IN COLOUR SINCE 1918

RACE ISSUE

COVER ART BY IZUMI WAKAKI

THE WORLD IN TECHNICOLOUR

Race isn't supposed to matter anymore. Not today, not in our post-colonial post-industrial post-modern world, when the glittering 21st century is sprawled out at our feet, and the signposts of racial oppression–slavery, colonialism, segregation, wars of extermination, apartheid, coerced migration, forced internships, economic exploitation, and disenfranchisement–are fading fast on the road behind us, soon to be forgotten. Race is old news, yesterday's dirty laundry, played like an Illmatic cassette, broke up like the Pharcyde. Or is it?

The floating car, robot maid, race-less utopia that many seem to be waiting for has yet to materialise. The construct of race, in its many guises–colour, ethnicity, religion, nationality, genotype–continues to play a dominant role in our lives, intersecting with gender and class to dictate our position in society. It affects how we define ourselves and how others define us, and shapes how we perceive and experience the people and events that surround us. People who claim to lead a 'colour blind' existence, who assert that race means nothing to them, tend to be the people who steamroll through their livesóand the lives of others–oblivious to the privilege they possess.

This edition of *the Ubyssey* is an attempt to allow members of the UBC community to put their reality down on paper, to tell us how race affects their lives and the world as they see it. This is a collection of unique perspectives and profiles that illustrate the pervasiveness of race in the experiences of a diverse group of people. ❖

A UBYSSEY SPECIAL ISSUE FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 2001 VOLUME 82 ISSUE 42

CLASSIFIEDS

Employment

TEACH ENGLISH IN KOREA - Good Salaries + free air and accommodation. Easily save 15K in one year. Degree required. Tel: 408-3760 Fax: 408-3761. Info at: www.asia-pacific-connections.com

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SWIM DIRECTOR & instructor/lifeguards for summer kids camp near Montreal. Send resume: JOBS@pripstein-scamp.com

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HELP INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS learn English! Be an English Conversationalist! $40 For 3 hrs, Friday's 9am - 12noon. Contact Laurie @ VLCI, 688-1886, laurie@vlci.com

THE LIONS SOCIETY OF BC is seeking Counselors and Programmers for our residential summer camps on Vancouver Island, in Squamish and the Okanagan. We provide a camping experience for children and teens with disabilities. Employment runs from June through August. For more information, send resume and cover letter to: Camp Administrator, Lions Society of BC, 201-3440 Douglas St. Victoria, BC V8Z 3L5. A criminal records check will be required of successful applicants.

Volunteer Opportunities

NEED VOLUNTEER EXPEREINCE? Opportunity to make a real difference in high functioning 2 year old autistic boy's life. Valuable training provided. Flexible hours, men and women welcome. Please call Cindy @ 827-0014.

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Personals

B.C.'S COOLEST PARTY LINE!!! DIAL: 25-Party, Ads*Jokes*Stories & MORE! Free Call!* 18+ *Try it NOW!!!

Announcements

VEGGIE LUNCHES, every Tuesday 12:30-2:30 pm in the Penthouse (3rd floor) of the Grad Center, 6371 Crescent Rd, vegetarian and vegan food, suggested donation: $4.00

SPARTACUS BOOKS Spring Sale, Mar 22-28th. 10-80% off. Philosophy, Anthropology, Education, Sociology, Psychology, Ecology, Geography, Literary Theory ... Development, Cultural, Media, Labour, First Nations', Queer and Women's Studies. 311 W. Hastings (Hasting & Cambie)

FESTIVA 2001, A Multi-Cultural Celebration! Friday, Mar 23 5-10pm. Come and Celebrate! Tickets $3 in advance $5 at door. www.international.ubc.ca, adrienne.bouris@ubc.ca or 822-1265.

GET READY FOR GO KART RACING!!! This exciting event is brought to you by Chinese Art Student Society, March 24, Richmond Go Kart Track. For more info call Mandy @ 603-1726

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY Forum: Taliban: Bitter Fruit of Imperialist's Anti-Soviet War. WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN, Fri. Mar 30, 7pm, Britannia Community Center, Rm. L4, 1661 Napier Street (off Commercial Drive). $2 suggested donation. Call 687-0353 for more info.

Academic Services

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Miscellaneous

NEED GIFTS FOR YOUR FRIENDS? Come check out "The Originals" line of jewelry at the AMS Used Bookstore, "SUBTITLES", in the display case, (located in the bottom floor of the SUB). Unique handmade earrings for between $0.99 and $2.49!

Between classes

Festival of Rights

Friday, Mar. 16 (that's today) 11am to 3pm.
Main Mall between Koerner Plaza and University Blvd.
Learn about BC's land-use issues.
Speakers, free veggie lunch and music.
Anne, you rock.

Give the gift of sight

Did you know that the cost of a pair of eyeglasses is equivalent to one year's salary in many developing countries?
Donate your old eyeglasses or sunglassses to make a difference in a child or adult's life.
Whether they're broken, out-of-fashion, or just no good, the Lotus Light Charity Society wants 'em all.
Help reach the goal of 8000 pairs of eyeglasses nationwide by visiting the eyeglass drop-off locations in the SUB or UBC Hospital.

Holistic therapy volunteer opportunity

Vancouver Friends For Life's Society offers wellness programs to people living with life-theatening illnesses and has lots of volunteer opportunities for dedicated people interested in holistic therapy.
Call Anne at 682-5992 for more information.

Between Classes is a free public service of *the Ubyssey*.
Fax your submissions to 822-9279.

THE UBYSSEY
FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 2001
VOLUME 82 ISSUE 42

The Ubyssey is the official student newspaper of the University of British Columbia. It is published every Tuesday and Friday by The Ubyssey Publications Society.
We are an autonomous, democratically run student organisation, and all students are encouraged to participate.
Editorials are chosen and written by *the Ubyssey* staff. They are the expressed opinion of the staff, and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Ubyssey Publications Society or the University of British Columbia.
The Ubyssey is a founding member of Canadian University Press (CUP) and adheres to CUP's guiding principles.

Letters to the editor must be under 300 words. Please include your phone number, student number and signature (not for publication) as well as your year and faculty with all submissions. ID will be checked when submissions are dropped off at the editorial office of *The Ubyssey*, otherwise verification will be done by phone.
"Perspectives" are opinion pieces over 300 words but under 750 words and are run according to space.
"Freestyles" are opinion pieces written by Ubyssey staff members. Priority will be given to letters and perspectives over freestyles unless the latter is time sensitive. Opinion pieces will not be run until the identity of the writer has been verified.
It is agreed by all persons placing display or classified advertising that if the Ubyssey Publications Society fails to publish an advertisement or if an error in the ad occurs the liability of the UPS will not be greater than the price paid for the ad. The UPS shall not be responsible for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value or the impact of the ad.

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Beats & Bites: Our new column featuring the Ubyssey's picks for music and munchies! Tristan Winch: "Don't Wanna Lose You Now" by Gloria Estefan; Daliah Merzaban: any song by Mohamed Mounir; Tara Westover: chocolate ice cream; Alex Dimson: that one by Dave Matthews; Michelle Mossop: hot water and peanuts; Sarah Morrison: cookies and spaghetti; Laura Blue likes playing the guitar; Hywel Tuscano: "Shake Ya Ass" and brownies; Ailin Choo: chocolate (except the dark kind); Mwalu Peeters: "Assemble Not Thyself" by the Terrors and lychee smoothies with coconut jelly; Adam Rudder: plantain chips and "The Sword of Allah"; Tom Peacock: fig newtons; Nicholas Bradley: jelly beans; Holland Gidney: doesn't know; Nic Fensom: sushi and Tosca "Orozco"; Priya Bala: those little coconut jelly things and "Pasilda" by AfroMedusa; Duncan McHugh: locusts and wild honey; Alicia Miller: chocolate and "Mother Father"; Terumi Taylor, Alana Stevenson, Alan Tong, Kim Thé, Julia Christensen, George Fuller, Ethel Tungohan, Andrew Kostynink, Reginald Khoker, Anne-Marie Samarasinghe, Diana Liao, and Izumi Wakeki were unavailable for comment, but we firmly believe that they have tastebuds and eardrums too. ❖

Canadian University Press
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My name isn't Shaft

for Rohan

When I walk in your store, why do your eyes follow me
like tiny bombs waiting to detonate at my slightest movement?
My fingers aren't knives and the only steel strapped to my waist
is my belt buckle.
I'm not a pimp and I don't deal crack.
I'm not the mugger, the thief or the rapist.
You've forgotten I was one who was raped
(Africans don't have names like Lincoln)
I don't have any illegitimate children.
I don't smoke ganja.
Fried chicken doesn't agree with my stomach.
I like to collect stamps, not welfare.
Why am I defined by my balls?
(the ones I dribble and the ones that dangle)
I don't know how to rap (my wife takes care of the gifts)
I'm not George Jefferson or Bill Cosby
(Why do they always arrest black men on *COPS*?)
I'm not the negro who dances like a tornado,
runs like a jaguar &
fucks like a demon
Why do I have to have a big dick?
Why does the dictionary define black as wicked, sinister & deadly?
Why is black magic the evil kind?
Don't brand my face with prison bars.
I won't hurt you.
Why do you ignore the softness of my smile &
the richness of mahogany?

-Reginald. P. Khokher

Uncovered

I apply my make-up with
a force unknown
each move, mechanical
knock on the door.
I greet my friend with a
smile, painted on perfectly.
Give me a minute.
Look in the mirror, at
my cappuccino cream.
Imperfections irk and I wipe
wipe wipe wipe peel slowly peeling
peel off the fake. Knock knock.
Hold on a sec, I'm coming.
Cappuccino cream my ass
as I
stare at the white revealed
uncovered. Unavoidably glowing
back at me in my reflection.
Like a conceited jester it greets me
thought you could get rid of me,
didn't you, brat?
Hastily, I
re-apply colour hard vigorous
stay on this time! I mutter.
Knock knock. Come on, I hear.
I open the door, one final glance.
Quickly, I
straighten my smile
which has fallen to the side,
threatening
to drop off my face.

-Diana Liao

Room-Mates?

