IT'S OFFICIAL!

Tuition fee proposal passed. See page 12.

When home doesn't feel like home

Home is where the heart is. Usually this old cliché is met with cynicism. Many people would mock it for being too sentimental, too trite. But for many Canadians, it's simply not true.

When is a house not a home? After September 11, many Canadians were forced to re-evaluate their concept of 'home.' All of a sudden, mosques and temples were being vandalised, children were afraid to go to school, all because ignorance associated the colour of their skin with terrorism. Feelings of displacement and fear replaced a feeling of being 'at home.' All of a sudden, the house was no longer a home.

Here in BC, tensions are increasing between the Campbell government and First Nations people over a proposed referendum on treaty rights. Just when land claims were beginning to be settled, the provincial government wants to go back to the drawing board and dispute whether Aboriginal communities have a right to their home. It seems the BC government cannot accept that First Nations' idea of home is different than that of society-at-large. Furthermore, the treaty referendum, by definition, ignores the fact that many Aboriginal people in Canada have been denied a place where they can feel at home for years.

This alienation is felt not just by First Nations, but also by other Canadians of colour. As a country, we have learned to pride ourselves on our multiculturalism and pat ourselves on the back for being a 'mosaic' compared to the 'melting pot' of our neighbours to the south. But is this really the case?

After September 11, how many men with beards and turbans have been the victims of cold stares and ignorant associations? How many have been arrested or interrogated by the police, and asked if they are members of terrorist organisations? Are we really a 'mosaic' when so many Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and other minorities have been victims of hate simply because they have the same skin colour as a terrorist?

Are we really a 'mosaic' when the statistics on First Nations peoples in Canada are so dire when it comes to poverty, substance abuse and suicide? Or when racist stereotypes of Native people are so prevalent, whether it be in the media or in the federal justice system?

Are we really a 'mosaic' when there are still federal MPs who make racist remarks to the media? Or when there are still Canadian citizens who are asked 'Where do you come from?' or 'What are you?' because their skin is not white, as if it means they could not have been born on Canadian soil.

How can home be where the heart is in a country like Canada, when so many Canadians are not completely accepted as *Canadian*? Or when immigrants come to Canada to meet up with family members, or make a new life, or flee from a troubled area, but are constantly marginalised, ostracised and made to feel like outsiders.

The articles in this issue cannot touch on all of these problems and they certainly do not claim to hold all the answers. What we hope the issue will do is make you question and look critically at the subject of 'home.' It is our hope that this issue will allow you to sift through all the rhetoric, look beyond the myths and see some of the truth. ●

—Ubyssey Colours Issue coordinators

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Announcement

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The *Ubyssey* Colours Index

Some numbers to think about:

Today, more than 3.6 million Afghans remain outside their country. One million Afghans are internally displaced.

Sub-Saharan Africa is home to ten per cent of the global population but nearly 70 per cent of all cases of HIV.

In Canada, 61 per cent of all hate crimes are directed towards racial minorities.

In the United States, 63 per cent of all hate crime incidents are directed towards racial minorities.

The suicide rate in Canada among First Nations males aged 15 to 24 is five times the national rate. The suicide rate among similarly aged First Nations females is eight times the national rate.

The $500,000 increase in government spending for First Nations, announced in the the late 1990s, does not affect the 800,000 First Nations people living off reserve—roughly 79 per cent of the total Native population.

52.1 per cent of all Aboriginal children live below the poverty line.

The Aboriginal disability rate is more than twice the national average.

Life expectancy for First Nations men is 62 years and 69.6 years for First Nations women. The average life expectancy nationally is 74.6 years for men and 80.9 years for women.

Twenty-two per cent of First Nations youth admit to solvent-abuse.

The incarceration rate of Native people is five to six times the national average.

The total revenues from the Head Tax which Canada imposed on Asian immigrants in the early half of the 20th century would be worth approximately $1.2 billion today.

African-Americans make up just over 12 per cent of the American population.

Forty-seven per cent of the American penal population is African-American.

The unemployment rate for African-Americans is 9.8 per cent. The overall US unemployment rate is 5.6 per cent.

40.6 per cent of African-Americans aged 18 to 24 are enrolled in college, compared to 45.6 per cent of similarly aged white Americans.

In 1998, 73 per cent of African-Americans had graduated from high school, compared to 81 per cent of white Americans.

In the United States from 1973-2000, 35 of every 1000 blacks, 27 of every 1000 whites and 21 of every 1000 people of other racial backgrounds were victims of violent crime. ●

—Statistics are from the Canadian Department for Indian and Northern Affairs, the Canadian Department of Justice, the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, Asian Canadian Multimedia Inc, American Council of Education Office of Minorities in Higher Education, UNAIDS, US Department of Justice: Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Bureau of Labour Statistics.

Well, there are four issues of *the Ubyssey* left before the end of the term. Love us, or hate us, there are only four issues left to let us know.

feedback@ubyssey.bc.ca

IMPORTANT REGISTRATION INFORMATION
SUMMER SESSION 2002

UBC Enrolment Services Registration Services

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Registration For Summer 2002 Will Begin On 14 March 2002.
Individual student registration start dates are determined by year standing and program of study. To find out your personal summer registration date, go to **students.ubc.ca** and click on Registration. When you login to the Student Service Centre, you will see your registration start date listed with your summer registration eligibility. **You may begin registering at 7:00 am on your registration start date.** Other services on the Student Service Centre are available almost 24 hours per day. For exact hours, please check **https://ssc.adm.ubc.ca/main.html**

A Couple Of Extra Reminders For A Hassle-free Registration:
Don't forget that undergraduate students must pay a deposit before registering for Summer Session. Check out the ways to pay this deposit by going to **students.ubc.ca** and clicking on "Deposits and Fees".

If you have any questions about your registration, you can email them to records.inquiry@ubc.ca. You can also phone our Registration Support line at 604.822.2844 during weekday office hours if you would like to speak with someone directly.

Upcoming events

A number of events are coming up that may be interesting to people concerned with issues of race and colour.

Festival is a celebration of the multicultural diversity of BC. There will be a variety of food, speakers and performances. The event will be held today from 5-11pm at the International House, located at 1783 West Mall. For tickets and information, call 604-822-5021.

Sponsored by the organisation Open the Borders, **the Displacement Conference** will discuss issues of refugees and borders. The conference will be a set of talks on reconfiguring borders for the global population. It will be held March 22 to 24 (starting Friday at 6pm) at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre at 1607 East Hastings Street. There will be a sliding fee scale ($0-$250). For more information, call 604-255-4910 or visit www.openthebORDERS.org.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Student Organisation of UBC is presenting a lecture entitled **'Holy Wars and Terrorism'** on March 20 from 7-9pm in the Hebb Theatre at 2045 East Mall. The lecture will centre around discussions of Islamic views on 'Jihad' and popular myths about Islam. It is sponsored by the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, a group devoted to teaching and clarifying Muslim philosophy around the world.

The HR MacMillan Space Centre Auditorium (The Planetarium) at 1100 Chestnut Street is featuring a film entitled ***Today is a Good Day: Remembering Chief Dan George.*** The film is a part of a larger exibition, the Cineworks Special Exhibition's First Nations Celebration. The exhibit will be held on Saturday, March 16, from 1-5pm. It combines both drama and documentary to look at Native issues brought by the entertainer Chief Dan George. For more information, contact Judy Robertson, exhibitions coordinator Cineworks, at 604-685-3841. ●

THE UBYSSEY

FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2002
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The leafy green Julia Christensen floats out of the dark blue Sarah Conchie ocean. She encounters purple child Justin Cheng, held by the raging red beauty Parminder Nizher. The yellow banana Ron Nurwisah grabs the baby and runs into the black Donovan Keuhn getaway car. The tourquise Alicia J. Miller sees the bright orange alarm Nic Fensom, held up by beige Laura Blue. Her partner in crime the pink Sarah MacNeil Morrison flys to her side. Together they cease the car at the indigo blue Ai Lin Choo stop sign. The baby flew out of the window and the maroonie bystander Scott Bardsley caught the baby. But his foot slipped on the vermillion Riaz Behra. Justin landed into the strawberry blonde pond Hywel Tuscano. The burgundy Graeme Worthy screams out "He's drowning!" The tangerine Michael Schwandt pulls off his waterproof coat and gently lifts Justin out. The flowery magnenta Serena Jade Harflette takes him away and returns him to his glowing green melon Sarah Tsang. He was safe.

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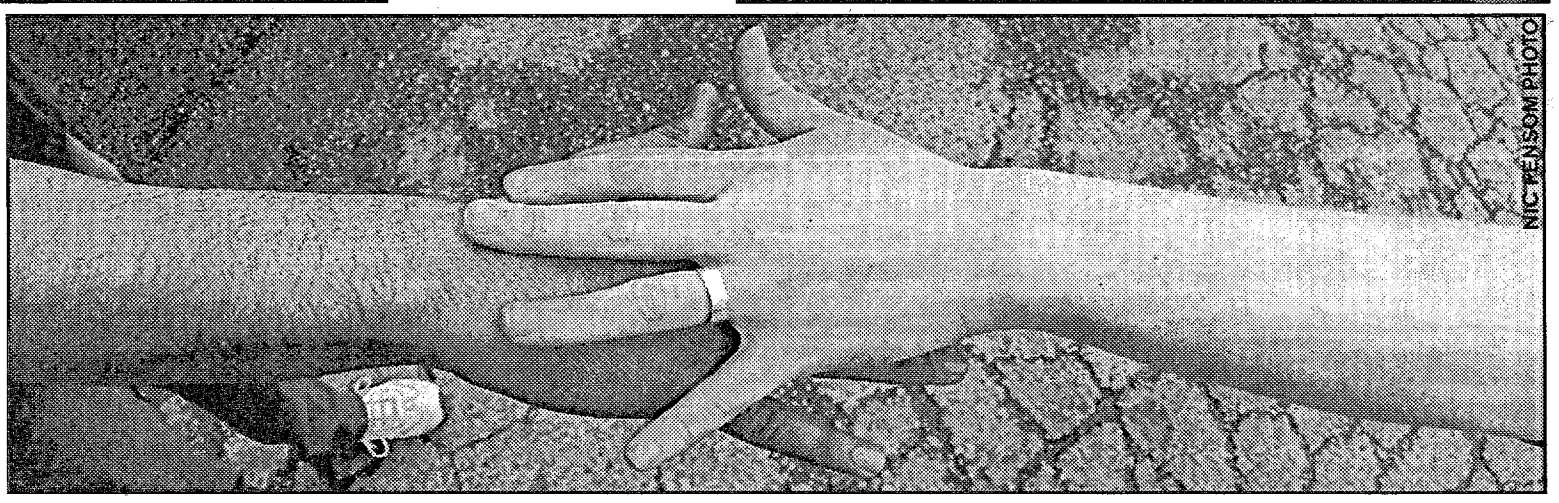


NIC FENSOM PHOTO

The prairie mulatto

PERSPECTIVE

by Michael Schwandt

The word mulatto originated from the Spanish word for mule, the sterile offspring of a horse and a donkey, and it is generally applied to people of visibly mixed ancestry. I am a mulatto; to put things simply, one of my parents is black, and the other is white. Increasingly, this is a common occurrence, outside of (North) American advertising and television.

