

Who killed Charlie Chan?

Mom, Dad, I'm Living with a White Girl at the Firehall Arts Centre until Feb 24

by Federico Barahona

Donna Spencer, the Firehall Art Centre's artistic director, describes *Mom, Dad, I'm Living With a White Girl* as "a love story" about "a young man who screws up his courage to tell his parents that he's living with a white girl." The problem is that he's Chinese and living in a mixed relationship. It's a story about a clash of cultures, sort of.

The story goes something like this: Mark (Chinese boy) and Sally (White girl) are living together, but Mark's parents don't know about Sally. Sally wants them to know, but Mark is afraid. His parents are very traditional and would snap if they knew.

Mark has a problem. His parents are Chinese, and even though he looks Chinese, he doesn't feel Chinese. He grew up in Canada, and he *feels* Canadian. His parents, of course, have a difficult time understanding this. A Chinese boy, after all, is a Chinese boy.

But there's also the story of the Yellow Claw and the Dragon Lady—a cheesy North American interpretation of Asian immigration. A Charlie Chan type of scenario, perhaps, but funny.

How can serious and funny plots run into each other like this?

"If the play was done without the B-movie aspect," says Donna, "I think it would pretty much be a kitchen sink drama and turn people off."

Daniel Chen is a fourth year UBC Theatre major and a snowboarder, even though he doesn't look like one. He also plays Mark in *Mom, Dad, I'm Living With a White Girl*. This is his first professional role.

He sees his character as trying to break away from his tradition and culture. In a sense, he explains, it's a way to fit into the bigger Western society. Daniel himself stayed away from his Chinese heritage when he was growing up. Most people, he explains, grow out of that as they grow older.

"The play," says Daniel, "is actually quite real to a lot of situations."

It's not that parents want to necessarily

destroy the white world, but they do want to find a way to maintain their culture.

The play, of course, pushes the issue to ridiculous proportions.

put it to Daniel like this: pretend I'm from a different planet and I have never seen an American film—tell me, what's a B-movie?

Daniel laughs, then explains. A B-movie is over-the-top; stereotypical, stock characters that sort of cross the line between being funny and offensive.

"You know," he says, "you can laugh it off, or you can be offended by it."

So they don't necessarily have to be horror movies?

"If you have a villain, they're evil, evil, evil villains."
—Daniel Chen

"No, no. They don't."

Really?

"The characters don't really have a wide range of an emotional scope. If you have a villain, they're evil, evil, evil villains. It's just cheesy. Very cheesy."

Oh, fromage.

ACTORS - (from left to right) John James Hong, Daniel Chen, Donna Yamamoto, Kirsten Robek: (lying down) - star in *Mom, Dad, I'm Living with a White Girl*



EDITH TAM PHOTOS

The way Daniel sees it, there are a lot of immigrants' kids asserting their own identity. *Mom, Dad, I'm Living With a White Girl* is an attempt to do just that. And that's a universal situation.

"I have a friend who's East Indian," says Daniel, "and she was like, 'Yeah, my parents are like that, too.'"

Donna agrees with Daniel.

"This country isn't all White," she says,

"it never has been, and we should be aware of that."

The first time I ever saw a non-white actor on stage was at the Firehall. I tell Donna about this. She seems excited and pleased.

What I don't tell her, though, is that Charlie Chan is dead, thanks mostly to companies like the Firehall and plays like this one. The Yellow Claw might be a joke now, but until recently, it wasn't funny at all.

Mom, Dad, I'm Living With a White Girl

Written by Marty Chan. Directed by Donna Spencer.

Featuring Daniel Chen, John James Hong, Kirsten Robek & Donna Yamamoto.

Daniel talks about "The Yellow Claw," an evil gang planning to unleash Asian hordes that will take over the White world. For the gang members, everything Chinese is good and everything Canadian is bad. Agent Banana and the Snow Princess, two crusaders who have dedicated their lives to fighting the Yellow Claw's invasion, have other plans, though.

Is the Yellow Claw trying to destroy the white world?

"Not necessarily destroy," Daniel answers. It's more like they want to maintain their Chinese culture in a White world that is trying to infiltrate them.

But there's more.

