle Award winner and a professor at Yale.

➔ **WATCH THE RECORDING AT**  
[lindinitiative.ubc.ca/claudia-rankine](http://lindinitiative.ubc.ca/claudia-rankine)

### **COVID-19 Webinar Series**

Since March, this series has been offering expert perspectives on everything from maintaining physical and mental well-being during lockdown to food security.

➔ **ACCESS ALL 10 WEBINARS AT**  
[alumni.ubc.ca/covid-19-webinars](http://alumni.ubc.ca/covid-19-webinars)

## alumni UBC Monthly Contests on the alumni UBC App!

### JANUARY

A \$100 gift card for the UBC Bookstore means you get to curl up by the fire with a good book.

### FEBRUARY

Celebrate Valentine's Day by crafting a meal at home with a \$100 gift card from Fresh Prep.

### MARCH

Take in the beauty of Vancouver's cherry blossoms with four tickets to the UBC Botanical Garden and Nitobe Memorial Garden.

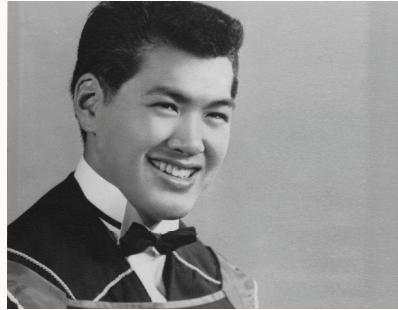
### APRIL

Look sharp in a customized UBC Techno Lite Jacket, part of the *alumni UBC* merchandise line available at the UBC Bookstore.

➔ **GET THE ALUMNI UBC APP**  
[alumni.ubc.ca/app](http://alumni.ubc.ca/app)



# IN MEMORIAM



## Robert H. Lee, CM, OBC, BCom'56, LLD'96

The UBC community is mourning the loss of Dr. Robert (Bob) H. Lee, CM, OBC, former chancellor of UBC and chairman of UBC Properties Trust, who passed away on February 19, 2020.

An esteemed philanthropist, visionary and beloved community leader, Bob Lee was one of UBC's most accomplished alumni. He dedicated much of his life, expertise and resources to building a brighter future for British Columbians and Canadians, and he embodied the mission of UBC and its vision for its alumni.

Bob was born and raised in Vancouver. The traditional Confucian values of humility, modesty, honesty, studiousness, and social duty were deeply ingrained in him from his father, Ronald Bick Lee. Bob, who was affectionately referred to as "Mr. UBC," met his wife, Lily, while they were attending UBC, and their four children (Carol, Derek, Leslie and Graham) and three children-in-law (Carlota, John Murphy and Angela) are also alumni. After graduating from UBC in 1956 with a Bachelor of Commerce degree, he overcame racial barriers and worked hard to establish a successful career in real estate and founded the Prospero Group of Companies.

Over the years, Bob touched the lives of many. He set the bar for community involvement through longstanding commitment to many organizations, including the Robert Lee YMCA, the Robert & Lily Lee Family Community Health Centre and the VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation. He was a member of the Order of British Columbia and the Order of Canada.



Bob was extremely devoted to the service of his alma mater, serving two terms on the UBC Board of Governors. He was installed as chancellor in 1993, served as chair of the UBC Foundation, and was the honorary chair of UBC's *start an evolution* campaign. UBC awarded Bob an Honorary Doctorate of Laws in 1996, and in 2006 the Robert H. Lee Graduate School at the Sauder School of Business was established in recognition of Bob's generous gift to support graduate business education. In 1999, Bob received the *alumni UBC* Achievement Award for volunteer leadership, and in appreciation of his personal and other contributions to UBC totalling over \$15 million, members of the community came together to name the Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre in his honour. It opened in 2015.

Of Bob's many contributions to UBC, the one of which he was most proud is the creation of UBC Properties Trust, which he founded in 1988 and then served as chairman for 23 years. The trust was the first in North America of its kind, and has earned the university over \$1.7 billion dollars to date with a projected \$4 billion dollars in perpetuity. Bob's vision inspired similar projects at universities around the world, making this one of the single most influential ideas for bolstering education funding in recent history.

Bob's thoughtfulness and generosity were far-reaching, and UBC was a particularly fortunate beneficiary of his attention and presence. He will be deeply missed by our community, but his legacy remains all around us and will live on for generations.

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## RICHARD "DICK" STEWART, BSC(AGR)'49, BCOM'49

Richard "Dick" Stewart passed away on May 12, 2020, at the age of 94.