In the Canadian prairie provinces where I was born and raised, it often seemed that anyone of colour was mildly remarkable. It's reasonable for people to be curious about the unusual, but a barrage of "What's your background?" questions can be confusing to a child who has never even defined the word 'background' in such a way. Although I am sometimes annoyed by this inquiry (for example, when the 'background' question precedes the "What's your name?" question), I am not shy about answering questions about my ancestry. I'm only ever hesitant to disclose my parents' parents' birthplace because I'm wary of the immense set of assumptions that may then be applied to me. ("Jungle fever, eh?"..."Um.")

To some extent, people of mixed descent can avoid many of the prejudices that other minorities encounter, if only by virtue of people's ignorance. It's difficult to form and act upon stereotypes where the type in question cannot be named. Unfortunately, as if to simplify the process of categorisation, a sizable number of people insist on attempting distillation: "Do you consider yourself to be more black or white?"

To answer in terms of stereotypes, I listen to hip-hop, but not the 'gangster-rap' minstrel shows that corporate media presents to the world. I also enjoy playing rock music. I love watermelon, but I don't eat fried chicken: I am a vegetarian, although I have no taste for collard greens. I do enjoy dancing and running, while I despise suggestions from ignorant individuals (white, black, or otherwise), that I am 'black from the waist down.' Such an idea is blatantly insulting to my (black) mother's intelligence (to say nothing of my white father's formidable ballroom abilities). Yes, I can jump, but basketball skill has eluded me since I warmed the bench for my junior-high team. To this day, I sometimes imagine that my only function on that team was making opposing coaches nervous. "We're winning, but I think they're gonna put in that lanky brown kid with the big lips. I bet he has fast cuts."

Although it's easy to find humour in these relatively harmless assumptions, people of mixed ancestry are given unique perspectives on racial prejudices and discrimination. The different treatment that my mother and father received at some parent-teacher meetings when I was a young adolescent led me to form a number of early conclusions about the polite racism that persists in our country. My father was never subjected to the interrogations about my home life that my mother endured, and he was praised where she was criticised for letting me miss school for travel or sports. My mother eventually let him take over this task completely. The two of them used to joke that it was as if teachers were describing two different children at these meetings. Indeed, the meetings reflected two different stereotypes, one black and one white. Feeling defensive of a race with which I had never explicitly identified, I soon felt sorrow for my mother, and for other non-white children. Children without at least one parent whose appearance was reassuring (read: familiar) to insular instructors surely endured the most prejudiced approaches of all.

To conduct an experiment in institutional racism, all I have ever had to do is cross a border with my parents. Attempting to drive into the United States with my family several years ago, I watched, naïve and confused, as my mother was forced to give details of her life (place of birth, occupation and place of work, just to warm up). My perpetually cynical father, more than aware of what was happening, insisted on supplying the American officials with his corresponding biography. This bit of jest was clearly lost on the border guards, who proceeded to demand every imaginable piece of documentation from my mother. Through all of this, my father had to show no more than his driver's license, and his face.

These two people, who have lived together for nearly 30 years, regularly receive grotesquely skewed treatment from institutions purporting to be protectors of equality. Most people likely see such discrimination as appalling, and people who are accustomed to 'background' differences within their own families are very much cognisant of sometimes subtle discriminatory routines. Without the ability to make a comparison, perhaps I could write off perceived slights against my mother as paranoia on my part or hers. Perhaps it is not unusual for a 50-year-old woman to have her purse emptied at an undefended border when she fails to produce an original birth certificate. And so on. Those who are involved in, or close to, visibly mixed relationships know better. ●

An Englishwoman speaks on race

OPINION

by Serena Jade Harflette

Tiny squeals of merriment and snatching grubby hands swathed in overlong sleeves. The little mob swarms and swipes at the centre the crowd. Flashes of a wrapped dark head, desperately dodging the anticipated rip of mother's careful arrangement, son's pride. A sudden shriek of triumph and one breaks away to perform a taunting victory lap around the playground, wielding his prize in the air. A pristine white handkerchief (ramaal), tossed jubulantly to and fro, falling carelessly to the muddied ground. Trampled. Tossed and trodden. Round and round. Followed helplessly by darting eyes that dread the impending time to beg.

Thus my first experience of race. The sense of humiliation has stayed with me as powerful moral images tend to do, even before we fully are able to understand them. My first school, some 20 miles outside of London, England, was the site of this attack towards one of the few ethnic-minority students in a system which is segregated to the extent that cultures are ignorant of each other in some areas. The distant land across the sea, a land of immigrants, Canada presented me with the picture of an ideal society where racial and ethnic identities co-exist, without the aggravating factors of British 'yob' culture and racial segregation.

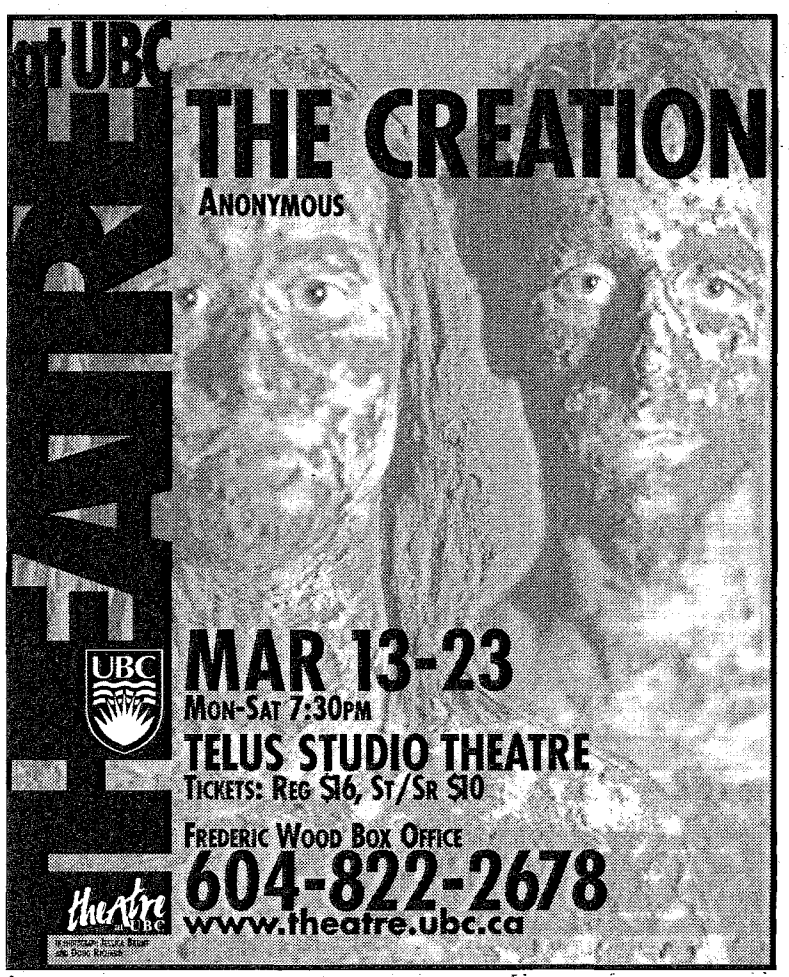
'Yob' is British slang for punk or hooligan, a primitive creature who can be found in Slough high street every Saturday night when the pubs are turned out and hordes of drunken young people stumble out into the waiting arms of the army of police needed to pacify their loutish behavour. Britain is the only country in the world where getting drunk is not the consequence but the aim of going out.

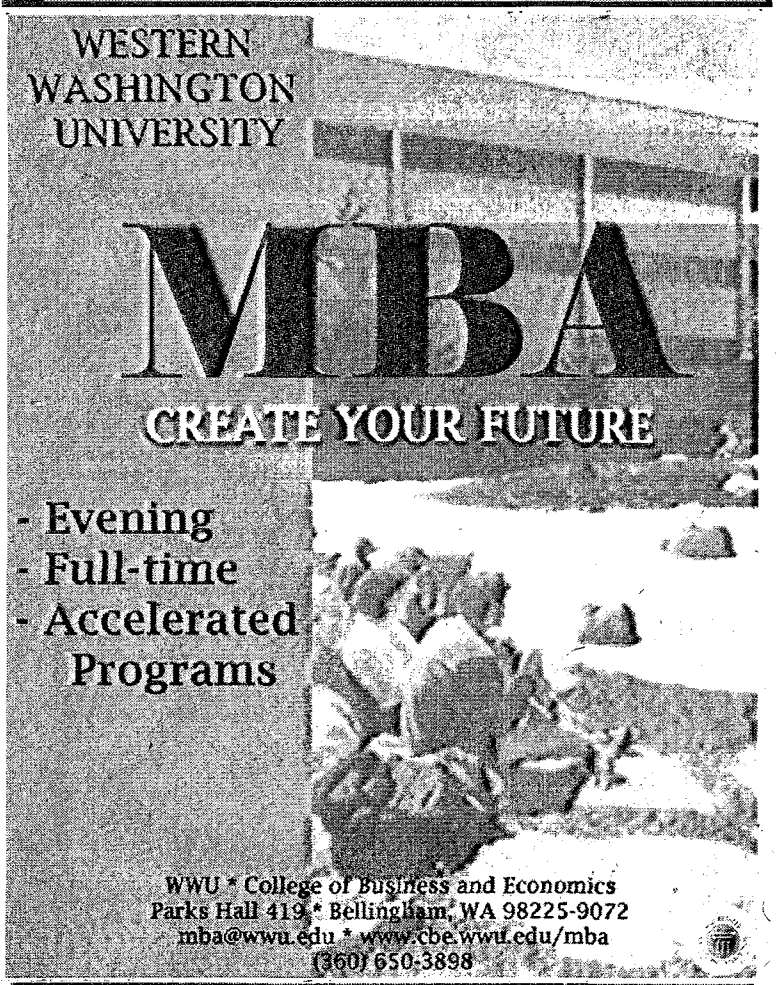
The number of times I have heard the resentful whine that minorities are taking British People's' welfare money from the government, or if they happen to be middle class, 'British People's' jobs, is immeasurable. Racial minorities are treated as if they are alien, with no equal claim to the country's resources, just parasites feeding off the wealth of the country, even though most were born to the country and are rightfully citizens. As one friend put it, "You feel like you are constantly being told you have no right to be here." This is made worse by the high ethnic mix of poor areas. At the same time, wealthier areas tend to be predominantly white, and in some towns this has led to bigotry and a complete ignorance of other cultures which translates into prejudice against poorer areas. An Asian friend who lived in such an area said, "I was walking home from school and this woman just stared at me and started to clutch at her kids keeping them as far from me as possible as if I was going to eat them, heathen that I am."