Drifting tides.....
or like two cars heading
North and South
on a highway
room-mates
in a
New Westminster apartment survive.
One a busy student;
career person, the other.
both strangers each avoiding the other
these last nine months
because of colour difference.
financial necessity
oppress us to
"tolerate" each other.

-Anne-Marie Samarasinghe

No such thing as a stupid question?

by Alana Stevenson

In academic settings, and the few occupations I have had, I have frequently encountered people who perkily assure others that no question is stupid. After many years of being patient and polite, the proverbial straw has been thrust upon my back, and I must insist that stupid questions do indeed exist.

Particularly in the realm of personal information, no one has the right to ask a question which makes another feel uncomfortable, no matter what the motivation is for asking.

For as long as I can remember, I have been politely and not-so-politely grilled about my ethnicity. There are many methods of doing this, ranging from bold strangers who will approach and demand, "What are you?" to shy types who will hem and haw, and finally, in a very politically correct manner, inquire as to my "ethnic background," to guessers, such as the man who delivered my prescription last week, and bellowed "Are you Chinese?" as he made his way back down my front steps. These are all variations on the same question, a question that should never be asked of someone to whom you aren't extremely close.

Having ethnicity brought up all the time can have very negative effects on a person. These effects can range from the simple annoyance at the "What are you?" question (I'm a human being!), to other, more serious problems. Being questioned about your ethnicity before someone gets to know you can lead to the assumption that your background or 'pedigree' is more important to them than what your personality is like.

In high school, when most teenagers are trying desperately just to fit in and be normal, frequently being singled out as 'different' can have devastating effects on self-esteem. Even to a secure adult who appreciates individuality and non-conformists, constantly being reminded of differences in appearance, which can't be helped, chisels at one's confidence.

I understand that curiosity is a natural response, and an undeniable part of human nature. Occasionally, I have taken it to be a compliment; that strangers are interested in the way I look. However, satisfying your own curiosities at the risk of making someone feel uncomfortable is simply selfish. It's not that difficult to stop a moment before asking a personal question, and consider how many times others may have asked the exact same thing, and what effect that might have on a person.

I have absolutely no problem with disclosing the fact that my mother is a third-generation Chinese-Canadian, and that my father is English. I willingly and eagerly discuss many personal details of my life with those who take the time to know me as a person. The people I take issue with are those who know nothing about me, yet because I look different, feel as though they have a right to find out why.

As a human being, please try and keep this in mind the next time you meet someone who cannot easily be pigeonholed into any one racial category. Ask yourself what's important, and get to know who they are, before you start to guess what they might be. ❖

THE UBYSSEY VOTER'S LIST

- Ailin Choo
- Alex Dimson
- Alicia Miller
- Bruce Arthur
- Daliah Merzaban
- Daniel Silverman
- Duncan McHugh
- Ernie Beaudin
- Graeme Worthy
- Holland Gidney
- Hywel Tuscano
- Julia Christensen
- Kathleen Deering
- Kim Thé
- Laura Blue
- Lisa Denton
- Michelle Mossop
- Nic Fensom
- Nicholas Bradley
- Regina Yung
- Ron Nurwisah
- Sarah Morrison
- Scott Bardsley
- Tara Westover
- Tom Peacock
- Tristan Winch

This person needs to attend one more staff meeting:
- Diana Stech

To be a voting Ubyssey staff member, you must have contributed to three issues this term, and attended three out of five consecutive staff meetings. If you have not met this criteria, but think you should be a staff member, come to this week's staff meeting or talk to Daliah.

For a few dollars more...

by Mwalu Peeters

On February 21, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK)—the biggest of the multinational pharmaceutical corporations collectively known as "Big Pharma"—held a press conference. Amid talk of US$7.73 billion in profits and marketing schemes for a new asthma drug, CEO Jean-Pierre Garnier also announced plans to extend Glaxo's "Accelerated Access" programme—an initiative under which treatment drugs for AIDS would be made available to African governments at reduced rates. Under the expanded programme, "not-for-profit agencies with the ability to deliver the medicines" would also be eligible for the discount rates, a move expected to generate some positive publicity for GSK.

Glaxo could use the good press. In recent months it, and the other made members of "Big Pharma," have come increasingly under fire for their complicity in the AIDS epidemic that is ravaging Africa.

More than 25 million Africans are infected with the HIV virus. Of these, only 25,000—0.001 per cent—have access to the anti-retroviral drugs that would prolong their lives and make their disease manageable—drugs that are readily available in the west. These people are denied access to the medicines that they so desperately need because neither they nor their governments—many of which are in the throes of structural adjustment—cannot afford them. AZT and 3TC, two of the basic antiretrovirals, cost between $10,000-$15,000 per patient per year. In contrast, the average working person in South Africa, one of the richer nations on the continent, earns less than $3000 per year.

"More than 25 million Africans are infected with the HIV virus. Of these, only 0.001 per cent—have access to drugs that would prolong their lives..."

GlaxoSmithKline owns the patents to AZT and 3TC. Under international trade law—the agreement on Trade Related Intellectual Property rights, or TRIPs—they have the exclusive right to produce these drugs for the next 20 years. This artificial monopoly, enforced by the WTO, means that GSK can set the price for its patented drugs. That they do, at rates that far outstrip many people's ability to pay.

The reasoning put forth for the exclusive rights is that companies like Glaxo must be allowed to "protect their investment" in research and development, so that other pharmaceutical manufacturers can't just piggy-back on their efforts. Likewise, the high prices are deemed necessary in order to fund the development of new drugs, drugs that may be more effective than today's standards in fighting disease.

This reasoning is, in two syllables, bullshit. This is especially true in the case of AZT and 3TC, drugs that were developed through publicly-funded US research projects. Glaxo didn't invent them, it just ended up with the patents. Equally mired in doodoo is the contention that huge profits are necessary in order to fund future research. Companies like GlaxoSmithKline spend more than twice as much on marketing as they do on research and development. More fundamentally, many would question the logic behind the notion that millions of African lives should be sacrificed in order to produce medicines that will then be priced too high for Africans to afford.

Last May, in response to growing outrage over their apparent unwillingness to pull the knife out of the back of a dying continent, five companies—Boehringer Ingelheim, Bristol Meyers-Squibb, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck, and F. Hoffman-LaRoche—with the backing of the UNAids project, offered to sell their antiretrovirals to African governments at a price 85 per cent lower than the market rate—the aforementioned Accelerated Access plan. Since that time, however, only two companies, Glaxo and Boehringer Ingelheim, have actually moved to reduce prices. And even at these cut rates, the cost is still much too high for some African nations to afford.

There are other options. Several countries—including Brazil, Thailand, and India—have intellectual property laws that prioritise the health and well being of their people over the bottom lines of transnational corporations. These laws allow for the production of cheaper, generic versions of patented pharmaceuticals in cases of dire human need. The end result is a drug with the same medicinal properties as the ones produced by, "Big Pharma," but without the brand name and with a much lighter price tag.

On many occasions, producers of generic pharmaceuticals have offered to export their versions of anti-AIDS drugs to African nations. For example, Cipla, an Indian company, has offered to sell Kenya a generic version of the drug Fluconazole at a rate of $0.64 per pill, compared to a brand-name price of $10.56 per pill. This is much less than even the 'reduced' prices being offered by western drug producers.

Not surprisingly, the greedy minds behind "Big Pharma" have opposed and obstructed exchange such as these every step of the way. Firing accusations of international trade violations and intellectual piracy, they have launched legal action against African governments that would dare attempt to provide their citizens with adequate, affordable health care. For instance, in a lawsuit that began on March 5, 42 different pharmaceutical companies—including the $14 million-a-day earning GlaxoSmithKline—will challenge the South African government's right to import large amounts of generic drugs, or alternatively, to manufacture them within its own borders.

Which brings me back to Glaxo's press conference. While touting the new and expanded "Accelerated Access" program, Garnier also made it clear that GSK would continue to protect its patent rights, and would do all it could to maintain its monopoly grip on Africa's pulse.

"If we can furnish governments with these drugs at affordable prices, there's not much point in allowing any other company to come in," Garnier said.

But there may well be. If anything, the behaviour of GlaxoSmithKline and its "Big Pharma" ilk clearly illustrates that they are not fit to be stewards of world health. Even if they yield to mounting pressure—the result of recent media focus on Aids in Africa and not any moral agency—and finally offer the anti-retroviral drugs at prices equivalent to generic medicines, what of other infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis and pneumonia, whose treatment in developing nations is also only constrained by finances?

The greed and avarice of the big pharmaceutical corporations—and the system of patent laws, intellectual property rights, and international capital that supports them—in the face of human suffering speaks for itself.

Their willingness to sacrifice life—particularly Black life—in exchange for profits is a ringing condemnation of them. It serves as a wake-up call for anyone who feels that the impact of the 'new economic order'—based on the exchange of knowledge, ideas, and 'intellectual property'—on Africa and Africans will differ in any way, shape, or form from the impact of the old economic order—based on slavery, theft, and colonisation.

(Note: In a similar lawsuit, the US—led by everyone's favourite oil-bred, son-of-a-CIA-director—is mounting a challenge to Brazil's intellectual property laws. Brazil, through the production and distribution of generic drugs to its population, has been one of the few developing countries to combat AIDS with any success, dramatically decreasing the rate of HIV infection and mortality from AIDS in the past decade. This apparently, is not good for business and a WTO tribunal will soon rule on whether or not the government of Brazil will be allowed to continue to care for its people.) ❖

Surviving the Holocaust

by Ailin Choo

Call me what you will, but it came as quite a surprise to find out that Ruth Sigal looks and behaves like any other successful career woman.

After all, Sigal is no ordinary person. The director of the UBC Women's Resource Centre (WRC) is a 'miracle' survivor of the Holocaust, who has just recently begun to tell her story, using it to help raise awareness of the Holocaust and of persisting discriminatory attitudes in society. She was honoured last year for her efforts towards fighting racism in BC schools.

Sigal, born in Lithuania in 1936, tells a frightening story of her childhood experiences. She remembers the atrocities that occurred with an astounding vividness. Her warm smile fades as she recalls being taken away from her home and being forced to live in a ghetto at only five years of age. She tells of how the Jewish population in Lithuania before the war was reduced from 15,000 to 10,000 people.