The Yellow Claw is also a world of Asian stereotypes. Charlie Chan walks around Hollywood, solving crimes with Confucian wisdom; Dragon Ladies only come out at night, waving their long fingernails and talking funny; Bruce Lee flies to Italy to break up a criminal ring, while James Bond is seduced by yellow vamps; somewhere else, a small lady reveals an ancient Chinese secret that will white out white clothes.

It's all very Hollywood, fifties style.

"It's cheesy and stereotypical," Daniel says.

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Monday, February 5

WINE & CHEESE: "VANCOUVER: MAKING WAVES IN THE PACIFIC"

Presented by the UBC Pacific Rim Club. Hyatt Regency Hotel, 6:30-8:30pm.

Tuesday, February 6

"WHERE ON EARTH IS THE LOWER MAINLAND ANYWAYS?"

Lecture by Dr. William Rees, UBC School of Community & Regional Planning. Woodward IRC #5, 12:30pm.

Wednesday, February 7

EATING DISORDER AWARENESS WEEK, UBC COMMITTEE

Slide presentation and panel by Mediawatch. SUB Party Room, 12:30-3:30pm.

One last look at the Women in View Festival

Denise Chong
Jan 27 at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre

by J. Quan

Vancouver native Denise Chong came to the Vancouver East Cultural Centre to read from her acclaimed 1994 family history *The Concubine's Children*, the paperback edition of which she had just finished promoting in the United States. She is currently working on a non-fiction book about the Vietnam War.

An entertaining speaker, Chong amused the sizable audience by describing her initial ignorance of how to write her chronicle, a problem she tried to remedy by reading detective novels. After the anecdote, she became more serious and summarized *The Concubine's Children*, a story that focuses on the life of her maternal grandmother, Leong May-ying.

Alternating between speaking from memory and reading selected passages, the novelist explained that May-ying first left China to sail to Canada in 1924. Only 17, the young beauty had been sold by the woman for whom she worked to a man living in Vancouver named Chan Sam. Chan Sam was a peasant who had left his wife and village in China to earn his fortune in the land mythically known among the Chinese as "Gold Mountain." The part owner of a small Chinatown shop, he intended to

return permanently to his homeland as soon as he had enough wealth to live comfortably in his village; in the meantime, he sought to end his loneliness and father a son by taking May-ying as his concubine.

May-ying was not happy with her life as a second wife. She was forced to work as a waitress to pay off the debt incurred by her journey to Canada. She did not give birth to the son she desperately wanted; instead she bore two daughters, both eventually raised by her husband's first wife in China. In 1930, May-ying gave birth again; the infant, another girl named Hing, would one day become Denise Chong's mother.

Chong punctuated the summary of her novel by listing some of the elements needed for writing a memoir, such as photographs and a link to the past. As Chong spoke of her mother, a note of pride came through in her voice: pride in Hing for surviving her harrowing youth in Vancouver and Nanaimo, and pride in Hing for being her link to the past.

Elektra Women's Choir

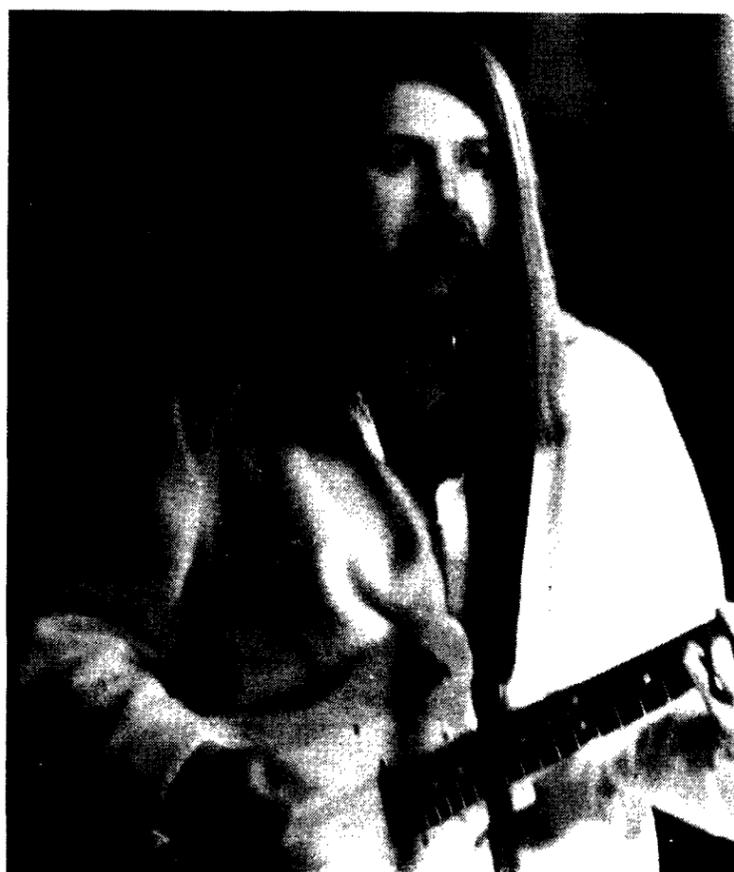
Jan 28 at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre