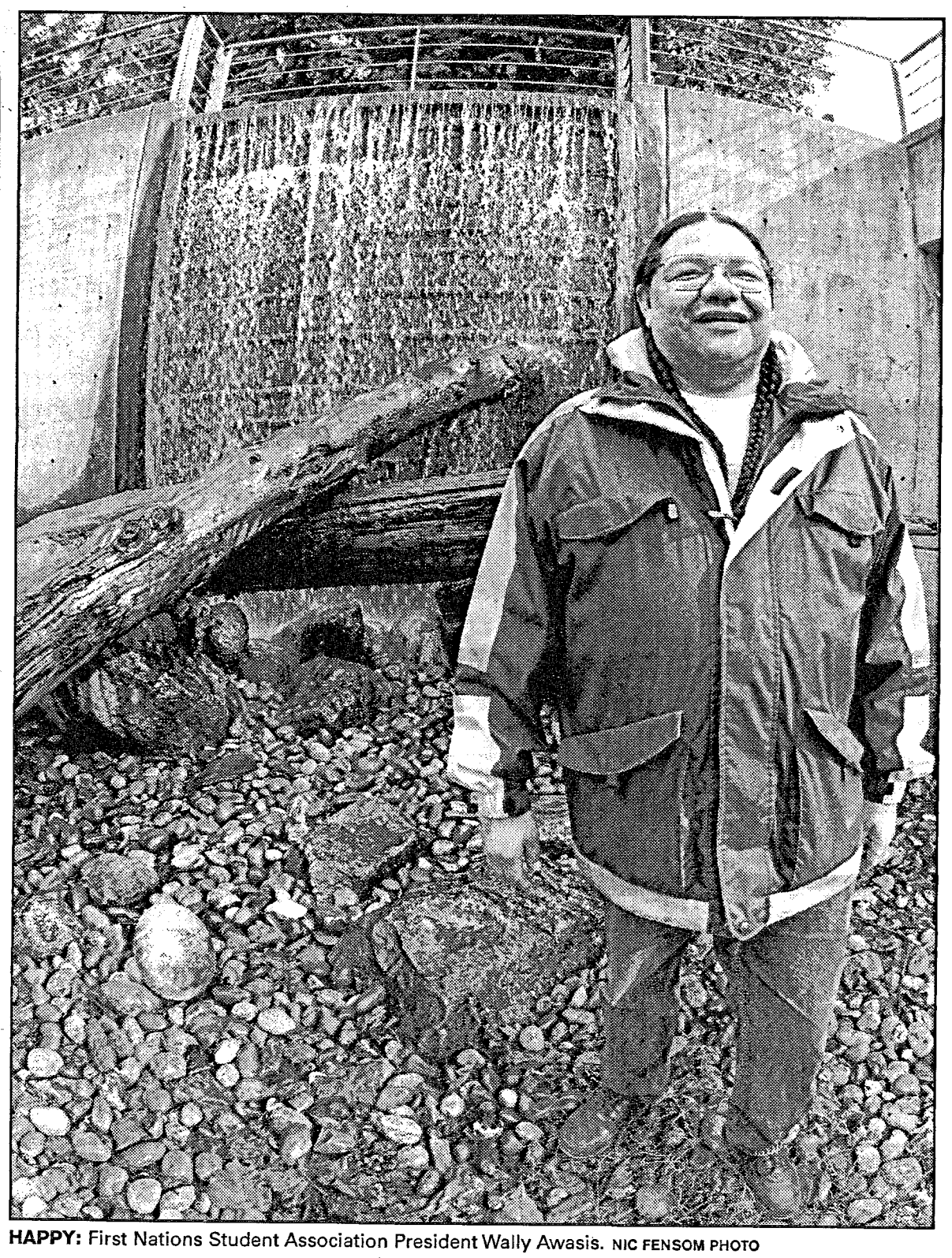
This segregation of British society is currently a major political concern. It is made worse by the virtual apartheid in schools. There has been a growth in religious schools which serve ethnic communities; this is partly a response to Christian schools like the convent which refused me entry since I had not been baptised. Asian communities claim separate schools to maintain their religious and cultural practices. Religion is perhaps more of a point of conflict than race, certainly inciting more hostility in my own town with clashes between the Sikh and Muslim communities. I think it is difficult for youths to reconcile their culture and religious practices with the yob culture they see all around them. They seem to search for an identity to protect them from this, and a reason not to join it, and find it in radical religious beliefs which become aggressive and hostile as they let it define them. It is frightening and saddening to come to school and be greeted by new graffiti promising death to all non-practitioners written on the wall of the Business Block. Some youths wield religious emblems on their bags like exclusive designer names and set up camp in the middle of the football area at lunch to give praise to Allah.

But, in the name of political correctness, nothing is done about this increasing tension. Diversity is valuable because we contrast different lifestyles and beliefs, and make judgments on them to become a better society with more universal values. Multiculturalism prevents this dialogue and the making of judgments in the name of 'tolerance' and 'respect,' which does not result in anything but an indifference and segregation as in the British model.

A call for strength is needed, a call for understanding and value of others as human beings, as well as a strong enough self-awareness to take responsibility for the state of our own lives. We need to stop channelling our anger and lack of control into scapegoats such as racism, which is just an outlet for the psychological problems and unhappiness of the individual. ●







HAPPY: First Nations Student Association President Wally Awasis. NIC FENSOM PHOTO

FNSA Powwow a first at UBC campus

by Parminder Nizher

For the first time in UBC history, on April 5 and 6, the First Nations Student Association (FNSA) will be hosting a Powwow.

"People come from all across Canada and the US to come to school here. They are moving away from their reservations, and from their culture, their songs and dances. A Powwow would help them reconnect because a lot of them are feeling lonely," says Wally Awasis, a third-year student in the Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP) and president of FNSA.

Awasis also feels the First Nations cultural celebration, which will be drug and alcohol free, will help people to dismiss stereotypes about Natives.

"People can see how First Nations have a good time without alcohol and drugs. A lot of people have a stereotype of Natives as drunks, bums, etc. and this will give an opportunity for people to see not all Natives do drugs or are on welfare."

Unlike at many other Canadian universities, where Powwows are held regularly, the event at UBC will be a campus first. Chris Treloar, FNSA communications officer and a fifth-year student in the NITEP Program, explains why.

"Powwows are traditionally prairie nation activities, and they can be very demanding on people," he says, "and this is a very conservative institution."

Awasis also believes that no one has held a Powwow here because, in the past, no one has ever asked the people of the Pacific west coast if they would allow it. "Nobody has asked the traditional people of the lands, such as the Musqueam, Squamish, or Burrard peoples, for permission. Even though this is UBC, we respect the traditional land as their territory, and we honour that. We are very grateful they are allowing us to bring our traditions to their lands," he says.

Celebrating Powwows is a tradition of prairie peoples, such as the Cree of Saskatchewan. A traditional Powwow consists of dances and songs such as the Fancy Shawl and Jingle Dress dance, although these often vary from tribe to tribe.

One thing that all Powwows have in common is the drum. The drum is the soul of a Powwow. It is reminiscent of the heartbeat you might hear in the womb. It is also representative of the heartbeat of Mother Earth.

Treloar points out that many academics and students don't often integrate culture into their work. "[The First Nations Longhouse] is probably the only place on the university campus where such a moulding is only beginning to be attempted. [We do this] with certain types of ceremonies, prayers, and feasts and that is something I don't see in other places on campus," he says.

Leah Ballantyne, a third-year sociology student and the treasurer of FNSA, feels a Powwow will help foster creative thought.

"Some of the policies at this university were incorporated when people thought within a certain box," she says. "Now there are a lot of people trying to think outside of that box and bring new and innovative ways [of thinking and acting] into the university to bring a more diverse community as a whole."

Awasis describes the goal of the event best. "We believe you don't need to get high by using chemicals. You can actually get high off of your culture and have the same feelings of confidence and feeling good."

The First Nations Powwow on April 5 and 6 will be held at the First Nations Longhouse. For more information contact FNSA at 604-822-8734. ●

Elections BC cuts before treaty referendum

by Kevin Groves
BC Bureau Chief

VICTORIA (CUP)—The body that governs elections in British Columbia has been forced to downsize to the point that some have questioned its ability to properly administer the imminent Native treaty referendum in the province.

"Clearly this referendum has been designed to extinguish Aboriginal land claims," said Troy Sebastian, a member of the University of Victoria's Native student union.

"If these cuts are part of the government's solution, BC's First Nations will use other means to make their voices heard."

Elections BC has been instructed to cut 45 per cent from its budget by 2005, when the provincial government plans to have balanced its books, said spokesperson Jennifer Miller.

But at the same time, Elections BC must administer the referendum, which Miller said will begin some time this month.

The $9 million effort will take eight weeks and require 150 staff, said Miller.

"We are being funded for this referendum, but it doesn't mean we can keep the entire $9 million if we don't spend it all," she said.

Miller added that Elections BC has never conducted a province wide mail-out referendum before. About 2.5 million registered voters will have to be reached by mail.

Only 100,000 mail-out ballots have ever been sent out by Elections BC at one time. When they are returned, the questions and the voter identities will have to be verified.

Norman Ruff, a University of Victoria political scientist, said that although making cuts to Elections BC just before holding a referendum the government obviously supports may look like preferential treatment, he expects the interpretation of the referendum results to be the real problem.

> ***"I should hope that the results of this referendum will help Natives open their eyes to the reality of how flawed the treaty process is."***
>
> ***—Christopher Collison***
> ***Member of the Haida nation***

Sebastian agrees. He said the referendum results could be used in a way that would give the BC government better leverage at the treaty negotiation table.

"Right now, the more things get stalled in the treaty negotiation process, the more likely the province's courts will rule in favour of First Nations when they use methods like litigation," Sebastian said. "So the referendum is really about giving the government the tools it needs to prevent these kinds of victories from happening again."

Recently, members of the Haida nation went to BC's law courts to secure their ownership of the Queen Charlotte Islands, an area where the province would like to begin offshore oil development.

The court ruled that the BC government had to come to a satisfactory agreement with the Haida nation before any drill bits could strike the ocean floor.

Christopher Collison, a member of the Haida Nation, said the referendum would likely encourage BC's First Nations to take direct action in the future.

"I should hope that the results of this referendum will help Natives open their eyes to the reality of how flawed the treaty process is," he said.

Already BC's First Nations have threatened civil disobedience should the government use the referendum results to affect treaty negotiations.

The Assembly of First Nations recently wrote a ten-page confidential document to discuss actions they will likely take for the remainder of 2002.

If the document's proposals were to be adopted, Native protest would begin the day BC Premier Gordon Campbell announced the start-date of the referendum.