"They were all taken out to the woods and shot by the Nazis...later, they would come in and rape women on the streets...it was awful."

Sigal explains how all parents were made to work throughout the day, and describes the games the children used to play in their absence. She mostly remembers playing in the mud, hungry, and waiting for her parents to come home with food.

Her most painful memory, though, is that of losing her sister. Sigal's face tenses up as she explains how the Nazis decided to kill all the children residing in the ghettos. She remembers her mother warning them against men who might come and take Sigal and her sister, Tamara, away.

Sigal was given the responsibility of looking after her sister, who was four years old at the time. She was instructed to hide under a pile of wood or to run over to her mother's cousin's house and hide. The Nazis finally came for the children on November 5, 1943.

"That's when I realised that we were in danger," Sigal says. "I knew that was the day because they came with trucks, barking dogs, and loudspeakers with lots of music, trying to obliterate the screaming of the children who were running around like mice trying to hide."

As instructed, Sigal rushed over to her mother's cousin's house to hide. He was a bachelor and a well-respected doctor in the ghetto at the time, so Sigal's family thought that the children would be safe with him.

"After hiding in the closet of the doctor's house for an extremely long time, my sister began crying for her mother," Sigal says, her voice faltering. After a while, she could no longer hear the loud music or barking dogs, and so she decided to come out of hiding. The two young girls were immediately spotted and thrown into a truck.

In what Sigal describes as a "miracle," her mother's cousin, by saving a German commandant's life, was able to gain a favour from the commandant: he was permitted to take one of the girls to safety. Sigal was taken out of the truck. Tamara, however, was left behind.

"In the meantime, the truck pulled away with Tamara on it, with her hands outstretched, saying, 'Don't leave me,' and they were gone. I later found out they were all taken to Auschwitz...she was four years old and I don't even have a picture of her."

Because her parents feared a quick return of the German soldiers, Sigal was rushed off to a rat-infested factory, where she spent four days in hiding. Her parents eventually found a Lithuanian-Catholic couple who were willing to take Sigal in as their own. "They were my saviours," Sigal says.

Her parents were finally able to escape the ghetto three weeks before the war ended, and immediately set out to get her back. Sigal remembers how she resisted returning to them—she says it took three to four months to wean her back.

"I figured I was Catholic and I didn't want to be considered a Jew. I hated them because they were Jews," she said.

The years after the war were chaotic ones for Sigal and her family. They immediately decided to leave Lithuania, and with the aid of fake passports, fled to Germany via Poland. They resided in a displaced persons' camp in Germany for five years, before making their way over to Canada. Thus began Sigal's experience as an immigrant.

Sigal recalls the difficulties she encountered in her constant movement from one place to another. She moved several times before finally arriving in Vancouver. Language was always one of the biggest problems. Lacking a proper education for 12 years, Sigal found it difficult to feel comfortable in her surroundings.

"It was hard with the immigrant experience, of being the new kid, of trying to fit in, never feeling that I'm part of anything, always feeling like the outsider" she says.

Nonetheless, Sigal managed to excel in Grades 11 and 12 and graduated with honours. She was accepted to UBC and pursued a degree in microbiology.

Sigal laughs as she begins to relate her most memorable moment at UBC. She begins by explaining that there were no language entrance tests at the time she applied, and that, as she had completed Grade 13 in Regina, she was put into second year. She was taking a 200-level English course, and her first assignment was to write an in-class essay about what she had done over the summer. She recalls her professor singling her out in class one day and asking to speak with her later on.

"He told me, 'I want you to get out of the university, you are not university material.' He said, 'if I have anything to do with it, you'll never graduate, because your English is atrocious" she said.

Sigal eventually changed the course she was taking, to one that did not require in-class essays. She beams as she tells me that she ended up with a final grade of 74 per cent. Her face then becomes serious as she tells me that this experience shed new light for her on the prevalence of racism in Canada.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Ruth Sigal draws on her Holocaust experience in an effort to end racism in local schools. AILIN CHOO PHOTO

"I have such an affinity towards new people who come to this country because they have no idea; people discriminate against you on a very superficial level without even knowing."

Sigal went on to work as a researcher, got married and had three children. After her third child was born, she decided to commit herself to volunteering at the UBC crisis centre. She said that she "simply couldn't just stay home and be a mum."

"We're the 'hidden children of the Holocaust' and the last generation to tell the story"

—Ruth Sigal, Holocaust survivor

Her work as a volunteer led to her interest in counseling and her realisation of the pleasure that comes from working with other people. She then decided to get her second degree and, at age 39, pursued graduate studies in counseling psychology. Placing her hand on mine, she says "And I've never regretted it."

Sigal hasn't always talked openly of her Holocaust experiences. She told me that in the past, she always hid her experiences and her Jewish identity.

"I was frightened to be out of the closet, so to speak, of being a Jew because of always being persecuted and always feeling afraid," she explains.

A turning point came when Sigal turned 50. Sigal says that two things began to happen. Firstly, she began to experience feelings of nostalgia, where she would begin to think back on her life, in search of her identity. Secondly, it was a period of time in which most Holocaust-surviving parents were beginning to die. These things, explains Sigal, led her to confront her own experiences.

"We're the 'hidden children of the Holocaust' and the last generation to tell the story. It's somehow my duty to tell the story," she says.

Sigal's decision to tell her story was prompted by the rising spectre of Holocaust denial. With the influx of immigrants to Canada, she was beginning to notice increasing amounts of racism towards other cultures. "You know you always have to find a scape-goat," she says.

These observations led her to become more active in her fight against racism, and to set up a support group for the 'hidden children' of the Holocaust. She started visiting schools and symposiums to speak about her experiences.

"They see me standing here, and I'm a director of the WRC, I'm an accomplished person, I've done many things, I'm educated and my attitude to life is very positive...so I want to teach that you can overcome adversity."

Sigal also combats racism by helping people come to a better realisation of their own and other's racist mentalities. She gives the example of one of her students who, in conversation one day, complimented one of Sigal's cousin's successful coffee businesses by saying, "you people really know how to do that."

"'You people' really got to me," says Sigal. "It's all stereotyping and it's all divisive...so you have to teach people to be assertive, to be able to know what's right or wrong and to not be afraid to speak up."

When asked if she still feels hatred towards the Germans for what they did to her family, Sigal admits that despite the numerous times she has told her story, she still feels extremely angry at what happened to her. She does not feel angry with German people as individuals, but she is angry with those who put people down or killed due to a difference in colour or religion.

"I'm just happy to be alive," exclaims Sigal. "What keeps me going is just being alive. First of all I feel very lucky that I survived...I feel that there's some purpose in my life, I have something to give back."

Despite her retirement at the end of the year, Sigal assures me that she will not quit volunteering her time to speak to people. She emphasises that education is the most important thing for this society and that she will never stop fighting against racism. She adds that racism in Canada is still a very prevalent issue and suggests that the solution lies in getting rid of the barriers and "being people with one another."

As I pack up to leave, Sigal hesitates and then asks what exactly I will be writing about her. She reminds me that she is uncomfortable with the idea of having an entire story written about her life, and wants me to assure her that I will not write in a manner that will make people pity her.

In telling her story, Sigal wants people to realise that there are issues out there to be confronted and overcome. She wants her story to touch not only Jewish people, but also all people who live in fear of being attacked, and of being discriminated against.

"The pain never goes away, that's what makes me a good counselor; because I understand that when you've come from that kind of a horror, I don't care how good things are now, that thing affects you all your life.

"Life is just so precious." This is the message she wants to convince people of. She has certainly convinced me. ❖

Race on TV and white mainstream monotony

by Ethel Tungohan

Watching mainstream television nowadays is much like getting a lobotomy. To enjoy television, I find it necessary to turn off my brain to stop my recurring, ongoing, painful analysis. Unfortunately, more often than not, the intellectual part of me emerges victorious, leaving me with no other recourse but to turn the television off or to throw my shoe at the screen.

There exists a great misconception that because the latter part of the 20th century has introduced prominent television minority actors like Bill Cosby, Lucy Liu, and Will Smith, problems of racism are gradually being rendered obsolete. Unfortunately, minority actors like those listed above are the exception rather than the rule. It also appears as though an unfair burden is placed on their shoulders to represent all blacks, or all Asians, or all minority groups, when different minority groups have diverse values and mindsets.

For example, when ABC first televised Margaret Cho's short-lived sitcom *All-American Girl*, news reports celebrating what a great stride this was for Asian-Americans proliferated. Yes, it is true that seeing an Asian woman headlining the show was a refreshing change from the white monotony of standard television fare, but it is too far-fetched to assume that Cho's character was "The Great (Yellow) Hope" for all Asians and all minority groups. To do so would be to assume that people who fall under the general category of 'Asians' are all part of the same ethnic mass, when each group has clear distinctions.

Of course, recognising that different racial groups have diverse values is crucial, and sometimes TV shows fall in the trap of propagating stereotypes under the guise of diversity appreciation. It is even more offensive when the token minority character amid an otherwise all-Caucasian cast brings to life stereotype after stereotype. It is as though TV show producers are clamoring to jump on the bandwagon of political correctness by having the minority character become the 'minority of all minorities.'

This blatant attempt at becoming more politically correct falls flat because the end result is characters who are not realistic people but are worthless parodies—or to put it mildly, the manifestation of what mainstream producers assume a minority character should be.

For example, Lucy Liu's character, Ling, in *Ally McBeal* is admirable in many respects. I admit to feeling ambivalent when asked to categorise her as a 'good' or as a 'bad' character for racial minorities—her strength, at least in comparison to Ally's innate, docile ineptness, is laudable. On the other hand, I cannot help but think that the way she is always so ferocious makes her the stereotypical Asian 'Dragon Lady.' Surely TV producers can create characters whose core values are promoted without resorting to turning them into ethnic caricatures.

And why is it that there are always just one or two ethnic characters in popular TV shows? To put it more succinctly, I get the feeling that television producers—in their quest to look more politically correct—introduce one or two minority characters into shows as a last minute attempt to make sure that they do not get accused of ignoring the cultural mosaic. Call me paranoid, but I get the feeling that producers are reluctant to add more racial minorities lest the show become 'too ethnic.'