Born at Kelowna General Hospital on April 8, 1926, Dick was one of four children raised by Richard (Dick) and Mary (Whitworth) Stewart. His parents' generosity and support for others became the values that Dick upheld his entire life. He was introduced to the benefits of teamwork through adventures shared with childhood friends, and to his love of music through time spent singing in choirs and performing in musicals as a boy.

Dick was a dedicated scholar at Kelowna High School and enlisted in the Armed Forces after graduating. After the war, he headed to UBC with his brother Jim and his dear friend Dave Leckie, graduating with a double major in Agriculture and Commerce.

After graduation, Dick worked in his father's nursery and orchard business, Stewart Brothers Nursery, and met Rosemary Boswell, a pretty, auburn-haired girl who worked at the nearby trucking company. Eventually, he captured her heart and hand, and they married in 1956, raising four children.

Dick had a keen interest in grape growing and his family opened Quails' Gate Estate Winery in 1989 on a farm site he had purchased in 1956 in West Kelowna. Dick was proud of his heritage, his community, his family, and his business. He was a member of Kelowna City Council from 1968-1972 and the UBC Board of Governors from 1981-1987. He loved his hometown and felt a deep responsibility to serve the community.

He leaves behind his wife Rosemary, children Ben, Cynthia (Scott) Walker, Andrea (Dave) McFadden, Tony (Lisa), 12 grandchildren, eight

great-grandchildren, and numerous much-loved nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his parents, brothers Bill and Jim, sister Kathleen and grandson Andrew.

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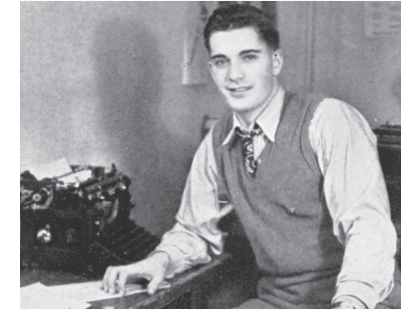
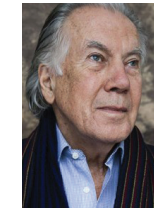
## HAROLD E. HOLLAND, BASC'50

Harold passed away on September 28, 2019. He was a War Veteran in the Engineering Class of 1950. After graduating he re-enlisted in the RCAF for a full career, retiring in Ottawa. He is survived by three daughters.

## JOHN C. WILLIAMS, BCOM'58

John will be deeply missed by his family and many friends. John loved saying,

"I've never worked a day in my life," and pursued his career with passion until his last days. He founded J.C. Williams Group, which was a second family to him, and became the go-to expert on retail for over 40 years. John was inducted into the Canadian Retail Hall of Fame in 2013. He volunteered extensively for many organizations and fundraised for UBC, his Alma Mater. He organized reunions at UBC with classmates from Magee Secondary School in Vancouver, where he grew up. John had a loving, happy marriage to Maureen, and was grateful to his first wife, Betty, for their years together raising their four children. He loved his kids and was delighted in his eight grandchildren. John grew more joyful throughout his life. At work, his voicemail message always concluded with "Make it a great one!" and his emails always ended with "Carpe Diem!" John's final days took him to Vancouver for a reunion where he joined his brothers for a road trip. John died peacefully in the car with his brothers at his side.



## Rt. Hon. John Turner, PC, CC, QC, BA'49

Former Canadian prime minister John Turner died this September at the age of 91, at his family home in Toronto. He held a place in government for nearly 30 years and was at the centre of some of the most formative political debates in modern Canadian history. As a politician, he will be remembered for being dignified, principled, and highly respected by both allies and rivals. Within the UBC community, Turner will be remembered as a distinguished student, athlete, and alumnus who made significant contributions to our university, our city, and our country.

Turner's time at UBC began in 1945, when he enrolled in the Faculty of Arts at age 16. His impact was felt almost immediately. By 1947, "Chick" Turner, as he was called by his classmates, was the fastest sprinter in Canada and a sports editor for the *Ubysses* student newspaper. He had a popular column called "Chalk Talk by Chick," which became known for its sharp wit and snappy prose. He qualified for the Canadian Olympic team in 1948 but did not participate due to a serious knee injury. Turner is remembered as one of the finest athletes to ever compete for the Thunderbirds. He was also one of UBC's most exemplary students academically, graduating with an honours degree and earning a Rhodes Scholarship at just 19 years of age. He attended Oxford University and earned a BA, Jurisprudence, Bachelor of Civil Law, and MA. He began work on a doctorate degree at the Sorbonne in Paris



but returned to Canada when he was called to the Quebec bar. He was greatly admired by his peers. In 2007, he received an *alumni UBC* Award of Distinction.