One-day boat blockades at entrances to Vancouver, Victoria and Prince Rupert harbours have been considered.

Collison could not say what the likely outcome of the treaty referendum will be, both in the ballot box and on the street.

"You can't gauge what's going to happen because we still don't even know what the exact questions are going to be," he said. ●

First Nations claims commission to be replaced

by Mohamad El Masri
the SFU Peak

BURNABY, BC (CUP)—Canada's department of Indian and Northern Affairs expects to table legislation later this year that would replace the Indian Claims Commission with a new Independent Claims Body. But the outcry from the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs and the Assembly of First Nations has been vocal.

The new body, part of a promise to Aboriginal peoples made by the Liberal party during the 1993 election campaign, will be more powerful than the current commission—an interim body created by Cabinet in 1991 following the Oka crisis of 1990 to oversee Native land claims against the Canadian government.

The interim commission was created because the federal government and the Joint First Nations-Canada Task Force on Specific Claims Policy Reform failed to agree on a final body to rule on Native claims. The role of the task force was to ensure fairness regarding the appointment of claims body members and mandate.

Chiefs from across the country met in Vancouver on February 13 and 14 to express their "overwhelming disappointment and deepening concern" that the government is stepping away from its negotiations with the task force, according to a press release by the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs.

The union has claimed publicly, and in letters to Secretary of State for Indian and Northern Affairs Stephen Owen, that Canada's approach to First Nations land claims is "based on an illegal policy, which continues to contribute to the further degradation of First Nation communities."

Stewart Phillip, president of the union and chief of the Penticton Indian Band, believes that abandoning task force recommendations for a new claims body signals a reversal by the federal government.

"Oka, Ipperwash and now Sun Peaks are instances where the specific claims process totally failed to address the specific claims and Aboriginal title interest," said Phillip in a press release.

"The draconian approach of government is unacceptable and represents a step backwards in finding a just solution to the problems inherent in the current claims process.

"This is yet another refusal on the part of the government to take responsibility for their outstanding legal obligations to First Nations," he said.

The most contentious plans for the proposed claims body are that the body would be able to grant no more than $5 million in cases that it hears and that the federal government would appoint all members of the claims body. First Nations groups are concerned that the federal appointment process is susceptible to conflicts of interest and calls into question the true independence of the claims body.

The ministry proposal would also require Native communities to ratify all claims before bringing them before the Independent Claims Body. This would make the claims process more cumbersome and bureaucratic, charges the Chiefs' Committee on Claims.

Assembly National Chief Matthew Coon Come has written a letter to Indian Affairs Minister Nault outlining First Nations' concerns about the proposal. The proposal, if legislated, could cause a considerable rift between the government and First Nations peoples in future negotiations, according to Coon Come.

"We are developing proposals to promote coordinated action on resolving these matters and moving forward cooperatively into the legislative process," said Come in his letter to the minister.

Stewart Phillip remains sceptical.

"No reasonable person or community would accept waiting more than a decade to have their legitimate grievances heard," he said. "Our people are tired of waiting for justice to be served. In choosing to ignore key components of the task force recommendations the government is electing to further fan the flames of resentment and frustration without our communities." ●

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Retracing our roots

The Chung Collection doesn't just shed light on Chinese history; it sheds light on all of our pasts

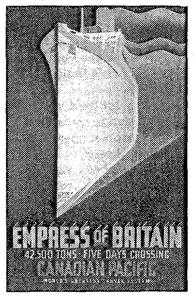
by Sarah Tsang

Dr Wallace Chung enters the Chung Collection Room in the Main Library beaming. His eyes animated, he talks excitedly about a recent call he received from a museum curator about possibly contributing to an exhibit on opium. "Did you know that the Chinese weren't the only ones who smoked opium?" he asks rhetorically, and goes on to say that apparently even German Chancellor Bismarck, "smoked up," in our terms, before public appearances.

Dr Chung's enthusiasm is contagious. His eyes light up as he begins to speak, this time, of the fruits of over 50 years of labour. Inspired by a picture of a majestic sea-liner in his father's tailor shop in Victoria, Dr Chung began collecting materials at the age of six. He started with clippings from magazines and newspapers before moving on to the larger documents, posters, and artifacts that now comprise his 25,000-item collection. Only 1000 items are currently on display in the showroom; the rest is stored in UBC Special Collections.

Both physicians in Vancouver, Dr Chung and his wife, Dr Madeline Chung, have been longtime supporters of UBC. Dr Chung himself taught in the UBC Faculty of Medicine for over 30 years before his retirement. His affiliation with UBC Library has also been longstanding. Since the 1980s, Dr Chung has served on the President's Advisory Council of the Library (PACOL). Yet his greatest contribution by far is the donation of the Wallace B. Chung and Madeline H. Chung Collection and Reading Room, which officially opened in May 2000.

"When I first started collecting, I had no idea that it would become such an important gathering of historical artifacts. It's like a jigsaw puzzle. When you have one or two pieces, it doesn't mean a thing, but when you have a thousand pieces, it begins to take on meaning. It wasn't until the mid-1980s that I began to think, 'Hey, this might be of historical significance.'"

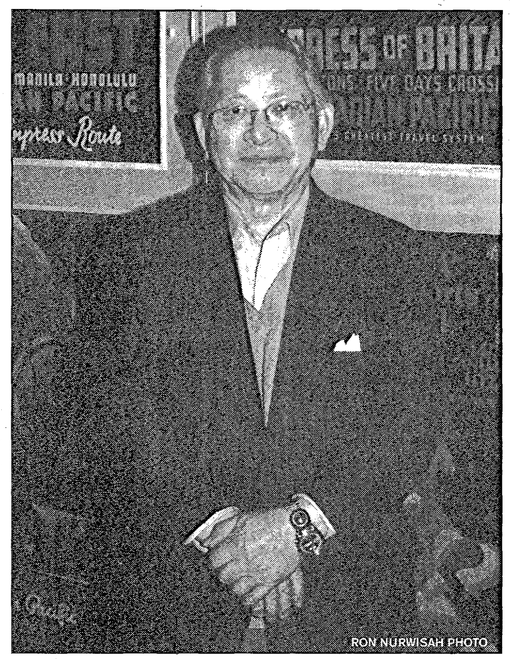


Indeed, the Chung Collection offers valuable insight into the understanding of early Canadian life. There are three main themes within the Collectio, under which materials are organised: "Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR)," "Immigration and Settlement," as well as "Voyages of Discovery."

The CPR section includes old maps and documents of train routes, as well as the original diary of Hector Langevin—Minister of Public Works under the first Macdonald government—who documented, in detail, the benefits of ending the western railway at Burrard Inlet, from which Vancouver has since emerged. The Collection also contains 15 rare and colourful promotional posters of the CPR, one of which Dr Chung refused to sell. The interested buyer was Gordon Campbell.

Dr Chung's favourite piece in the Collection is an impressive model of the Empress of Asia—a CPR cruise ship that travelled across the Pacific—which now stands in the centre of the exhibit room. Discovered in Toronto in an utter state of disrepair, the ship was lovingly and meticulously restored. The process that took about 4000 hours over six years. "Two years more than medical school," he adds jokingly.

The model also holds personal significance to Dr Chung, as his mother travelled from China to Canada on the Empress of Asia. Indeed, after 50 years of personal investment it is evident that the collection, especially the section on Immigration and Settlement, offers glimpses into Dr Chung's own life experiences.



RON NURWISAH PHOTO

Born and raised in Victoria's Chinatown, Dr Chung remembers the rampant racism that existed before the Second World War. "When we were kids, you know, we were told not to go out onto the streets or we'd be beaten up in the ghettoes of Chinatown," he says. "I finished high school in '45. Most people nowadays see that time as the 'golden era' where you have so many opportunities ahead of you, but we [Chinese] were very depressed We had nowhere to go...There was a road block every way.

"So many of my friends before me had to leave the country in order to practise [medicine]," he says. "[I] went to medical school two years after we were granted the franchise in 1947. In those days, you weren't a Canadian citizen if you couldn't vote."

And yet, Dr Chung shows no sign of bitterness. He states matter-of-factly, "I have experienced Canada from its worst to its best. [This exhibit] shows how, within 50years, which is really just a blink of an eye, Canada has changed during my lifetime, from a racist and bigoted society to the present day, with the passing of the Multiculturalism Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which guaranteed equality for everybody regardless of race, colour, religion, or creed." He adds, sadly, "But a lot of people don't know that."

From an academic perspective, the research potential of the Chung Collection is plentiful. Dr Chung explains how many a thesis could be written on the evolution of the Chinese-Canadian, based on "one man's treasures, of how he came to Canada, paid the head tax, worked as a waiter, earned enough money to start business in the prairies after the war, applied for his family in China to join him, got his wife and younger son but not the elder son (who was older than 18), received his pension, applied for Canadian citizenship, and then returned to Vancouver to retire, where he died."

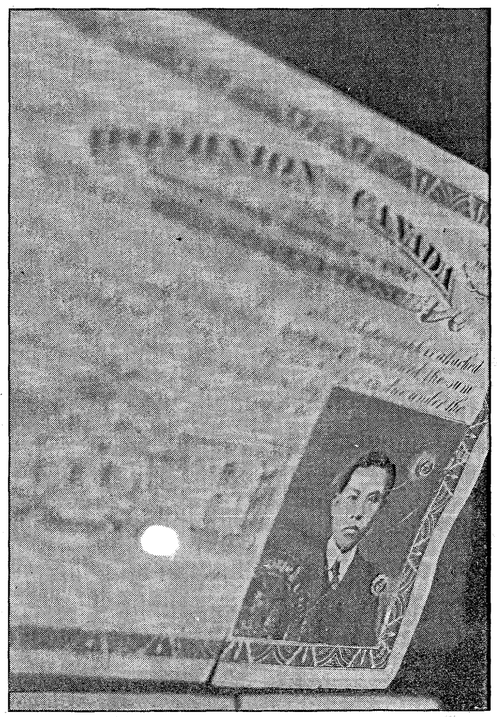
Another possible topic for a doctorate degree is the history of Scottish migration to Canada. In Chung's collection there are pictures of families and detailed lists of names that show the development of a colony known as Clan-Donald, in modern-day Alberta. Unlike Chinese immigrants who were reluctantly imported as cheap labour, European immigrants were actively encouraged to settle the prairies.