To prevent the show from becoming 'too ethnic' or too concentrated on minority characterisation, most TV shows relegate our token minority players to the sidelines, either as a sidekick or as a secondary character.

This fear of the TV bigwigs is probably why we hardly (if ever) see certain minority groups like First Nations people, Southeast Asians, and Muslims. Still, such an excuse should not always mean that other people suffer as a result. It is imperative that diverse lifestyles are shown, if only to show that in multicultural countries like the United States and Canada, multicultural representation is truly practised, even in the realm of television.

That this is easier said than done need not be reiterated. That is why to promote different lifestyles and to break free from the reluctance of mainstream television networks like NBC and Fox, certain networks like UPN have made a determined effort to highlight minority characters.

In cable networks, we have different channels that have shows catering solely to one specific group. These are good because they allow minority characters to be represented on TV, even on a small cable channel. Unfortunately, in a way, they merely strengthen and emphasise minority separation from the mainstream.

In retrospect, at least minority representation now on mainstream television is better than it was decades ago. Contemporary shows like *The Practice*, *ER*, and *NYPD Blue* successfully represent minority characters.

But again, the same problems recur—for example, in *The Practice*, why is it that one of the two black characters has to resort to the 'tough black guy' stereotype? But at least efforts are being made to ameliorate the situation. Some effort is better than no effort whatsoever. Or is it?

Are efforts made by TV producers truly motivated by a desire for change? Are we settling here? Or is there really no point in my angry tirades?

Perhaps in a sense, I am being self-righteous in my indignation, for I, too, propagate the arduous cycle of stereotyping. Perhaps ignorance really is bliss. But being ceaselessly inundated by image after image that solidifies the status quo, and not seeing yourself represented in television, can have harmful effects. It invalidates your lifestyle and makes you believe that the standard white upper middle-class tradition is normal—that your experiences are not valid. At least I am taking a decisive stance. ❖

Three black kids, three white dogs

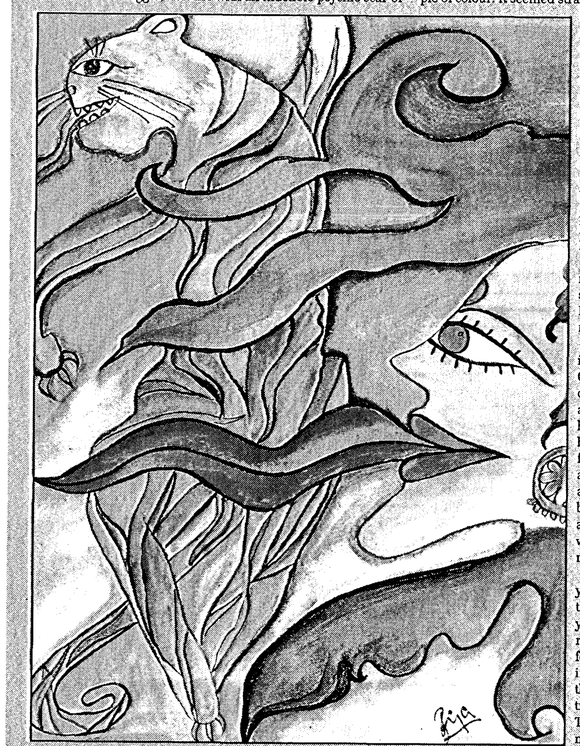
by George Fuller

So I'm a little white boy in a nice clean, white world—Kingston, Ontario, 1928. Difference didn't really threaten. How could it? It really didn't exist, at least not visibly. Was it not there because nothing brought it to consciousness, or was it simply the segregated world?

Memories become selective over time. When I was about six, my family spent a year in Washington, DC. During this time, my first memories of people of colour, of African descent, and the word 'nigger,' left me with an indelible psychic scar of alienation, wounding, radical difference, fear and even revulsion. Returning safely to white Winnipeg removed the chance of further encounter and indoctrination.

But did it? Who were these French-speaking people across the river in St. Boniface, with their separate ways, different language, and demands for recognition? Not like me and mine, but objects of suspicion, ferment, and even division—potential thorns in our comfortable world.

At the age of 16, I moved to the US. I entered a university chartered by the US Congress, which barred admission to people of colour. It seemed strange, as a Canadian kid, but nothing to get worked up about. Then, into my life came a university student of African-American descent. Visiting with his family was the start of my consciousness raising. I spent a three-day weekend in a totally 'black' world I never knew existed.



Suddenly, unknown subconscious fears surfaced: Was I the enemy? How should I have behaved? Was it safe to eat their food? Why an all 'black' world? How come I didn't feel this way in North Africa three years earlier?

Such was the introduction to my culturally-molded subconscious racist, prejudicial emotions. It raised more questions than I was ready for or could answer.

Some ten years later, a rat-infested apartment in New York City drove my wife and I, both students at the time, to apply for an apartment in a low-income public housing area. We were placed in a high-rise project in Harlem, the famous Manhattan 'black' ghetto, as, at the time, the only white tenants in a project of six to eight buildings each of 21 floors with 11 apartments per floor. I was also working in the same area as a community worker and legal advisor.

When it comes to confronting your deeply-ingrained prejudices, there is nothing like immersing yourself in a community your own race has oppressed. It can be a profoundly enlightening and frightening experience. No longer are these people a faceless mass, indistinguishable one from another. Their emotions spring alive, recognisable through each unique face and gesture, through friendly smiles, expressionless self-protective stares, and eyes of anger and hostility. Each personal encounter is loaded with responses whose genesis lurks in the stormy history of 350 years of slavery and oppression.

The ghetto can be a dangerous place, not only for its regular occupants, but especially for a foreigner. Repressed anger at denial of self-worth and opportunity make your presence a potential ignition flash point.

It was the early 1960s, the peak of the black fight for civil rights, and we were swept into involvement. It was in confronting the white community and its racist legal system that we discovered how deeply-rooted our racist assumptions were.

This unanticipated journey of self-discovery led me to reflect on my inherited prejudice as an Anglo-Canadian toward my fellow French Canadians. It made it possible to see the parallels between the oppression of people of African ancestry and our history as Europeans in the invasion and genocidal destruction of the original inhabitants of these continents, now known as the Americas. Parallels that leave scars that, like it or not, affect everything we do as Canadians.

As a family, we entered into interracial adoption and foster parenting. As a result, we were continually sensitised to underlying racism, as our children experienced it through their youth into their adulthood.

Even today, our youngest son, an African-Canadian night-club singer, will be stopped by the cops in Vancouver when he is driving home after gigs in his girlfriend's car, on suspicion of being, perhaps a pimp, perhaps driving a stolen vehicle—simply because of his race.

Four years ago, while teaching in China, some students asked what a Canadian is. I told them they should probably wait 60 years for an answer, as we are a people undergoing such rapid change. I explained that in many ways Canada represents a unique set of circumstances. Through our history of immigration, particularly since the end of the Second World War, we have become one of the most racially and culturally diverse nations in the world, and the process is continuing, perhaps accelerating. Yet, our children are raised in tragic ignorance of this history. Rather than appreciating the diverse nature of being a Canadian, they are all-too-frequently polarised by their differences.

We are most comfortable with what we see in the mirror. The real issue for any society is to create a climate that allows us to celebrate our uniqueness, to preserve it for ourselves, and share it with each other, while at the same time admitting our exclusive tendencies. Isn't it possible for us to be vulnerable enough to each other, to share our worst tendencies so that we can care for each other in our common humanity? The alternative is ugly. We have thousands of years of endless tragic examples.

But let us not forget that as we preach to the rest of the world and seek restitution for our own historical wrongs, that we are all invaders in the land of First Nations people. Settling with them is the inevitable first priority. ❖

ALL ART BY PRIYA BALA

Dream casting the motherland: innocence found

by Adam Rudder

The other day I was thinking of my trip to Africa, 'back' to the motherland. There are so many little everyday things that are different about Ghana. I am thinking of a mini-bus ride, and a lesson about love taught by an African stranger. He was a Christian, born a Muslim, and had read some Buddhism.

JapanMan (a Ghanian who had been nicknamed JapanMan due to his interest in Buddhism and Japanese culture) and I discussed the pitfalls of the Christian religion for the African man on a mini-bus speeding for Russia (a suburb of Accra).

"Yeah man, the whites don't see the unity, and this ignorance is a persistent theme in the way they study and live Christianity," I ventured, with new confidence found on a mini-bus where the majority of people were black.

"Yes sir! Before the white man came we had our own religion. It was a religion that was set in the particular way that African's see the world. The Bible can be used by black people—but we have to read it and understand it for ourselves. Everywhere, there is the white man's Christianity," JapanMan said, shaking his head.

At that point, the man sitting in the row in front of us cut in politely but with confidence, "Do you mind if I join your conversation?"

I smiled. That is what I love about Ghana.

"I overheard you talking about disharmony among the different peoples and races of the world. This was not God's plan. God split the people of the world at the Tower of Babel as a test, so that we might overcome our differences, regardless of the languages that we speak. There is another language—not captured in words, in symbols constructed in Twee or English or French..."

"Yes, one love, we have to learn to work together," JapanMan broke in.

"But the problem is power. The white man has the power to enforce his divisive form of Christianity—and his racialised conceptions of the world," I added, feeling that this whole love argument was oversimplifying the issue.

"Yes, young brother, but no one has the power to take that love that you have in your heart. You have to give that away," the man said with a smile that succeeded in melting some of the aggression I was beginning to feel.

Damn, these issues get me heated. Not at this gentle man who sat in front of me—I respected and valued his input. It was in myself—it is this anger that feels uncontrollable, the revenge I only know as unquenchable.

It furls my brow, hardens my eyes and puts edges on my words. I am a product of that Babylon system, I have evidence ingrained in my psyche. My father passed it on in pissed-off and melancholic glances. Sometimes I feel like that is how I have inherited the middle passages through my father's eyes. Eyes that tell of the pain in our ancestral souls. It is 400 years of pain, a product of violence, manifest in this anger that lies just below those subtle glances. A story that lingers in the silences, too dangerous to be spoken.

These thoughts, thoughts that did not even have words, ran through my mind in waves of emotional memory. As if he had been reading them, the man broke into my passing thoughts, and responded with words: "We have too much hate in the world already, we need to advocate on the behalf of love. Jesus taught that we must stay our judgments, love without condition, and lead by example."