by Tanya Dubick

Throughout their performance, the Elektra Women's Choir delivered deep harmonious and high-pitched vibrations as the Vancouver East Cultural Centre filled with spine-tingling sounds. Ears were kept busy processing the high soaring tones that occasionally punctured the choral pieces' overall structure.

Elektra, directed by Morna Edmundson and Diane Loomer, is a close and connected group of over 30 women singing an eclectic range of choral works designed to inspire and elate. They were established in 1987 and nominated for a Juno award in 1994.

Loomer and Edmundson realized their desire to produce varied programming, conduct, and utilize the reservoir of superb female



JENN KUO PHOTO

THIS PICTURE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WOMEN IN VIEW. (Just in case you were confused.) Netzwerk recording artist (and former Lava Hay member) **Suzanne Little** sweetly enchanted her way through tunes from her debut solo album **Be Here Now** at the Railway Club last Tuesday, January 30. She will be opening for Wild Strawberries at the Town Pump on Monday, February 26.

singers in Vancouver. Based on compositions specifically for women, the material often comes from obscure, traditional, and *avant garde* sources. *Ave Maria*, a powerful and celebratory score, was commissioned specifically for the choir.

The program's first half began with music from 14th century England and ended with the popular Irish folk song 'Follow Me Down to Carlow.' For the second half, the audience was treated to a selection of Canadian folk songs such as the Newfoundland tune 'She's Like the Swallow' and the Quebecois songs 'J'entends le Moulin' and 'Reel à Bouche,' a fiddling tune.

Stephen Hatfield's *Heaven Bound Train* closed the evening and brought the event to a close. It was a lively spiritual piece that did not come across as powerfully as it could have. I wanted this rhythmic song to take me to a higher realm, but it came all too short.

Both Edmundson and Loomer

work well together and share their roles comfortably: one conducts the choir, while the other sings in it. One can sense the devotion shared by these two artists, who introduced each song to provide helpful background information.

The audience was responsive to the performers and applauded with gusto after a blissful silence at the completion of each song — an all too short moment of peaceful reverence.

The work of the pianist Eric Hominich could go unnoticed, but for the fact that his accompaniment is so well fitted to the demands of the choir. His playing added to the overall work, but it could not distract anyone's attention from the singing at hand.

This was indeed a pleasurable wrap up to the Women in View Festival. As for the Elektra Women's Choir, who will soon be Canada's only representative at the 1996 world symposium on choral music in Australia, they've caught the "Heaven Bound Train."



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Film stills and canvases flying low: the art of Ana Gomes

Ana Gomes: Entropia at the SUB Gallery until Feb 2

by Christopher Brayshaw

Ana Gomes' *Entropia*, the first solo show of the AMS Art Gallery's 1996 season, deploys a dazzling array of art historical quotations old and new, alluding to everything from Jasper Johns' assemblage sculptures of the early 1950s, to the recent photographic practices of Cindy Sherman and UBC Fine Arts instructor Jeff Wall.