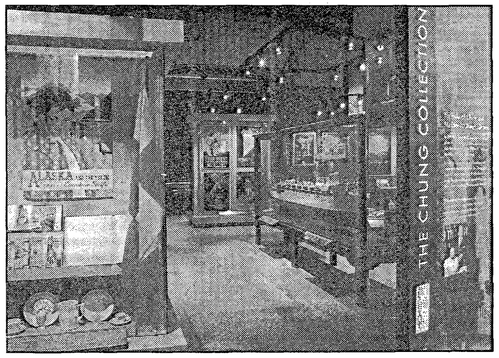
Dr Chung also sees the extensive materials on the Yip Sang family as a goldmine. Yip Sang was the patriarch of one of the founding families in Vancouver's Chinatown. Yip worked as an accountant for a firm that brought in Chinese workers for the CPR. He eventually set out on his own and became extremely successful. In 1898 he built the Wing Sang building in Vancouver's Chinatown, which still stands today. Dr Chung explains just how influential Yip Sang became. At the height of his power, Yip Sang "practically owned half of Chinatown," with his four wives, 19 sons, and four daughters.

Dr Chung tells of how Yip Sang wrote a letter to his sons, warning them "never to divide the property and sell it piecemeal; otherwise the family fortune would disappear." Unfortunately, the sons did not heed the advice; Dr Chung was invited by one of Yip Sang's descendants to "pick out whatever [documents] he wanted" when the family building was being renovated. Dr Chung managed to find many valuable documents that attest to the power of Yip Sang, including letters of correspondence, lists of his 80th birthday gifts, invitations to his sons' weddings, as well as petitions to the Canadian government on behalf of the Chinese community in Vancouver.

So how does this all relate to Chinese-Canadians today, or to Canadians in general? Dr Chung quotes a Chinese saying, "If you don't know where you come from, you don't know where you are going to." He feels that the collection serves as an important reminder to the general public. "Rights are a privilege and no one is obligated to give them to you. Who knows, things may change. Nothing is permanent; we need to be alert and watchful [to guard our rights]."

The Chung Collection is open Tuesday to Saturday from 11:00am to 4:00pm, free of charge. ●





Here's to you Ms Robinson

Eden Robinson's writing has a dark side... that's what makes it so good

by Ron Nurwisah

I didn't think Eden Robinson would be so funny. Her works certainly don't point to an author who cracks jokes all the way through the interview and often caps off her sentences with a warm, rich laugh.

Traplines, her first published work, was a collection of short stories that dealt with such light-hearted topics as drugs, violence and the struggles of teenagers growing up in a hostile environment.

Monkey Beach, her first novel, tells the story of a Haisla family, the Hills. Jimmy, the Hills' son, has gone missing at sea. The story revolves around Lisa, his sister, and her attempts to cope with his disappearance. The book has dark undercurrents that are never far from the surface.

Both works have catapulted Robinson to literary success. *Traplines* garnered the UBC Creative Writing grad. the 1998 Winifred Holtby Prize for best first work of fiction in the Commonwealth. *Monkey Beach* cemented her reputation, when it received both Giller and Governor General nominations. The book also gained significant attention in the United States and in Europe, not just in Canada.

Robinson also has the distinction of being one of the first Haisla writers to be published and the success of her work has made her a part of the welcome boom in First Nations writing. The mainstream success and acceptance of writers like Thomas King, Tomson Highway and Sherman Alexie, to name just a few, is heartening for Robinson.

"It's wonderful. It takes the pressure off, because if there's just a few of you then you are 'the' Native author, but if there's a whole fleet of you then you're given a lot more freedom to write what you want.

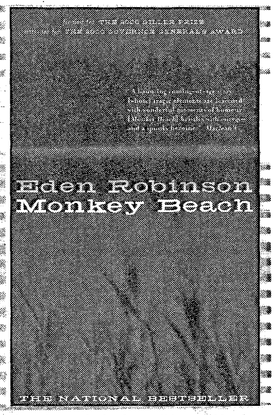
"A lot of the first writers were activists and that's the tradition they came out of. And they had a personal and political agenda," Robinson says. "I think it helped that they had powerful motivation because they wanted social justice and social change; they broke a lot of ground for the rest of us, which I'm grateful for."

Robinson, who grew up around Kitimaat village on the central BC coast, sees her writing as an indirect response to cultural change, as well as her own inadequacies.

"[The Haisla] are really close to the oral culture. We're just the third or fourth generation that switched over to being writing based. It's a real steep learning curve and some of the storytelling abilities crossed over. I think my writing is compensation because I'm a horrible, horrible storyteller. There are certain techniques that I just don't grasp," she says.

Fortunately her mother was not a bad storyteller. Robinson reveals that the inspiration for *Monkey Beach* came from stories she used to hear from her mother about fisherman and sailors who had drowned. "That's actually how *Monkey Beach* got started in a workshop," she says. "It started off as a series of six different anecdotes about how people drowned...When it starts off with such a dark seed it's inevitably a dark book," she explains.

Robinson also admits that it was hard to keep many of the social issues that in First Nations communities from taking over the novel. She had to cut out dozens of pages describing one character's activism with the American Indian Movement. Even with all this editing, the book is still haunted by the ghosts of residential schools, social inequality, alcoholism and broken dreams.



And just how was such a 'dark book' received in a tightly knit community, like Kitimaat village? Robinson admits to receiving complaints about the rather tragic plot and a lot of good-natured ribbing about the ending. "You can make it bad, you can make it good, but you can't just waffle it," she says, hardly able to contain her laughter.

"But I hate interpreting my book for people. I think it's your imagination and your template," she says "I like hearing other people's interpretation. It just reveals so much about them; you can immediately tell who's an optimist and who's not," Robinson adds with a chuckle.

Another added benefit to her novel's success is that others in her community have also begun writing, something that excites Robinson. But where will she go from here. Currently Robinson is in the middle of a fellowship at the University of Calgary, but her next project is never far from her mind.

"My goal for the next book was to write a Native *Bridget Jones*, cause I really wanted something light. But as soon as she developed a passion for power tools and self-mutilation I realised this might not be my genre," Robinson joked.

In semi-seriousness Robinson reveals that her next novel will be inspired by one of the short stories from Traplines, "Contact Sports." In true Robinson fashion, one of the main characters in that story is a serial killer.

When I finally ask her just why her works are so gloomy, Robinson's answer makes perfect sense.

"I have a friend who's writing her first book, and it's amazing. She's this very serious, earnest, dry wit, very politically conscious writer and she writes slapstick. I think it's just the parts of you that you don't use and I use those little corners, I don't mind going to those little dark places."

Eden Robinson will be reading at the Central branch of the Vancouver Public Library on March 18 at 7:30pm, the Carnegie Reading Room on March 19 at 7pm and at the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design on March 20 at 7pm. Admission is free. ●

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In a continuing effort to increase the level of service provided by the Faculty of Arts Academic Advising Office, the Faculty intends to hire three to five students to serve as the first point of contact for students attending the Academic Advising Office.

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in the AMS Council Chamber

New art: three from India

I love my calendar girl...

by Parminder Nizher

FROM GODDESS TO PIN-UP: THE UBEROI COLLECTION OF FEMININITY IN INDIAN CALENDAR ART
part of Moving Ideas: a Contemporary Cultural Dialogue with India
at the Presentation House Gallery
until Mar. 31

The truth is I didn't know what to expect from an exhibit about Indian pin-ups. Knowing Indian society, I figured, 'Okay, a Bollywood actress in a wet white sari,' right? Wrong. To my shock, I actually saw nipples.

You don't often come across an exhibit on calendar art like *From Goddess to Pin-up: the Uberoi Collection of Femininity in Indian Calendar Art*, a rare treat to the viewer. The art, mainly collected across India in the 1960s and 1970s, comes from the home of Australian sociologist Patricia Uberoi. Uberoi and her husband J.P.S. Uberoi have been collecting these gems for 30 years in India. The collection provides a window into Indian culture.

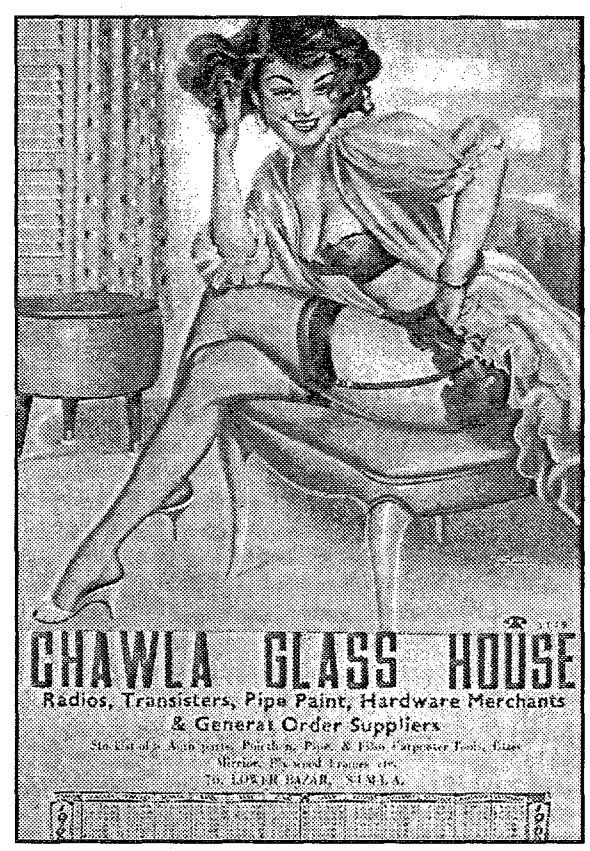
The pin-ups portion of the exhibit represents (like all pin-ups) women as sex objects. An image of "The Fisher Girl" with nothing covering her double-D breasts but her flimsy sari pallu, stares out at the viewer. Her creamy smooth skin beckons men to touch it and her eyes are filled with passion. In another picture, the woman as 'vamp' figure is portrayed as a barely clothed, dark-haired beauty who tempts the male with liquor. The features of the temptresses are faintly familiar. Did I just see this same girl on the multicultural channel in a Bollywood film? Hmm...

I moved on and encountered photos of lovers. Krishna and Radha, Shiva and Parvati, Ram and Sita. Hold on a minute...Why is the woman at the man's feet gazing longingly into his eyes? The theme of wifely devotion and subordination to the husband is on repeat.

The bond between mother and child is also evident in many calendars. The woman as mother is not left untouched. One thing that surprised me is the Christian content. Yes, there was one of Madonna and the child; I had expected Krishna and his adoptive mother Yashoda—but the Virgin Mary?

The next display shows Kali, with her many arms, riding a horse. It is evident that such goddesses and gods are a large part of Indian culture. There is the "Lakshimi of the Home" and the "Modern Saraswati." The goddesses are idolised just as much as the popular movie actresses.

The exhibit is an interesting look into Indian culture, but if you are looking for artistic theories, you won't find them there. ●



Artists rewrite history?

by Ron Nurwisah

VIVAN SUNDARAM AND ATUL DODIYA
part of Moving Ideas: a Contemporary Cultural Dialogue with India
at the Contemporary Art Gallery
until Mar. 31

If one man can be representative of India it is Mahatma Gandhi. His life saw the birth of the modern Indian state and his death at the hands of an assassin immortalised him. He was no longer Gandhi the man, the spiritual father of India, but Gandhi the martyr, a symbol for his country.