His words rained down and there was growth, devoid of reaction. Growth, of that same kind that first manifested love from Divine word.

I shook my head and smiled warmly. He had seen that ghost, hatred, manifest from violence passed, that shadow that meanders in my soul, yearning for physical vengeance. He had seen it, and in his glance I felt a sense of calm. If even for a moment, I became aware of that love that I had forsaken. I could tell that the warmth of my smile was received, it reflected back to me in the glint of his eyes. There was pause.

"We need to follow the example of Christ and love our fellow men without condition. And we must start now," he paused for a moment. "I love you."

I sat frozen in a moment. The ever-present music on the mini-bus paused. His words pierced through the story that had been constructing my surroundings. The story that helps me survive back home. The story of better and worse, that gives power to differences. I moved back slightly, and felt as though I had been revealed to myself, through the fog of illusion that protects me from the judgment of white suburban neighbourhoods—but that also keeps me shielded from the possibility of kinder realities. This was new, unexplainable, a simple concept given life in a manner which I had never experienced before. These are the fruits of another land, another knowledge, different from the one I had unknowingly invested so much unspoken confidence in. My front receded, for a moment the speech battle on the bus that I had created withdrew.

"Yeah, I love you too."

And that was it, he was leading me places where love dominated and defined the context in which we spoke. Words from this black man's mouth left me with a love unexplored—solace from the anger that twists my soul. And as I turned to face the window, in an effort to escape the intensity of that moment, I saw the countryside pass me by, and became aware that Ghana had once again transformed me. ❖

Global interracial community

by Terumi Taylor

What is it about Islam that makes people consider it a race rather than a religion? Islam is not a race in any way, shape or form. Muslims, the followers of Islam, come from just as diverse racial backgrounds as Christians. The colour-blind nature of Islam is manifest through the pervasiveness of racial harmony in mosques, in the activities of Muslim communities, and in interracial marriages.

Many people seem to have severe misperceptions about Islam or Muslims. These misperceptions are present not only as media bias, but also extend to the general population regarding who Muslims are and what Islam is all about.

You can receive your dose of blatant media misrepresentations by watching *The Marine and the Princess* or *Not Without My Daughter*. These movies thrive on stereotypes and false images of the lives and motivations of Muslims. Muslims, and in particular Muslim women, are shown to be a voiceless and weak people, forced to partake in what the media wants you to believe are the evils of Islam.

The unfounded fear of Islam was most vividly demonstrated during the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, when CNN announced a search for several Islamic-Arab terrorists. The bomber turned out to be Timothy McVeigh, a white American 'Christian.'

Islam is not an NBC made-for-television movie, but is one of the few religions that blatantly opposes colour intolerance and racial prejudice. In Islam, Muslims learn that their intentions and actions are most important, and that race is irrelevant.

Some will argue that Islam is for Arabs only, but this is far from the truth. Islam does not give Arabs any superiority or advantage over others, but rather asserts that "the best people in the eyes of God are those who are the most pious." (Quran, 49:13)

According to UN figures, there are around 1.1 billion Muslims worldwide, and of these people, less than 25 per cent are Arab, with the remaining 75 per cent residing in areas outside the Middle East, and identifying as Indonesians, Indians, Pakistanis, or Malaysians—to name a few.

In addition, there are many Muslims, such as Yusef Islam, also known as Cat Stevens—the folk singer who changed his life through Islam—or myself, who are white Anglo-Saxons.

As members of this society, we should seek to understand others instead of judging. Shakespeare once wrote, "There is no darkness but ignorance," so let us seek the light through understanding and education. A greater comprehension of complete systems, including Islam, that have had and continue to have success in establishing a global interracial community, should be seriously considered in seeking solutions to intolerance and prejudice. ❖

Identity

By Alan Tang

"I felt like a marginal man. I could identify with two cultures...but I was never at ease with either."

—Dr Miguel Tecson, March, 2000

If you visit the Museum of Anthropology, you may notice this quote on the wall. It comes from a small exhibition where Tecson explains his plight as a new immigrant to Vancouver in the 1950s. It is seldom that one quote sticks in the mind, but this quote unknowingly nudged itself into mine.

Is he asking for our pity or merely our acceptance?

It hardly seems like a young man given the opportunities and riches of a new land can be considered a victim in any sense of the word. Yet my heart goes out to him as I consider the struggles he must have endured in a different place, at a different time, when racial intolerance was in vogue. Or is it because I somehow see myself in his statement?

Vancouver is now "the most Asian" city in North America, my *Lonely Planet* guide proudly declares. Why should I care, though? It is not like I relate to these people. What I really wanted to know was how many Australians there were in Canada.

Yet I took a strange comfort in knowing that there were Asian people in Vancouver. But how could that be?

I had been the secret president of the Anti-Asian club for so long. I would denounce all things Asian. I would mock their polyester clothing, curse their Japanese cars, ridicule their 'pearl tea,' stare at them rudely, and call them uncouth when they persisted in speaking loudly to someone two feet away from them.

Give me sheepskin, a Holden (you call it 'GM' in Canada), and a Tooheys any day.

There had never been a battle between cultures in my mind. I never once gave a second thought to my identity or race back in Sydney, but why now in Vancouver? Vancouver and Sydney are so similar, but my whole life has changed since I arrived here. Vancouver has become a haven for my freedom, where the constraints of home are so far from my mind. In many ways, I am living a double life.

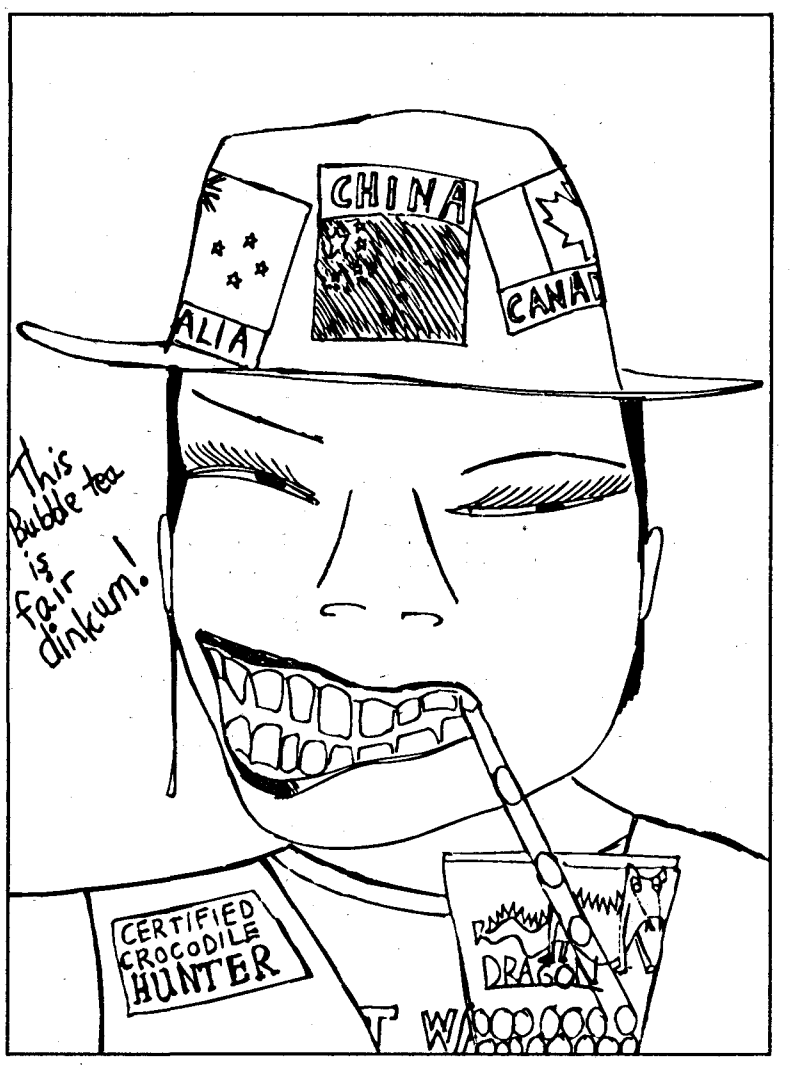
"You, Asian boy, $20 discount!" a shopkeeper declares to me.

Me, "Asian boy?" What the hell was he going on about? But instead of starting a Freudian discussion about my identity, I walked away with a heavier wallet, ashamed that my values could be so easily bought.

"I am Australian" I proudly proclaim when the question, "Where are you from?" is asked. Once in a while, wondering eyes scanning my features, while eyebrows meet in confusion. "Australian?" they ask themselves.

"Funny, you don't look Australian" has never been said to me, and for the love of God, I hope it never is. Rage will hold no bounds if I ever dive into my well-rehearsed soliloquy of race, culture and multiculturalism in Australia.

Yet for the next couple of months I will continue to live my double life, telling myself I have no doubts about my identity. All I know is that I am not a victim and never will be. ❖



A visionary for First Nations education

by Julia Christensen

Most UBC students have never been inside the First Nations House of Learning. They may have passed the building, noticing how its design distinguishes it from other buildings on campus. But most students probably don't know what actually goes on inside the longhouse. They probably don't know about the dedicated people who strive to make the House of Learning a "home away from home" for First Nations students at UBC.

And they are probably not aware that Jo-ann Archibald, director of the House of Learning, has been nationally and internationally recognised for her life-long dedication to facilitating First Nations learning in the education system—for First Nations and non-native students alike.

In 1995, Archibald received the Justice Achievement Award, an international award from the National Association for Court Management, for her work in developing First Nations justice curricula.

In 2000, she also received a National Aboriginal Achievement Award for her work as "an agent of change and unrivaled pioneer in the advancement of First Nations education."

Growing up just outside Chilliwack, Archibald, a member of the Sto:lo people, was raised on the Sowahlie First Nation reserve.

Life on the reserve was isolated but very happy, she says—a beautiful place to grow up, surrounded by mountains, rivers, and fields. Archibald feels quite fortunate because of her childhood experiences. She spent a lot of time playing "in nature" with her friends on the reserve.