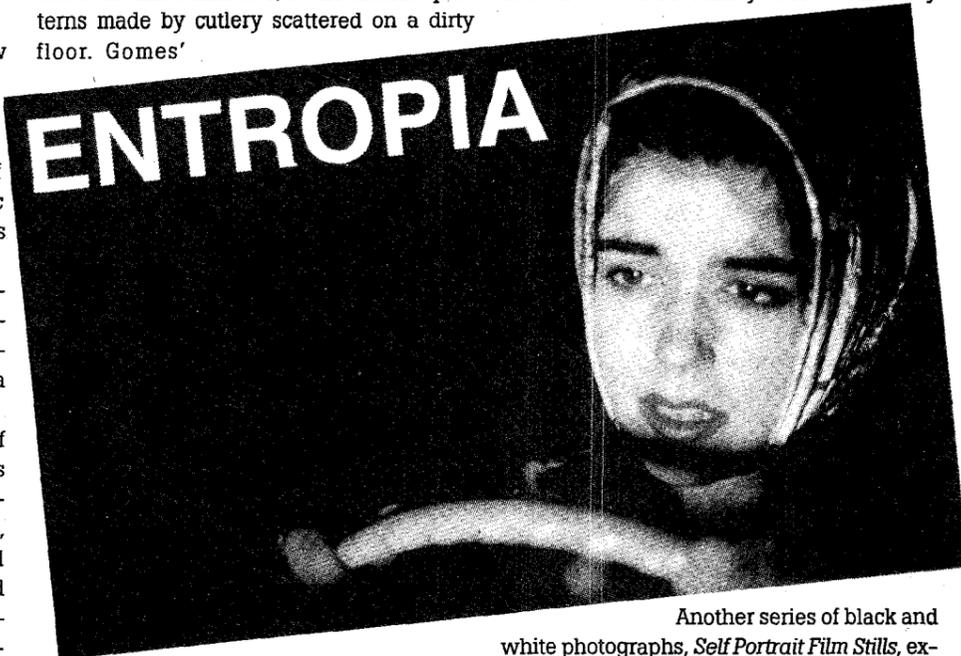
There's pleasure in Gomes' thoughtful quotations of others' work, and considerable frustration in how she seldom moves beyond stylistic homage to produce works reflective of a truly original point of view.

Entropia's strongest works are a series of color photographs mounted in plexiglass boxes along the gallery's east wall. These images, shot by Gomes on a recent trip to Croatia, depict building interiors torn apart by civil war. Smashed windows, broken furniture, and shards of masonry scattered on the floor obliquely speak of a culture wracked by violence.

At first, Gomes' photographs suggest comparisons with Jeff Wall's 1978 backlit Cibachrome, *The Destroyed Room*. But as the

Croatia series progresses, Gomes concentrates on smaller and smaller details within the ruins: overturned furniture, or the abstract patterns made by cutlery scattered on a dirty floor. Gomes'

civil wars into question. These works are consequently some of the most disturbing to be shown at the SUB Gallery in recent memory.



shifts between objective depiction of war's damages, and her aestheticization of smaller portions of it, call North American viewers' distanced interpretations of Eastern Europe's

Another series of black and white photographs, *Self Portrait Film Stills*, explicitly refer to American photographer Cindy Sherman's *Untitled Film Still* series of the early 1980s. Both artists cast themselves as American film heroines in order to expose the ide-

ologies that govern representations in film.

Some of these images are blackly comic — for instance, Gomes as a Hitchcockian heroine, driving into darkness, or as the screaming victim of a faceless (male) killer, who might have lurched out of any recent John Carpenter or Brian DePalma film. But the *Film Stills*, while formally complex, ultimately provoke impatience with their inability to add anything to Sherman's earlier, more original critiques.

Other Gomes artworks include a series of paper casts, torn apart and reassembled in wooden boxes, and a series of extraordinarily hideous paintings, set off from the rest of the exhibition by a garish red couch. While Gomes' couch commands attention, the paintings don't — in fact, I wish she'd edited out these works, which read more like studio exercises than successful paintings.

One non-figurative painting did catch my attention: a plain canvas with a silver zipper running down its front, like a ready-made parody of a Barnett Newman stripe. This image, with its almost subliminal eroticization of the act of looking at art, fascinates me. Hopefully many other viewers will get a chance to see it, too, before Gomes' complex show comes down Friday afternoon.