It is with all of these historical and cultural considerations that painter Atul Dodiya approaches his series of watercolours on the life of Gandhi in a joint exhibition at the Contemporary Art Gallery. Old photos in textbooks and in documentaries often show Gandhi as a frail ascetic, a strange figure next to British colonial figures or world leaders and even next to fellow revolutionaries Nehru and Jinnah.

Dodiya's paintings do the opposite: the Mahatma, far from being out of place, instead gains a heroic quality. Dodiya's paintings of Gandhi are simple and raw, but they capture Gandhi's complexity and resonances. The images are almost religious in nature—appropriately so, considering Gandhi was just as important a spiritual figure as he was a political figure.

Even in paintings where Gandhi isn't visible, history has endowed Dodiya's works with significance. In the image of the *S.S. Rajputana*, the ship looks like just any other ship. Those who know Indian history or Gandhi's life are well aware, however, that the *Rajputana* was the ship Gandhi took on his way to London in 1931 for negotiations that would ultimately lead to India's independence. The crowd of people crammed into the corner of Dodiya's painting is representative of the thousands that saw Gandhi off in Bombay.

History is the common theme of all of Dodiya's paintings and a series of photographs by fellow artist Vivan Sundaram. Sundaram's work is not ispired by overarching national histories and myths, but of personal histories.

Sundaram's *Re-take of Amrita* is a series of photographs taken by the artist's grandfather that have been digitally manipulated. The effects are varied. At first glance, some of these photos appear as if nothing has been changed, until one looks closely and sees strangely out-of-place human figures, paintings super-imposed on people and ghostly figures looming in the background.

It is as if Sundaram wanted to go back and change history, placing people where there were none. Some of the effects are light-hearted; due to perspective, one photo has a large swimmer's head bobbing out of the water next to farmers working near a lake. Another has Umrao Singh, the artist's grandfather and taker of these photos, nearly unclothed in his study standing under a waterfall, disconcertingly but comedically out of place.

But there are serious undertones. These works are not just re-imaginings of family snapshots, but also a statement on the reclamation of history. Post-colonial countries like India have to reconcile their own histories with the impact of white colonial rule. Too often their histories have been erased, denied and destroyed by a system that seeks to replace it with European histories.

When Sundaram juxtaposes a photograph of Amrita Sher-Gil with one of her paintings, he calls into question representation. Just how do Indians represent themselves and how can they seek to represent their history? Sundaram's answer uses technology, wit and a sense of play to reclaim family histories. Dodiya uses the powerful symbol of a man long-dead whose legacy is still in flux. Both approaches attempt to reconcile the colonial past with a post-colonial nation and in the process reveal just how difficult this process is. ●

Provocative India

by Parminder Nizher

SECULAR PRACTICE: RECENT ART FROM INDIA
part of Moving Ideas: a Contemporary Cultural Dialogue with India
at the Charles H. Scott Gallery
until Mar. 17

"Why are you doing this...?" These words reverberate in Hindi through the small, white box-like room where Nalani Malini's political video is being shown. All language boundaries are broken when the lines are repeated over and over and over again. Warning: You will want to bolt; these words will begin to conjure up an uncomfortable intensity in you.

Malini's video "the Hamletmachine" is a part of the exhibit *Secular Practise: Recent from India*, which in turn is part of a wider exhibit of contemporary Indian art being held in various locations throughout Vancouver. The exhibit is a response to the reality of a rapidly modernising society.

Malani's main focus is the political rise of right-wing Hindu fundamentalists in her native India. In "the Hamletmachine," political consciousness is the theme. The dark imagery surrounding the main object is hard to avoid. Malani's voice speaks the scenario while a drum pounds in the background. At the same time, different parts of a bare man are shown on the various screens. The feeling of dark intensity is hard to shrug throughout the 20-minute video, perhaps too much for some viewers.

Next I am faced with a painting of a nude man with arms around a monkey-man, cupping his penis. The title, "Ram Bhakta Hanuman," confirms my suspicions that the painting holds elements of the Ramayana. A quick look around the room and I see various white canvases filled with (predominantly male) nude images. This is the work of Bhupen Khakhar, a contemporary artist who has been upsetting Indian modernists for 40 years. His provocative bisexual imagery is blatantly obvious. In this particular collection, Khakhar uses simple, yet eloquently effective images to render his point. His homosexual images are a brave step in the prudish Indian continent.

I turn the corner and I come across hanging banners filled with dark shapes. I cannot be sure what Jayashree Chakravarty is trying to tell me in her banners. The words 'Walk,' 'Don't Walk,' 'Stop' and 'One Way' are splattered across what appear to be buildings, trees and bazaars. As I walk carefully amidst the banners it comes to me. I am walking in a contemporary Indian city. I feel the urban beauty of Calcutta, the disarray of the city and the fusion of the colourful bazaars among the packed buildings.

The exhibit's only weakness is in its selection: though Malani's video itself is worth the ride out to Emily Carr, there could easily have been more work in Khakhar's selection. ●

A family affair

by Parminder Nizher

MONSOON WEDDING
now playing

Mira Nair is back with a vengeance with her critically acclaimed film, *Monsoon Wedding*. Her film took the Venice Film Festival by storm and won the Golden Lion Award.

The film is set in the Indian capital of Delhi, a city where ancient tradition is blended with savvy modernity. The film is based around the Punjabi Verma family, as it comes together for a quickly called wedding. The story goes beyond a simple wedding tale as Nair eloquently intertwines five stories which surround the chaotic preparations for the wedding.

There is Lalit (father of the bride) and his wife Pimmi who turn, once again, to one another as a dark family secret threatens to halt their carefully planned wedding. Lalit is the raging stressed-out father with a cash flow problem around the wedding. Their traditional marriage is portrayed as a learned love and a life lived well (and tolerantly) together.

The bride to be, Aditi, quickly agreed to an arranged marriage just on the rebound from a passionate affair with her employer. Hemant, her groom, is an Indian engineer working in America. They come together five days before the wedding so each can learn more about the other, the person they'll spend the rest of their lives with.

Aditi's cousin Ria is unforgettable as an unmarried woman in her late 20s hearing endless comments about becoming a spinster. But Ria has a deep secret buried within her that she must overcome before marriage crosses her mind.

These plots combine with a lustful teenage infatuation story, and an innocent love story between the tent contractor and the family maid, to make up the delightful *Monsoon Wedding*.

It is a film about love, tradition, modernity and, above all, family waiting for the monsoon rains to arrive to relieve the choking heat wave. Nair allows her characters to develop and face their problems openly and move on.

The exuberance of a Punjabi wedding is there, with the music and dance that tie the wedding together: the sounds of old and new Bollywood, Punjabi bhangra (folk music), Indian pop, jazz and ghazals (traditional love songs). There are the sensual pleasures of cinema intricately weaved into the film; Nair uses a handheld camera and films Delhi as a character, both modern and traditional. *Monsoon Wedding* is a tribute to the city and above all to family. ●

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Application deadline: ***March 15, 2002***

Important Information Regarding Nominations

- Please submit a résumé and cover letter listing desired positions in order of importance.
- Applicants must currently be, and continue to be until September, 2003, registered students at UBC.
- Applicants for all positions, with the exception of the Student Administrative Commission, may not hold a seat on AMS Student Council for the duration of their term.
- Nominees applying for a specific position on a Commission, including Vice-Chair, that are not appointed to that position will automatically be considered for:
  1) another position on that Commission or
  2) appointment to another position in the Society
- All appointments will expire either March 15, 2003 or September 30, 2003.

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The Bank of Montreal is moving out of the SUB, and we need to find a new way to utilize this space. Right now we are in the process of collecting your input on how to use this area, in order to provide the kinds of services you want. Feel free to submit more than one idea about what should go in this space - be as creative as you want! Please submit your suggestions via e-mail to: vpadmin@ams.ubc.ca, or drop by the Bank of Montreal and fill out the comment cards located at the entrance.

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K-Otic rhythm & rhymes

by Alexis Roohani

K-OS
at the Gallery Lounge
Mar. 7

If you were in the SUB last Thursday afternoon, you probably noticed quite the gathering of curious onlookers hovering around the doors of the Gallery. Hopefully their curiosity drew you in and you discovered what was going on inside. If you were in too much of a hurry, or just weren't around at all, then you can congratulate yourself on missing one of the coolest on-campus events we've had this year (and let's face it kids, there haven't been many).

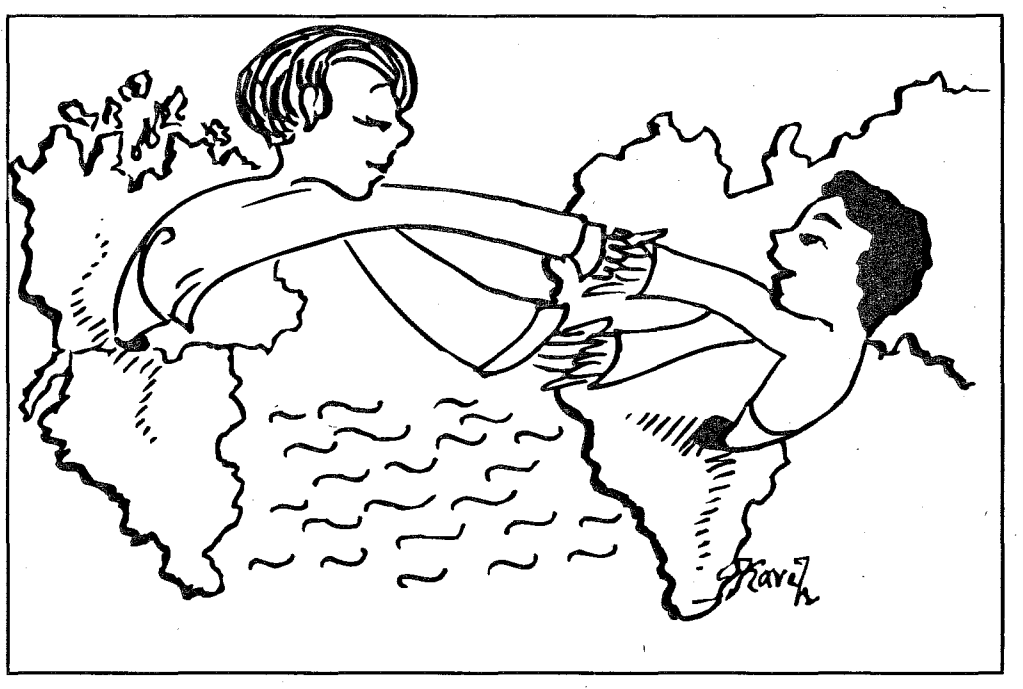
On Thursday afternoon, the Gallery Lounge became host to the smooth urban rhymes and melodies of Kevin Brereton, a Toronto-based hip-hop artist better known as K-OS. Accompanied by the acoustic mastery of Vancouverite Russ Klyne, K-OS delivered a set ripe with lyrical freshness and rhythmic energy to a full, and very appreciative, house. The vibe was mellow and the crowd was responsive. And for an hour out of a typical UBC day, you could sit back, chill out and actually convince yourself you were someplace, well, not UBC.