Turner's career in government began in 1962, when he was elected as a Liberal MP in Montreal. He became a rising star in the party and served as a minister in the Trudeau cabinet from 1968 to 1975. While serving as justice minister, Turner oversaw changes to the Criminal Code that led to the decriminalization of homosexuality and a number of other important social reforms. In June 1984, after Pierre Trudeau retired, Turner was sworn into office as Prime Minister and held the position for 79 days before being defeated by Brian Mulroney in the federal election. He was the first UBC graduate to serve as prime minister. For the next six years, Turner served as the leader of the Opposition, and was a notable critic of Canada's emerging free trade agreements. He also served as Vancouver Quadra's MP during that time. He was a strong presence in Canadian politics for a generation, and widely admired for his desire to make Canada a nation of, in his words, "equality and excellence."

The government held a state funeral for Turner, who was a devout Catholic, at St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica in Toronto on October 6.

**JOHN (JANOS) SZAUER, BSC'59**

John Szauer passed away peacefully on September 10, 2019, in Williams Lake, BC. Born in Hungary on January 10, 1932, John was educated in Budapest, beginning studies at the University of Sopron in 1954 (interrupted by the Hungarian Revolution of 1956), then emigrating to Canada in 1957 with fellow Sopron students and faculty to complete his education at UBC. In 1958 he married Sopron classmate Klara Szikszai, and they graduated together from UBC's Faculty of Forestry Sopron Division in 1959. John joined the BC Forest Service in Prince George, becoming a Registered Professional Forester. In 1972 he transferred to Williams Lake, worked as planning forester and forestry manager, then regional manager of the Cariboo Forest Region from 1984 to 1988. From 1989 to 1991 he served as commissioner on the BC Forest Resources Commission. John and Klara then operated Greentop Forestry Services until her sudden passing in 1999. John is remembered by daughter Katalin; sons John, Thomas (Sarah) and Augustine (Johanne); granddaughters Kalysta & Matiya; family in Belgium and Hungary; and friends and colleagues.



**JANICE L. MCCORMICK, MSC'77, PHD'97**

The School of Nursing was saddened to hear about the recent death of Janice McCormick, a member of the very first cohort of students to graduate from our PhD Program, Nursing. Janice was a pediatric nurse from Manitoba, who found her way to Vancouver after holding nursing positions in New Orleans (Tulane Medical Centre, Dialysis) and Montreal (Royal Vic). She obtained her MSN from UBC in 1977 and worked as a clinical nurse specialist at BC Children's Hospital. Returning to UBC to enter the PhD program, she was one of the first nursing program graduates to cross the stage in the spring of 1997. On completion of her PhD, Janice taught at the UVic School of Nursing, Langara Campus. She loved the engagement with students and the continuing scholarly work. In addition to critical reflections on optimizing pediatric care, Janice had a fierce commitment to equality and power imbalance issues. Her dissertation research reflected a feminist post-structural examination of power discourses within clinical nursing practice. Janice will be remembered as a wonderful friend and colleague.

**LUITJE K. TROMP, BSC'79**

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Lou Tromp. After a courageous battle with cancer, Lou passed away peacefully, with Alice, his wife of 40 years, faithfully by his side. He also leaves to mourn their two daughters: Colleen (Devon) Van Veen and



Cheryl (Dave) Tromp; three grandsons: Trayke, Tyson and Jeremiah Van Veen; two brothers: Jelmer (Wendy) Tromp and Ralph (Ginny) Tromp as well as numerous extended family members and friends.

Born and raised in Duncan, Lou had a love for the outdoors that led to a long career in the forest industry as a Registered Professional Forester. He studied at UBC, and his career took Lou, Alice and their daughters to live in Williams Lake and Smithers. During the summers Lou enjoyed camping with his family and running the Tromp U-Pick Strawberry Farm. Lou and Alice returned to Vancouver Island several years ago in preparation for his retirement. He will greatly be missed.

**RICHARD BERWICK, MED'79, DED'88**

Dr. Richard Franklin Berwick, an internationally respected UBC sociolinguist, passed away at the age of 74 on June 3, 2019, in his North Vancouver home. Rick pioneered practitioner research in the field of intercultural communication at Kobe University of Commerce and Ritsumeikan Asian Pacific University in Japan, and at UBC, his alma mater, and Capilano University. He was the original academic coordinator of the UBC Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange in 1991. For his efforts, Capilano University has created an annual student community service award in his name.

Known for his sense of humour and intellect, Rick loved to debate, and always had a sincere, open and unbiased perspective on people from all cultures and walks of life. His many students, colleagues and friends in Canada and Japan will be seeing him in all their familiar places. He is survived by his beloved wife, Taeko; daughter, Yuri; son, Benjamin; granddaughter, Maya; and extended family and friends. A celebration of life was held in North Vancouver on June 30.