Starting public school off-reserve when she was five marked a major transition in Archibald's life. Growing up on the reserve, she had never felt different. She had never felt uncomfortable. But life off the reserve was different.

"Of course, we always knew we were different, in a sense. In the sense of who we were as Sto:lo people," Archibald says. "I felt in high school especially that I knew I was different culturally and there was a difference to where I lived. I could sense that but at the same time I didn't understand why...It was not an easy experience because you do experience forms of racism...names that kids call you and that hurts."

Archibald says she chose to create her own identity, rather than accept any labels that others put on her. She did well in her studies. She excelled in sports. She was popular. She was even prom queen, a fact that she reveals with an embarrassed giggle. Yet even though she did her best to fit in, she still felt different.

While all the reserve kids attended elementary school, few made it to the high school level. Archibald was one of only two First Nations students in her graduating class. What helped her graduate,when others dropped out, she says, was the support she received from the town and "something inside" her that pushed her to work hard and study.

Archibald says that going to public school and then returning home to the reserve each day was her first experience living in "two different worlds."

"A lot of our elders say we have to learn to live in two different worlds and I really feel that difference," she says. At the House of Learning, it's that sense of 'living in two worlds' that Archibald always keeps in mind. The longhouse, she says, is intended to be a "home away from home"—a world separate from the rest of the university, where First Nations students can feel safe, comfortable, and 'at home.'

"For aboriginal people," Archibald says, "we get used to living in these different environments or worlds but we need to have a place that feels like us."

It was this same desire to create a place for First Nations people that led her to consider a career in teaching.

Throughout her high school years, Archibald felt disappointed at the lack of First Nations representation in the curriculum. She was taught about the problems of aboriginal communities in Canada and the history of the Iroquois, but nothing about First Nations history in BC. So Archibald applied to UBC and was accepted into the Faculty of Education.

JO-ANN ARCHIBALD: strives to create a "home-away-from-home" for First Nations students at UBC.
JULIA CHRISTENSEN PHOTO

"I was very much interested in learning more about First Nations history and culture," she says. "Although when you grow up in the community, you attend the various functions, at that time you don't realise that's part of our culture...That was part of being Sto:lo but I didn't recognise it, of course at the time."

Making the move to Vancouver was not easy for Archibald, and her first year at university was a lonely one. While she poured herself into her studies, she desperately missed her home community and felt bewildered by the size and activity of the UBC campus.

By her second year, Archibald had managed to find a couple other First Nations students at UBC, "even though there were very few First Nations students at that time," and they decided to rent an apartment together.

After second year, Archibald married her long-term boyfriend from Chilliwack. He moved with her to Vancouver, and she began her third year of university as a married woman.

After Archibald graduated from UBC, she spent two years teaching at an elementary school in North Vancouver before she and her husband decided to move back to Chilliwack. There, Archibald taught at primary schools for several years before becoming involved with the Coqualeetza Cultural Centre. At the centre, she worked with other teachers and elders to develop curriculum for elementary and secondary students that looked at the history of the Sto:lo people.

By this time, Archibald had given birth to her only child, a daughter. Tragically, two years after her daughter's birth, Archibald's husband was killed in a car accident.

The support of the Sowahlie community, and the Archibald and her late husband's families, helped her overcome many of the obstacles she faced as a working single mother. These support networks were equally important in helping to raise Archibald's daughter, whom she feels benefited from all the family and friends she had surrounding her as she grew up.

While Archibald continued her work with the cultural centre, she also began a Master's program part-time at SFU. Her research focused on local First Nations curricula.

Studying for her Master's, working at the centre, and raising a daughter all at the same time, made for one of the most challenging periods of Archibald's life. Finding balance was hard, she says. Her first priority was giving her daughter a good home life. Work came second. Graduate research was often left at the bottom of the pile. But she knew it was something she had to do and she pushed on.

After Archibald received her Master's degree, she pursued a PhD program, again part-time, at SFU. Researching for, and writing, her PhD thesis was a seven-year process as she continued to work full-time and raise her daughter.

Meanwhile, Archibald's work with the cultural centre ended and she began working for the Native Indian Education Program (NITEP). Most of the students were women with children, and were very motivated, serious learners. This was Archibald's first experience teaching adults and she loved it.

Archibald was eventually approached to fill the head position at NITEP. Though initially doubting her abilities, Archibald decided to take the job. She packed up her daughter and moved again to Vancouver, a decision she didn't regret.

While heading NITEP, Archibald also worked with Master's students and taught a few courses at UBC. Then the position of director at UBC's House of Learning became available, and she was approached to apply. Again she resisted, fearing she didn't have what it would take. Something inside of her, however, pushed her to accept.

"I think what pushed me to take these leadership positions is because...they were opportunities to make some positive changes in programs or within the institution. I was always much more interested in changing the institution to be a better place for First Nations learning, whether it's for the First Nations learners themselves or if it's about learning about First Nations."

As an aboriginal woman working at UBC, she feels she has a great responsibility to the First Nations community. "My teaching is to give back [to the community] and I am there to serve," she says. To First Nations people, Archibald adds, community service is given more priority than research. Working within the university is, therefore, very challenging because "at university, research is a priority...and community service is bottom of the list."

"I have the aboriginal world that I am responsible to so I must ensure that I meet those responsibilities but then I am also within academia so I must work to meet those responsibilities, too, and they can clash...I choose to stay in academia because I think we need to have First Nations indigenous knowledge within academia...it needs to have a place and it's my job to provide it," she says.

Archibald has accomplished a lot during her time as director of the House of Learning. A First Nations library, child-care centre, and fully-equipped computer lab were all established under her leadership.

She has also worked extensively with the University of Auckland in New Zealand as she is director for the International Research Institute for Maori and Indigenous Education—an institute that is working to share resources, perform collaborative research and provide staff, student, and faculty exchanges.

Archibald also successfully developed an aboriginal admissions policy with UBC and worked to create a new First Nations studies program in the Faculty of Arts. Trek 2000 also set targets to increase First Nations enrolment at UBC. Archibald stresses the significance of a major university like UBC looking at what it can do to increase the number of First Nations students on campus.

But her biggest accomplishment as director, says Archibald, is working to make the House of Learning a home for First Nations students.

"It is an intellectual home... because there are many opportunities here to learn about First Nations people and First Nations issues. It's also an important cultural home—we have lots of different cultural activities. It's a social home. It's a spiritual home. It's an emotional home. I feel good about my part in making the house a home in that it addresses all those areas."

Archibald's term as director will end this June. As she looks back on her term at the House of Learning, she feels proud of what she has been able to accomplish. Looking forward to the future, she is excited about things to come. After she leaves the longhouse, she plans to take a year's leave, and will travel to London, where her daughter lives. After her sabbatical, she plans to return to teach in UBC's Faculty of Education.

"I'm really looking forward to it," she says. "I really miss teaching courses. I find working with university students very invigorating."

For now, Archibald will continue her hectic life, still trying to balance all that is important to her. When she does get some free time, she listens to the child inside of her who still wants to play "in nature," and goes for long walks in the woods or on the beach. It was that same child inside, frustrated with the lack of First Nations material in her high school courses, that has pushed Archibald to make all of the great leaps that she has made throughout her career. And First Nations education is stronger for it. ❖

Head-tax redress

by Kim Thé

"Nobody outlives Gim here," boasts Gim Wong, a sharp and robust 78-year-old who will proudly parade his zest for life when given a sympathetic ear.

Wong, clad in a plaid shirt, gray slacks and his purple felt army beret, stands with an extended, clenched fist and furrowed brow, while singing the last words to the Canadian national anthem in a wavering voice. He smiles upon hearing my applause and laughter and tells me that his love for amateur singing only draws negative remarks from his family.

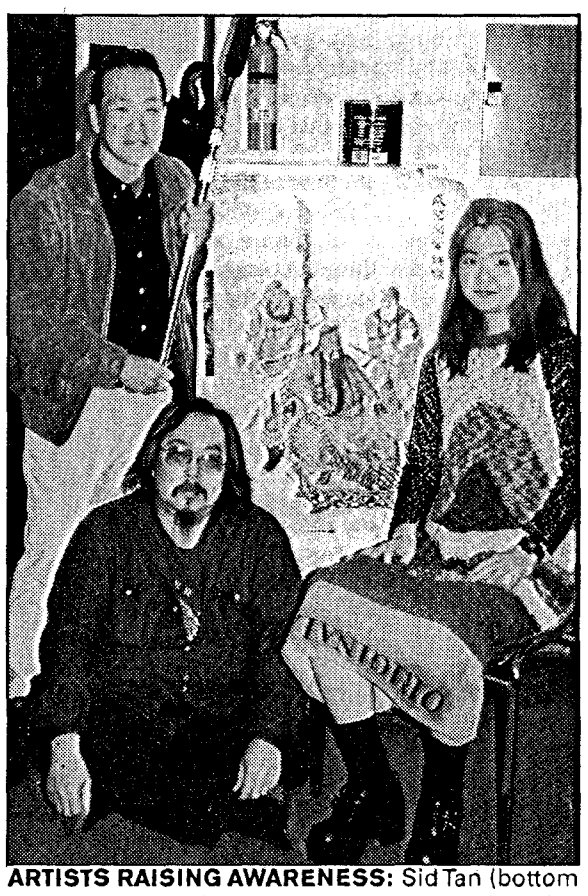
Not only is Wong probably, as he claims, one of the few Chinese Canadians who can sing both the American and Canadian national anthems, he is also one of the few surviving Chinese-Canadian army veterans. He dodged bullets and deked out enemy planes as an aviator and gunner during the Second World War. More recently, he earned a reputation for being one of the few Asian race-car drivers, by speeding around tracks along the coast for 11 years.

Since the 1950s, Wong has spent about seven months in jail on various charges, including disturbing the peace, obstructing justice and swearing at the Crown. But most notably, he is one of the few Chinese-Canadians from his generation whose many encounters with racism have goaded him to become a rabble-rousing activist, seeking redress for the former Chinese Head Tax and Exclusion Act in Canada.

After thousands of Chinese helped build the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885, Chinese immigrants were forced to pay a head tax upon entering Canada. The price started at $50, was raised to $100 in 1890 and was $500 between the years of 1904 and 1923. During this period, white Canadians feared the 'mongolianisation of BC' and the so-called 'yellow peril.'