> ***"We're trying to do things where we can interact with people, to talk about hip-hop and the blessings it gives to us."***
>
> ***—Sol Guy***
> ***K-OS's Manager***

The sounds of K-OS are, in a word, contagious. Having never heard of K-OS before Thursday's performance, I was surprised at how easily I slipped into his music. And it's safe to say I wasn't the only one. While K-OS is known as a hip-hop artist, his music isn't so conveniently pigeonholed. The rap element is there, along with the definite essence of free-style. But factor in Klyne's acoustics and K-OS's softer vocal harmonies, and you have a listening experience that is nothing short of addictive. At the very least, the sound is inviting. In an interview posted on his website, K-OS describes his aim as making "positive music." His musical inspirations have always been those artists with "more of a good vibe," such as A Tribe Called Quest and The Fugees. Spend a few minutes with his debut album Exit (in stores March 26), and these influences won't be hard to find.

The Gallery performance was part of K-OS's Evolution Tour, a cross-Canada tour in celebration of Black History Month. With such a countrywide agenda, one might wonder how K-OS ended up perched atop a bar stool on the Gallery stage. UBC's Colour Connected, an on-campus resource group for students of colour and their allies, is in part to thank for bringing K-OS to UBC's stomping grounds. The members of the audience, however, weren't the only thankful ones after Thursday's interactive performance. K-OS 's manager Sol Guy explains the value of performing at local venues like the Gallery: "We're trying to do things where we can interact with people, to talk about hip-hop and the blessings it gives to us," he says. "Stuff like this, for us, kind of reaffirms things."

The audience received affirmation of its own from Thursday's performance. There's no doubt about it: K-OS gives form to some satisfying sounds. ●



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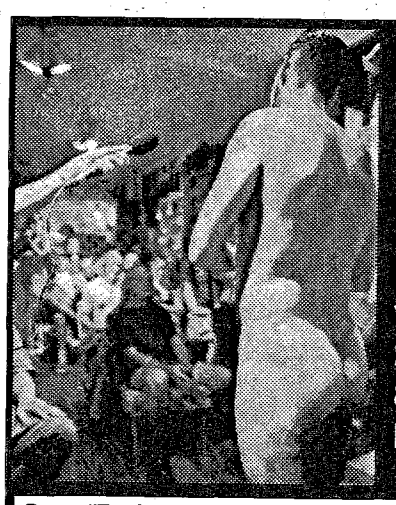


Have a say! Take part in this year's *Ubyssey* editorial election!

If your name is on this list, you can vote. If not, well, you suck. Elections are being held from March 20-27. Questions? Call Duncan M. McHugh @604-822-2301. Oh, and Ted, if you want to be on the list, you have to come to the next staff meeting.

Scott "Da Man" Bardsley
Ron "Rack of Lamb" Nurwisah
Marta "Moochie" Bashovski
Jesse "Fuzzy Agenda" Marchand
Laura "L-Bo" Blue
Duncan "M.I.A." McHugh
Ai Lin "A-Lo" Choo
Alicia "Shovel Rat" Miller
Julia "Churchy" Christensen
Sarah "Lil' Red" MacNeill Morrison
Sarah "SuperConch" Conchie
Tessa "T-Bone" Richardson
Kathleen "Übergeek" Deering
Michelle "Student Journalist Barbie" Rosa
Lisa "Rip 'em Apart" Denton
Michael "Pikachu" Schwandt
Sarah "Too Cool for School" Fung
Chris "Finger Lickin' Loin Cloth" Shepherd
Rob "The Guy" Nagai
Hywel "It Hurts!" Tuscano
Graeme "Tight Ass Pants" Worthy
Sara "I Can't Believe I'm Still Here!" Young
Natasha "She be Danish" Norbjerg
Lars "By the Skin of My Teeth" Goeller
Nic "Let Them Have Doughnuts!" Fensom
Parm "Shakin' It Up" Nizher

Photos from our past

FIRST SON: PORTRAITS BY C.D. HOY
by Faith Moosang
[Arsenal Pulp Press]

C.D. Hoy introduces us, citizens living in a multicultural society, to a different world of race relations. *First Son* is a collection of photographs taken between 1909 and 1920 of rural British Columbia. The photographs show the emotional and complex lives of people in the early 1900s (of Caucasians, Asians and First Nations residents). From a time before the advent of multiculturalism, Hoy brings us collage of different people from different races.

Hoy's personal life was similar to those of many others in rural British Columbia. He immigrated from China in 1902 after paying the Head Tax which penalised Asian immigrants. He began by working the odd jobs that many immigrants took. Eventually, Hoy learned to use a camera and began to take pictures.

He learned English and Native dialects, allowing him to meet and take photos of Caucasians and First Nations peoples. Coming from a time before Canada's open multiculturalism, the diversity of people in his photographs is startling. On one hand, the diversity seems to diminish the racism within BC. Yet in many of the pictures, there is a certain sadness or discomfort. The hauntingly still and sullen faces in many of the photos take us back to the drudgery in turn-of the-century rural life.

Through Hoy's photographs, one can learn a lot about a subject's life. The picture of a Chinese man sitting on a chair, wearing a striped overcoat clearly demonstrates this. The man's hands have a certain weariness, indicating that the picture was taken shortly after work. His face is wrinkled, showing his age and his time spent outdoors. We can also infer that this man might have worked on the railway, building something that ironically was created to express unity during a time when non-Caucasians were denied the right to vote and racist legislation was enacted.

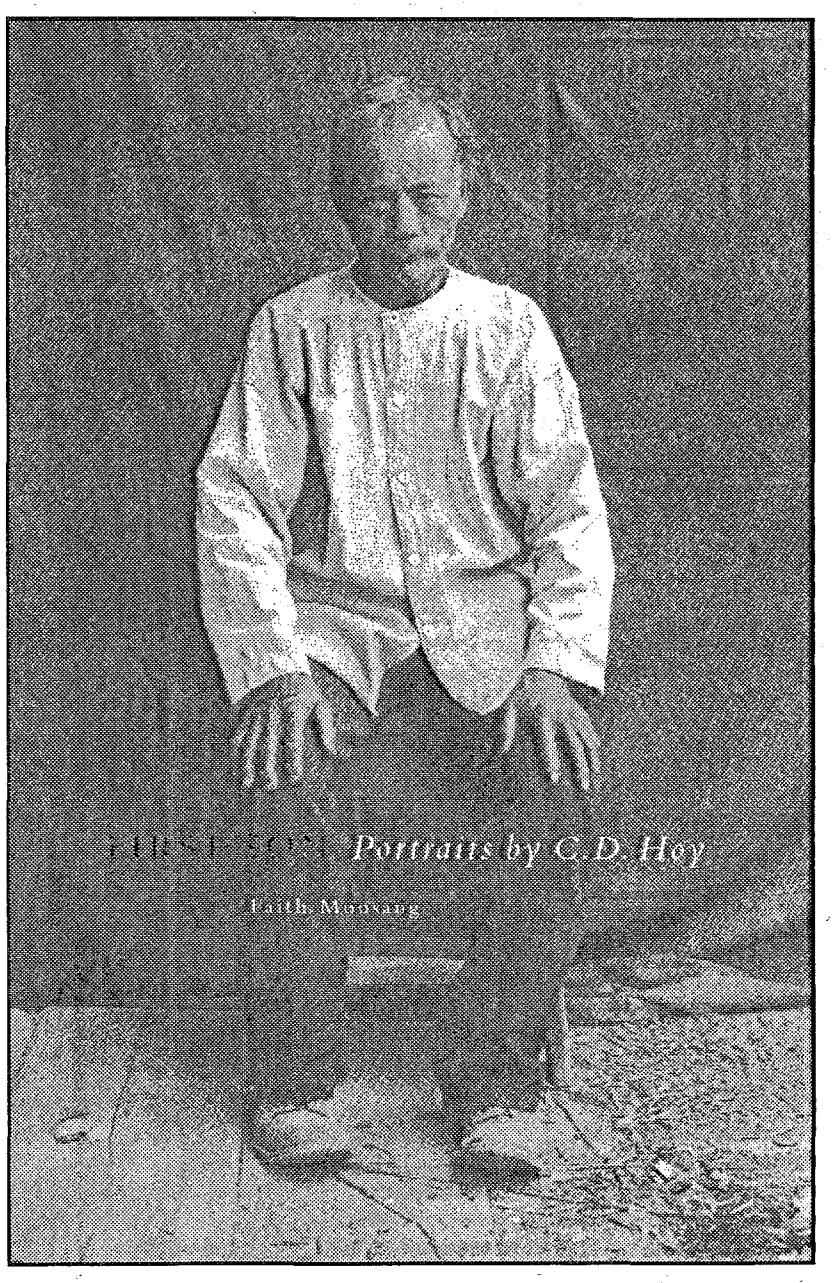
The photographs of women show the stifling confines of tradition. In some of the early pictures, we see women dressed in traditional attire, sometimes with children. One picture of a Native woman caught my eye. Her hands seemed to be curled up with a wash cloth. Was she washing clothes just before the photo was taken?

Hoy's photos capture the unhappiness of women and people of colour. The pictures of the wealthier Chinese men show, however, these men's complete assimilation into 'Canadian' culture. In pictures of a Caucasian man and Chinese young man, both wear Western suits, both have their legs crossed, and both have similar facial expressions. One wonders if this indicates that the only way to be equal with 'whites' is to assimilate into their culture.

Included in the book is Hoy's biography as well as historical information about rural BC. Faith Moosang, who wrote the biographical information, breathes life into the pictures by describing some of the attitudes that existed at the beginning of the century.

For insight into how Asian and First Nations peoples livied in rural British Columbia in the early 1900s, Hoy's snapshots and photographs are more revealing than a textbook. The black-and-white images show people before multiculturalism, and liberal views on race, that surprisingly come together in Hoy's photos. ●

–Justin Cheng



The problems of race

OTHER CONUNDRUMS: RACE, CULTURE AND CANADIAN ART
by Monika Kin Gagnon
[Arsenal Pulp Press]

Multiculturalism: Canadian policy supporting cultural diversity, passed as an official act in 1988. So Canada's got culture and multi-culture.

The above definition, given by Canadian artist and curator Monika Kin Gagnon, seems a bit harsh. After all, hasn't multiculturalism been a good thing? Just look around you: artists of colour have their work shown in Canada's finest galleries. Asian filmmakers, First Nations playwrights and black musicians are accepted. We're open; we're tolerant. There are a few problems, but we're working through them, right?