**DAVID FUSHTEY, LLB'88**

On October 8, 2019, David Fushtey passed away at St. John Hospice in Vancouver at the age of 64. Dave was born on August 21, 1955, in Guelph, Ontario, to Ruth and Steve Fushtey. Beloved husband to Moura Quayle, Dave was a true Renaissance man: a landscape architect, sculptor and multi-talented lawyer. He loved music, art and beauty. Law was everything Dave believed in – discipline, justice and consideration of others without compromising his values.



Dave actively followed his dreams. He had fallen in love with the art of stone sculpture and this passion led him to start a program called "Stoneworks" for street youth. But his commitment to words and the rule of law drew him back to create The Governance Counsel in 2002 to focus on his passion for governance – the effective exercise of informed authority.

Dave was a Fellow at the Centre for Dialogue at Simon Fraser University (SFU) where he valued the staff and students of the Centre. These experiences led to the May 2019 publication of *The Director and the Manager: Law and Governance in a Digital Age: Machiavelli Had it Easy*. The 1000-page text includes direction for the emerging discipline of governance and was a celebration

of years of thinking, researching, writing, editing and compilation. At the SFU book launch, Dave was his usual humble, funny and deeply thoughtful self.

Dave was passionately involved in politics. Most recently he worked to build bridges with China and was privileged to visit Huawei in Shenzhen with students in May 2019, where he developed enduring relationships. Dave loved his work with youth, mentoring many students and young professionals. He truly wanted to help people understand how legal and regulatory systems should evolve to enable positive relationships in our complex world.

From a young age Dave showed leadership, kindness and courage, and he worked tirelessly in his pursuit of justice. He will be dearly missed.



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# THE LAST WORD



## Andrea Bang, BA'12 (Psychology)

Lifelong learner,  
tea-worshipper,  
slayer of chairs

**WHO WAS YOUR CHILDHOOD HERO?**  
Buffy! I would practice “slaying” chairs. Vampires and chairs – same-same.

**DESCRIBE THE PLACE YOU MOST LIKE TO SPEND TIME.**  
At home. Or a buffet.

**WHAT WAS THE LAST THING YOU READ?**  
Doretta Lau’s *How Does a Single Blade of Grass Thank the Sun?* It’s a bunch of short stories featuring young Asian Canadian voices. They’re funny, witty, somber and heartbreaking.

**WHAT OR WHO MAKES YOU LAUGH OUT LOUD?**  
Recently went to see Hannah Gadsby perform live and was rolling! Oh, and kids are guaranteed laughs. They’re so brutally honest and carefree.

▼  
**CLAIM TO FAME**  
Stars as Janet Kim in CBC’s *Kim’s Convenience*.

▼  
**CHILDHOOD CAREER ASPIRATIONS**  
Librarian, construction worker, fairy.

▼  
**LATEST PROJECT**  
Refreshing her high school Spanish.

**WHAT’S THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON YOU EVER LEARNED?**

It’s never too late to learn something new.

**WHAT WAS YOUR NICKNAME AT SCHOOL?**

Didn’t really have one. But an old boss used to yell “BANG!” at me.

**WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION?**

As a Vancouverite, my umbrella? But I’ve lost hundreds of them in my lifetime so...

**WHAT WOULD BE THE TITLE OF YOUR BIOGRAPHY?**

*Be Back in 5 Minutes*

**WHAT ITEM HAVE YOU OWNED FOR THE LONGEST TIME?**

I’ve kept lots of childhood mementos, but somewhere there’s an autographed photo of Seth Green that I’m pretty sure I’ve had forever.

**WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR EPITAPH TO SAY?**

She’s standing behind you.

**IN WHICH ERA WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE LIVED, AND WHY?**

1960s. Minus all the crappy parts, it’d be fashion, art and music heaven.

**WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?**

Bed bugs.

**WHAT IS YOUR LATEST PURCHASE?**

A box of donuts and mini Oreos.

**NAME THE SKILL OR TALENT YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO HAVE.**

Superhuman strength.

**WHICH FAMOUS PERSON (LIVING OR DEAD) DO YOU THINK (OR HAVE YOU BEEN TOLD) YOU MOST RESEMBLE?**

I’ve been told I resemble a bunch of different people. But my favourite was in high school when someone showed a magazine to me, pointed at a random Asian person and genuinely said “Andrea, it’s your twin!” We looked nothing alike.

**WHAT IS YOUR PET PEEVE?**

When people try to enter a full train before letting anyone out.

**DO YOU HAVE A PERSONAL MOTTO?**

Tea is delicious.

**WHAT ARE YOUR UBC HIGHLIGHTS?**

Sleeping in the Aquatic Centre.

Photo: Crystal Marie Sing Photography

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