Wong recounts the hardships that his grandfather, father, and mother experienced when they came to North America in the early 1900s. His maternal grandfather docked at New York in a dilapidated junk after being barred from landing at other ports, including Vancouver, Victoria, San Francisco, and Honolulu. His wife didn't find out that he had arrived safely in New York until one year later.

For the next six or seven years, Wong's grandfather laboured as a houseboy. Wong explains that the poor living conditions and cold weather probably accounted for his grandfather's early death at the age of 45.



ARTISTS RAISING AWARENESS: Sid Tan (bottom left), Sean Gunn (top left), Qloydda ShinE (right) seek to raise head tax awareness. KIM THÉ PHOTO

In 1906, Wong's father came to Canada at the age of 15 and paid the $500 head tax. Years later he went back to China after the First World War to get married, due to the lack of Chinese women in Vancouver's Chinatown. When his mother arrived in 1919, she had to pay the $500 head tax too. Wong compares his mother's exodus from China to Canada to that of the hundreds of Fujian boat migrants who landed in several boat loads at the Canadian Forces Base on Vancouver Island, beginning in July, 1999 under similar dire conditions. His mom told him that she never left her bunk in the bottom of the filthy junk during the 20 day voyage.

After landing in Vancouver, Wong's mother was interred and quarantined with the surviving Chinese women at the bottom of Burrard Street, for more than one month in unsanitary conditions.

Wong and his parents worked in the laundry along with his uncles, who first established the business in Vancouver's Chinatown.

Then, in 1923 the federal government passed a harsher law, known as the Chinese Immigration Act or the Exclusion Act, which barred all Chinese immigrants from entering Canada. Wong says that such overt racism directed at the Chinese community created a bachelor society in Canada and separated families for 24 years. His eldest uncle only got to see his son and daughter once, when he went back to China for one year.

A trip home meant that you had "to give up the farm and pack up all your stuff, you would go for one year and then have to start all over again, completely broke," said Wong.

Although Wong was born and raised in Vancouver's Chinatown, he has felt the effects of these racist laws, which continue to reverberate today. Wong cites racist encounters and fights he has had with police and tenants over the years as examples of existing racism.

Wong now wants to speak for his 'voiceless' descendants. Along with about 50 head tax payers, their wives and descendants, Wong has signed up to be a plaintiff for the class action lawsuit that was filed on December 18, 2000 by the representative plaintiffs, 93-year-old head tax payer Shack Jang Mak, 89-year-old widow Quen-ying Lee and her 50-year-old son Yew Lee, against the Canadian federal government for the $18.9-24 million that was collected in head taxes under the Exclusion Act.

Wong says that most of his Chinese friends from his generation do not understand his adamancy in advocating the need for redress. But Wong has remained resolute and determined to bring justice to his 30 relatives (most of whom are deceased), who were victims of discrimination and segregation.

The majority of the people who support redress are descendants of head-tax payers. Out of the approximate 81,000 head tax payers, there are about 200 alive today.

Victor Wong is a Canadian-born descendant speaking on behalf of his grandparents, who had to pay head taxes. Wong was the founder, and is currently the executive director, of the Vancouver Association of Chinese Canadians, a chapter of the Canadian Chinese National Council (CCNC), which helped make court action possible.

Wong recalls that he didn't actually learn about a racist history against the Chinese until he went to UBC. At home, the past was not talked about regularly. Wong says that because of the Exclusion Act, his grandfather, who entered Canada in 1912, visited his wife in China only four times over 21 years.

After the Exclusion Act was repealed in 1947, Wong's father moved to Canada in 1950, and got married in 1958. Such family fragmentation has led Wong to seek redress for his parents, grandparents and the larger Chinese community. He has been fighting for it since the CNCC first lobbied for redress in 1984.

Wong says that after a man named Mr. Mark approached his MP, Margaret Mitchell, in 1984 to help him get his head tax money back with interest, the council in Toronto received over 2400 claims from head tax payers, mostly from BC.

In 1988, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney settled the Japanese redress and paid a total of $600 million, about $21,000 to each surviving interned victim in symbolic compensation. The success of this settlement encouraged the Chinese-Canadian community to push for their own redress movement. However, despite the 4000 or so claims that were gathered and presented to the government in 1993, the community was only awarded an apology from Secretary of State, Sheila Finestone.

TAKING ACTION: Gim Wong stands proud in his Army beret. KIM THÉ PHOTO

The class action lawsuit, drawn up in November, was filed in December due to the government's rejection of the claims and refusal to compensate those Chinese-Canadians who incurred race-based taxes. If the lawsuit is rejected or dismissed, Wong says that he will speak to the United Nations.

Sid Tan, a member of VACC and an activist and local community television producer, is another descendent who is tenaciously seeking redress for his grandparents. Tan wants the "$1.2 billion (compounded amount) taken from the *Lo Wah Kiu* [Old overseas Chinese]" in head taxes to be given back. "In those days $500 was a lot of money. It could buy you two houses today," says Tan.

His grandfather, Chow Gim Tan, managed to raise $500 and came to Saskatchewan because of the confiscation of his property in China during the 1949 Chinese Cultural Revolution, and the repeal of the Exclusion Act. In Saskatchewan, "he became a cook, paid his taxes and contributed to charity, while separated for a quarter century from his wife and family in China," says Tan.

Tan is the only voice left who can speak for his grandmother. She has told him of her fear in claiming her rights. "No, what if they come and tie you up and kill you?" Tan is not surprised by the intense terror that his grandmother feels due to the amount of suffering she has undergone.

Another supporter of the redress movement is Chinese-Canadian author, singer/songwriter Sean Gunn. Korean born author, singer/songwriter Qloydda ShinE joins Gunn in singing the song, "Head Tax Blues," to raise awareness about these racist issues. Although ShinE and her family weren't affected by racist legislation, she believes that she should fight for this cause because she has an interest in human justice. ShinE notes that "history is a part of our cellular conscious memory, time doesn't make things better."

But in opposition to these redress advocators, who refuse to forget this aspect of history, are those who do not support the redress movement.

My own grandfather, David Yuen, has accepted the injustices of history and moved on. Yuen concedes that although his father came to Victoria in the early 1900s, when racist laws were enacted, one has to accept that that was the law then.

"The Chinese immigrants that came from China weren't forced to come to Canada, it's not like the Japanese-Canadians who were forced to evacuate the Pacific coast," he said. "The difference is that the Japanese were residents here, whereas the Chinese were immigrants. The Japanese had no choice. There's no parallel here."

Both Roy Mah and On Lim, whose fathers had to pay head taxes upon entering Canada, agree that Chinese were not forced to come to Canada. Although Mah admits that it was a racist law targeted at Chinese, he compares paying the head tax to paying an admission fee at a theatre or a license fee for a hunting or fishing permit. He says that the Chinese were given the opportunity for a better life in Canada, which came with a price.

Mah asserts that in China, the Chinese who came to Canada were not considered 'victims,' but, rather, the 'the cream of society,' who were privileged and fortunate. Although angered by the unfair Exclusion Act, which they call, the "Humiliation Act," Mah and Lim do not want individual compensation. They argue that since most of the head tax payers have died, they would rather have the government offer a formal apology and collective compensation that would go to establishing "an education fund that could include a chapter on this part of history in textbooks to prevent mistakes from occurring again." Mah also suggests that a few million dollars could be used "to build a landmark commemorating the Exclusion Act."

Yuen, Lim and Mah all acknowledge that racism did exist while they were growing up. Yuen recalls that his schoolteacher replaced his Chinese name with an English one. Lim recalls that the Chinese were not allowed to move outside of Vancouver's Chinatown, while Mah remembers the segregated Asian schools. All three speak of being denied the opportunity of professional jobs, and of being refused entry into places. But despite having endured such overt racism, they have persevered and have not harboured deep animosity or resentment towards white Canadians.

What remains to be answered is why people from the same generation, with similar experiences, have such opposing perspectives. It seems the definition of oppression is very subjective and relative.

And why is it that the larger Chinese community is not interested in the redress movement?

The complexities of this contentious issue are manifold and ambiguous. Hopefully, what the larger Chinese community can agree upon is the need to increase awareness and educate the general public about a significant part of Canadian history that has resonated through the consciousness of several generations of Chinese Canadians. ❖

Immigrants face discrimination

by Andrew Kostyniuk

"They're taking all our jobs!" A couple of years ago, I heard this misinformed opinion from people my own age much more often than I had expected. It was made in the context of the near-hysteria in BC over the boatloads of Chinese refugees who had arrived on the icy shores of Vancouver Island. Numerous discussions at the time brought me to the realisation that I was a bit naïve; I had assumed that this kind of ugly rhetoric had all but died out in Canada. Evidently not.

BC is the second most popular Canadian destination for immigrants, with 40,000-45,000 people arriving each year from Asia, Africa, Europe, the Americas, and Oceania. This number includes about 2700 refugees, the great majority of whom originate from Africa. Among the refugees, about 1100 are conventional refugees who are government and/or group sponsored, while the rest are asylum seekers or refugee claimants—people who left their home countries fearing for their lives.

Refugee claimants who have yet to be granted citizenship (which can take up to 12 years), lack the basic sense of security that most of us take for granted. In Canada, they can be detained and held for an indefinite period of time, without charges of criminal wrongdoing and without any given reasons. The Chinese refugees fall under this category, and 20 are still being detained. The reasoning behind this treatment is that asylum seekers are considered a 'security risk' by our judicial system.

Refugees may be held in detention until they attend deportation hearings. The number of people deported from Canada jumped from 2379 in 1989 to 8296 in 1993, three-quarters of whom were not considered to be criminals.

Chris Friesen, director of Settlement Services of the Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia (ISSBC), said that the millions of dollars spent annually by the Immigrant and Refugee Board on the detention of refugees could be spent much more constructively. Friesen also notes the lack of appeal mechanisms to review the findings of the hearings. He further cites Canada's deportation of torture survivors back to countries where torture is routinely practised.