Or are we actually just—pardon the use of the term—white-washing racism, painting over a very ugly and destructive force, instead of trying to do something about it? Are artists of colour truly accepted in Canada? And how do these artists deal with being Canadian yet not being part of mainstream white culture? These are just some of the questions brought up by Kin Gagnon in her, book *Other Conundrums*.

Through a series of essays that examines the works of a good number of Canadian artists of colour—artists that for the last 20 years have been asking some of these same questions—Kin Gagnon reveals a number of problems still inherent in society.

The most basic problem that Gagnon posits is would be the refusal of many organisations to acknowledge the existence of racism. These tacit denials make it impossible to proceed. What good is an anti-racism policy that doesn't mention racism?

Multiculturalism is another possible stumbling block. With all its good intentions, multiculturalism often serves to ghettoise and exoticise non-white artists. A concert of classical Chinese music is multicultural; the symphony is not. More menacing is that multiculturalismmay be just another way for Canada's dominant white culture to maintain its hegemony. Both are equally valid interpretations.

Identity, another topic that can easily illicit thousands of pages of writing, is handled deftly and succintly by Kin Gagnon. She acknowledges its fluidity, its difficulty and its importance to the continuing dialogue between artists of colour and their audiences.

Gagnon's essays explore thorny issues using the lens of art to focus her criticism and ideas. They are rich, dense, thoughtful essays that do more than bring up conundrums and questions: but also try to answer some of them. Often, the answers are not pretty or palatable. But then again, race has never been a clean and easy business. ●

–Ron Nurwisah

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My mother took a stand

PERSPECTIVE OPINION

by Donovan Kuehn

My mom stopped George Wallace. Right in his tracks. Seventeen years old and using nothing but her hands, she stopped the man who ran four times for the presidency of the United States who she believed would keep the southern United States segregated and in the past.

My mother was raised by her grandmother, her extended family and the Catholic Church in the small town of Savannah, Georgia. She was alive at an amazing time. Almost 100 years after the American Civil War and Reconstruction failed to end the oppression of black people in the southern US, blacks had found their voice in the growing movement for civil rights.

In the southern states, segregation was trying to hold on. It was enforced through the legal 'thuggery' of local police, as well as the illegal 'thuggery' and murder perpetrated by the Ku Klux Klan. One of the most unabashedly racist politicians in the south was Alabama's governor, George Wallace.

When Wallace began his political career in the 1940s, he was seen as a 'liberal' and he even campaigned for governor of Alabama with the support of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), America's oldest black organisation. Wallace was defeated by an opponent that he felt was more racist than him. After that, he declared that in the future he would be the "loudest and most impassioned voice" calling for racial segregation. He kept his promise and, after a nasty campaign in 1962, Wallace was elected the governor of Alabama.

Once elected, Wallace's support for segregation grew. In June 1963, he, along with armed state troopers, stood in the path of two black students to prevent them from registering for classes at the University of Alabama. It took direct intervention by President Kennedy and the Alabama National Guard to allow the students to attend classes.

In September 1963, Wallace ordered state police to go to the major cities in Alabama (Huntsville, Mobile, Tuskegee and Birmingham) to prevent the newly integrated public schools from being opened. After one person was killed, the federal government intervened again.

In March 1965, Alabama State Troopers, with dogs, whips and tear gas, attacked a march that was promoting voter registration. The violence in Alabama was televised throughout the US and internationally. The public's horrified reaction is reputed to have helped President Lyndon Johnson get the 1965 Voting Rights Act, designed to ensure that all people had the right to vote, passed through the US Houses of Congress.

In 1964, and in three subsequent elections, Wallace ran for the US presidency to promote his belief that whites and blacks should live separately.

But wait a second, this is a story about my mom.

It was in this turbulent time that my mother had graduated and was looking for work. She had been active in the Civil Rights Movement and she wanted to help others who were in need. She eventually joined a program called Vista.

Vista was established in 1964 as a domestic version of the US Peace Corps. Vista's goal was to eliminate "poverty in the midst of plenty" and to provide people with "the opportunity to live in decency and dignity." The program still exists today as Americorps, and in the 38 years since its inception, it has had more than 100,000 participants.

My mother was assigned to work in Miami, Florida. Before starting work, her group of Vista volunteers were invited to the State House in Tallahassee to meet Florida's Governor. The Vista organisers, concerned that the program was still new and reliant on various state agencies for support and funding, implored the volunteers not to do anything 'disruptive.' So off they went to Florida's legislature, promising to be on their best behaviour.

Now, as luck would have it, there was another guest in Tallahassee at that time. Governor George Wallace was in Florida for a conference of state governors. The Vista volunteers were in for a treat: not only would they be addressed by the governor of Florida, but they would also hear from Governor George Wallace himself.

After a brief speech by the Governor of Florida, Wallace took the podium. My mother sat there, angry. Here was a man who had spent his political career trying to stop blacks and whites from eating together, studying together, even sitting together on buses. She had to do something to express her displeasure.

After polite applause, Wallace began his remarks. "It is a pleasure for me to be here in the state of Florida..."

Then from the back of the Chamber came clapping. Everyone turned around to see what was going on. What they saw was a skinny, 17-year-old black woman applauding with vigor. The other Vista volunteers got to their feet and began clapping as well. Then others, until there was a standing ovation. Eventually, it died down and everyone retook their seats.

"Thank you for your enthusiasm. Now as I was saying..."

Once again Wallace was greeted by applause from the same little, black woman at the back of the room.

And so began an elaborate tango in the Florida State House. Both partners knew their parts: one would lead, trying to speak; the other would follow, starting to clap. But the leader would falter, and be overtaken by applause, which started individually, but was quickly joined by dozens, and then hundreds of hands.

This dance went on and on until finally, one dance partner realised that he didn't want to lead any more, and he left the dance floor. Wallace walked away from the podium, his speech left unsaid.

George Wallace, governor of the 24th largest state in the union, four-time challenger for the presidency of the United States of America, the man who tried to stop children from attending integrated schools: he met his match in a 17-year-old girl. My mom. ●

—Donovan Kuehn is UBC graduate currently living in Japan. His mother, Sadie Kuehn, is a community activist and former Vancouver School Board Trustee, who lives in Vancouver, BC.

On neverending violence in the Middle East

PERSPECTIVE OPINION

by Riaz Behra

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon recently told reporters that the Israeli military must "hit Palestinians hard," and inflict "heavy casualties" to force them to comply with military rule. He argued that Israel is in a "state of war"; but the term 'war' cannot adequately describe the horror which has been brought upon the Palestinian people. No, this is not a war—it's a slaughter. For the last several weeks, Israel has escalated its attacks on civilians, property and institutions, showing little mercy or discrimination. Recently, Israeli tanks and troops backed by AH-40 Apache helicopter gunships have invaded and laid siege to numerous Palestinian refugee camps, indiscriminately rounding up and detaining thousands of men and boys accused of no specific crime, and ordered them to leave their households and surrender to the Israeli military. Over the last three weeks, more than 150 Palestinians, mostly civilians, have been killed. Buildings, including four elementary schools, have been bombed. Ambulances and medical personnel who attend to Palestinian victims have been attacked by the army and, in many cases, prevented from attending to the wounded. The utter brutality and cruelty of Israeli occupation has once again reached horrific proportions.

As the Israeli regime continues this deliberate campaign to inflict terror and violence on an entire people, the world community has for the most part chosen to stand by and watch. Israel's staunchest ally, the United States, has at times issued light criticism towards Israeli policies, but such criticism is far from compelling. In the eyes of many, the United States government, in its unconditional political, financial and military support of Israel's occupation, has made itself an accomplice to Israel's atrocities. Words, coming out of Washington, are of little value. Colin Powell and other leading figures in George W. Bush's administration are fond of saying that they want to "stop the violence," but have shown themselves to be completely disinterested in stopping the 35-year illegal military occupation which is wholly behind the violence in the first place.

Foreign policy, both American and Canadian, and the media's view of the conflict, are shaped by a false paradigm of equivalence. We are presented with the image of a moral equivalence between the occupiers and the occupied, and a military equivalence between a nuclear power and teenagers throwing stones. One side maintains a huge occupation army outside its internationally recognised borders, in someone else's land, for the sole purpose of taking that land from those people and giving it to well armed settlers, preventing the freedom and independence of those it dispossesses. It's only against the backdrop of false equivalence that it becomes possible to make the preposterous claim that Israel is somehow the victim and Palestine the aggressor, or to make the equally ridiculous claim that the use of force in the maintenance of military occupation is 'self defence.'

The illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian land is itself violence that has been perpetuated for the last 35 years. It's the violence that takes the form of house demolitions, state-sanctioned torture, targeted executions without even a semblance of due process, land confiscations and economic strangulation. Rarely, if ever, is the experience of Palestinians under Israeli occupation even addressed by the mainstream media. A little over a month ago, the Israeli Defence Force in a 'retaliatory attack' entered a refugee camp near Rafah and proceeded to demolish the homes of 58 Palestinian families, leaving hundreds homeless. This policy of house demolition has proceeded since the 1967 war, but we don't hear the voices of Palestinians explaining the horror of having Israeli bulldozers show up to destroy their houses. Few people have probably heard of the daily humiliation and harassment that Palestinians suffer as they attempt to cross through heavily armed and guarded Israeli military checkpoints, which exist for the sole purpose of intimidating the Palestinian population. Instead, the dominant image of Palestinians is that of the 'terrorist' who has an inherent hatred of Israel. What's rarely discussed is the conditions of hopeless poverty, desperation and daily degradation that Palestinians suffer under Israeli occupation and that create this environment of anger and hostility.

The Israeli military—equipped with its tanks and armoured helicopters—has imposed, and will continue to impose, vast suffering on the Palestinian people. But I ultimately believe that if Israel's goal is to crush the Palestinian people into submission and force them to surrender their national aspirations, then it will be unsuccessful. If 35 years of brutal military occupation and unimaginable suffering has not been able to crush the Palestinian liberation struggle, then I don't believe the current escalated repression will either. Palestinians remain united and firm in their determination to end Israeli occupation completely. There is also a glimmer of hope offered in Israel's peace movement, notably in the recent open letter signed by 152 Israeli soldiers stating they refuse to serve "beyond the 1967 borders in order to dominate, expel, starve and humiliate an entire people."

"No justice, no peace," is often a chant heard at protests, but I believe that it describes the reality of the situation in Israel/Palestine. The bloodshed and misery will continue as long as the Israeli regime continues to disregard international law and Palestinian rights. Peace in Israel/Palestine is only possible between equals once military occupation has come to an end. ●

TUITION

Yesterday, UBC's Board of Governors passed a motion to increase tuition fees. Read about the proposal, the debate, and the backlash, on our website: WWW.UBYSSEY.BC.CA

See Tuesday's paper for full coverage.

THE UBYSSEY NEWS DEPARTMENT