Most people would likely agree that claimants who have committed violent crimes here in Canada should immediately be sent back to their country of origin. This contrasts sharply with the idea of detaining refugee claimants for up to 15 months without hearings, which is unacceptable on human rights and fiscal grounds. While there is a mandatory judicial review every seven days, this has helped the detained Chinese refugees little.

Canada is thought by some to be the least racist country in the world. In reality, immigrants and refugees, particularly women and members of visible minorities, face systemic discrimination upon arrival in Canada. They face racial barriers in areas such as housing, employment, and social acceptance. The root causes of these barriers are many, including our traditional immigrant profile, and the recent shift in source countries.

Part of the problem stems from the history of racial and cultural discrimination in this country. At the time of Confederation, only eight per cent of the population was not French or British. In the next half century, several million immigrants, primarily from northern Europe, were let in to the country as it expanded westward. The all-time peak in immigration was reached in 1913, with 400,000 new immigrants arriving.

Until the late 1960s, Canada's official policy was to preferentially accept immigrants from Europe. The first large influx of immigrants from South and East Asia came in the 1970s. Since then, most Canadian cities have become much more interesting places to live, but the problem of anti-immigrant and refugee sentiments has continued.

Friesen states that many of the current problems with racism against immigrants in Vancouver are linked to the "shift in source countries over the last ten years." There are now many more immigrants from countries like Africa, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan—groups that have experienced extensive discrimination while working to settle into their new home.

The growth of our country has been closely tied to immigration (without the consent of the original inhabitants, mind you), but systemic racism has, perhaps due to this, become deeply embedded. Our country continues to pursue policies such as mandatory HIV testing for all prospective immigrants. This proposal by Citizenship and Immigration Canada involves the exclusion of all people who test positive for the virus from immigrating, except for refugees and family-sponsored individuals. This unfairly targets people from non-European countries, where the incidence of HIV infection is considerably higher, and goes directly against the recommendation of UNAIDS which state that there is no public health rationale for restricting liberty of movement or choice of residence on the grounds of HIV status.

The systematic and institutionalised racism our government and legal system support is the direct result of them being modeled by the dominant cultural groups. In today's 'multicultural' society, these systems are fundamentally unable to dispense fair and even-handed treatment to all who come before them.

On the brighter side there have been a number of recent developments to ease the difficulties faced by new immigrants and refugees in Vancouver. Among these is the opening of the Bridge Community Health Clinic, which is a Refugee Clinic specifically targeting the health needs of refugees in Vancouver. This project, the first one of its kind in Canada, was implemented through a partnership between the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board, ISSBC, and Providence Health Care. In addition to interpretation services in several Asian languages, Spanish and Farsi, the Refugee Clinic provides immigration examinations and extends health coverage to landed immigrants not yet coveted by MSP.

Many area hospitals have also begun hiring more interpreters to increase the accessibility of acute health care for the immigrant population.

In 1995, UBC implemented a Student Refugee Sponsorship Program which brings two or three refugees to BC each year. This forward-thinking program provides them with social and financial support while they attend UBC free of charge.

Among the immediate problems faced by new immigrants and refugees upon entry to BC is the difficulty of finding decent rental accommodations. Barriers such as references and racist attitudes towards visible minorities appear to lead to sub-standard housing.

Racial barriers in gaining employment include problems in attaining recognition of foreign credentials, a lack of Canadian experience and problems gaining acceptance by professional associations and colleges. These difficulties are particularly noticeable in the fields of engineering and medicine.

Many immigrants with professional qualifications and experience find they are warmly invited to Canada, but have great difficulty having their credentials accepted and finding work in even remotely related jobs. People who leave their home countries as refugees often arrive in Canada without official copies of their credentials. Often unable to return for them, these immigrants are forced to abandon the hope of ever achieving recognition in Canada. This has lead to the Canadian stereotype of the immigrant doctor delivering pizzas or doing housework.

In 1997, the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) ordered Health Canada to introduce quotas for the promotion of visible minorities to senior management positions after ruling that "systematic" racial discrimination within the government has "bottlenecked" minorities in scientific and professional fields. The CHRC study found "significant underrepresentation" that could not be explained by disinterest or lack of skills.

Historically, immigrants to Canada have been able to achieve equitable employment and income rates after 15 years, but now more and more immigrants are economically marginalised. A 1998 study of immigrants and refugees who arrived in BC between 1991 and 1996 found that 52 per cent were living in poverty. Typically, unemployment rates in the Lower Mainland among recent immigrants are double those of non-immigrants.

The myth of reverse-racism is sometimes raised in reference to immigrants and employment. In truth, reverse-racism serves as an excuse for racism. The barriers encountered by white males in the work place are inconsequential when compared with those experienced by women, visible minorities, immigrants and refugees.

Language issues are also at the core of much racist reaction. Immigration advocates such as Friesen put much of the blame on the lack of a comprehensive ESL policy framework in BC. About $20 million is spent annually on adult ESL education in BC, but this serves to provide immigrants and refugees with only a lower intermediate level of English. To attain a higher level of English, as is certainly necessary for anyone working in a professional capacity, costly language classes are required.

The government has a crucial role to play in changing the way immigrants and refugees are dealt with in Canada. Much internal change is needed as well as greater education of the public. Communities themselves should take action to solve problems of racism and improve the quality of life for everyone. Already, many religious, ethnic and other community groups have taken it upon themselves to help immigrants and refugees feel welcome and get a solid foothold in their new home.

Undeniably, Canada will continue to be composed of people whose origins lie all over the world. The only way to true multiculturalism is by passing through this veil of racism. Surely, there can be enough jobs for everyone. ❖

Talib Kweli & Hi-Tek: Reflection Eternal

This review of Reflection Eternal's first album, originally titled *Train of Thought*, comes a year late, but the album took a cool minute to grow on me.

Part of my delayed reaction was due to expectations. Ever since popping up around '95, Talib Kweli's image has been that of "a thinking person's emcee," a socially-conscious lyricist who consistently drops lessons in his rhymes. His penchant for politically-charged content continued on subsequent releases.

By the time *The Human Element*—Kweli's scathing indictment of the US criminal justice system and the death penalty—dropped in early 2000, I was keyed-up and sweaty, waiting for Reflection Eternal's first full-length to hit the pavement. The upcoming *Train of Thought* was going to be a manifesto, a call to arms, phase two of the Pan Afrikan socialist revolution in hip hop that dead prez sparked on their album, *Let's Get Free*. After my first few listens to *Train of Thought*, though, I felt let down.

It's not as if the hi-teknology-no-ordinary-brother and the man whose name is in the middle of equality came completely incorrect. The intro to their album, "Experience Dedication," aptly illustrated that the duo was still building from a solid foundation: "all the political prisoners, social prisoners, freedom fighters, graffiti writers, grass-roots organisers... we don't represent the streets, we represent the folks in them."

But compare this to the words of Chairman Omali Yeshitela on "Wolves," the first track off of dead prez's album—"Imperialism—*white power*—is the enemy when it first came to Afrika, snatched up the first Afrikan, brought us here against our will, *is* the enemy today,"—and you can see that that fire, that sense of uhuru sasa urgency isn't as prevalent on Kweli and Tek's offering.

So, if Reflection Eternal's album wasn't the trumpet blast to shake down the walls of Jericho, another small axe to the big tree of Babylon, then what was it? Even after a week or so on heavy rotation, the *Train of Thought* seemed to be missing some chug. It seemed too standard issue, just Hi-Tek beats and Kweli braggadocio. Dope for sure, but for the most part, not the type of shit that would make you want to pull a Fela and declare your backyard an independent republic.

There were exceptions, of course. "Love Language" deserves honourable mention for being only mildly corny despite having it's chorus sung in French. The lovely and talented first name Dante last name Beze makes two appearances: on the chorus of "Some Kind of Wonderful," and trading verses with Kweli on "This Means You" ("Smog in the city ain't no good for your health!"); automatically bumping both of these songs onto my lazy Sunday morning play list. "The Blast" makes you want to sit on your front steps in the sunshine and smile, nodding your head, sipping mango juice, and pausing only to sing along when Vinia Mojica chimes in. The incredible "Africa Dream" starts with a Zimbabwean proverb: "If you could talk you could sing, if you could walk you could dance," then brings ancestral spirits to life between your headphones for the next three minutes. "Good Mourning" features a sombre Hi-Tek track, which Kweli uses to reflect on death before asserting the need to celebrate life.

The real jewel on this album, though, is the final song, Kweli's take on Nina Simone's "Four Women." Titled "For Women," I was a little leery of it at first. In a genre where women's voices are so rarely heard, it seemed a little counter-progressive to have a male emcee-even one as astute as Talib Kweli-telling their stories for them. But after listening to the song, and to the Nina Simone original, then to the 2000 version again, I was converted.

"For Women" (along with my gradual realisation that, even if he seems to be in 'battle' mode for most of this album, Kweli is consistently seasoning his boasts with wisdom) made this album for me, moving it from the shoebox under my bed up to the stack of discs on top of my stereo. More than that, it reaffirmed my faith in hip hop as a continuation of Afrikan oral traditions.

Kweli's beautifully crafted narrative weaves its way around Simone's four stories, paraphrasing and quoting at points, distinguishing itself at others, but always remaining true. By paying homage to Simone, Kweli reasserts hip-hop's birthright as the grandchild of soul and gospel, offspring of reggae and funk, a fledgling branch on a family tree whose trunk is the field songs and spirituals of slavery days, and whose roots push back across the Atlantic to the continent.

"For Women" exemplifies the many levels of resistance that have been and continue to be a hallmark of Black life and expression in the face of downpression. Kweli's detached, almost resigned end to the song: "Folks 'round here call me Peaches, guess that's my name," is markedly different from the embattled, fed-up and ready to throw down "THEY CALL ME PEACHES!" that Simone ends with, just as the start of Reflection Eternal's album is not the same as the abeng blast that sets off *Let's Get Free*. Dead prez's album and Nina Simone's song assert that the time for decisive action is now. Kweli and Hi-Tek—while no less defiant and equally aware that the proverbial fit will hit the shan at some point—are more abiding, willing to endure hardship a little while longer while the people continue to sharpen their tools. And until that day when they "hear fate calling," they remain "freedom fighters ready to attack at the crack of a new day dawning." ❖

–Mwalu Jan Peeters-Kasengeneke