They won't be restoring this one in 20 years

Restoration opens today at the Caprice

by Peter T. Chattaway

In a post-modern world brimming with eulogies for that obsolete if well-intentioned phase known as the Enlightenment, it was inevitable that some film would come along to remind us of the heady idealism that made this bygone era possible in the first place. Like most memorials, however, Michael Hoffman's *Restoration* smothers the boring complexities of its subject in a misty fog of retroactive sentiment.

Historically, the Restoration marked the end of Cromwell's Puritan government and, in the licentious person of King Charles II (a complex array of costumes and wigs that we once knew as Sam Neill), a return to the iniquitous indulgences of the royal court. Though people in this film keep saying that they are witnessing the dawning of a "new age" (with all the long hair on display, it just might be Aquarius), to these jaded eyes it looks just like the same old debauchery, only prettier. Whatever advances were made in the Age of Reason, they serve little purpose in *Restoration* beyond providing the film with lots of nifty Newtonian tinker toys: astroglobes, curtains decked with optical illusions, and model cities laced with streets so straight you half-expect "the Merry Monarch" to race some Matchbox cars down their level lanes.

Hoffman earnestly mixes this luscious attention to detail with an unfortunate, compulsive interest in obvious metaphors and movie



Robert Downey Jr. plays *RESTORATION's* central metaphor (but not the most obvious one—for that, see the Man with the Visible Heart).

clichés. The central metaphor, one Robert Merivel (Robert Downey Jr., in a performance so effortlessly nuanced you almost forgive his attempt to sabotage *Richard III*), is a physician who flees medicine not, as you might think, because it's a damned difficult field of study, but because he lacks the "faith" required of a proper doctor. A prodigal of sorts, his fall from Reason and subsequent redemption form the real "restoration" behind the film's title.

He finds a temporary refuge in the king's palace when Charles discovers that Merivel's veterinary instincts are second only to his gift for induced flatulence (going to medical school does have its benefits). It's only a matter of time, though, before Merivel steps out of line — by

making a pass at the king's mistress (*Patriot Games'* Polly Walker), no less — and he is banished from the royal court, forced to find work in an asylum run by tight-lipped Quakers. Here he is cajoled out of his spiritual doldrums by a suspiciously beautiful mental patient (Meg Ryan) — one of those looney people one meets in films who are actually more in tune with the world than the rest

of us — just in time to find his heroic calling when the Great Fire of 1666 hits London.

For all its triteness, *Restoration* is not without its pleasures, especially if you like period pieces (which I do). The script crackles with bawdy gems that the cast relishes with controlled glee (says Charles while looking for his mistress, "The royal tool is waving about in search of her"). David Thewlis (*Naked, Total Eclipse*) and Ian McKellen (in a complete change of pace from *Richard III*) turn in game performances as Merivel's kindhearted stooges, but my favorite was Hugh Grant's brief cameo as Finn, the snobby painter; Grant really must play nasties more often. And, between James Newton Howard's sumptuous score and the

gorgeous sepia tones of Oliver Stapleton's photography, there's more than enough style on hand to carry the story through the gaps in its internal logic.

After all, how seriously can one take a film in which a caesarean birth spells certain doom for the mother, but some schmoe can accidentally fall and poke a hole through his ribcage, and then flash his ticker — and even induce people to touch the pumping muscle — as though it were some sort of parlour trick? Hoffman may think he's getting Merivel in touch with the "heart" of this era, but at points like these, methinks the film loses touch with reality.



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Pot-smoking politicians in trivial pursuit

by **[name redacted at request of the author]**

The guessing game began Oct. 31, 1995, the day of the Quebec Referendum, when the media was out covering the vote and the official opposition was boycotting parliament. The House of Commons passed Bill C-7. The bill concerning pot laws. Very quietly.

I guess: that they were passing a stupid law, and they knew it.

They guess: that I'm smoking a bowl right now and should get a criminal record and \$1000 in fines and six months in jail.

I win the round.
I pick up a card, and it reads "Visit the US." I show up at the border, making sure not to wear perfume. The customs officials swear over

their beer guts. "Fuck! Those freaking politicians are going to quit sending fingerprints and photos of those evil demon weed criminals. What's going to happen to my fucking job? Go on through, Miss."

I guess: that politicians have been experiencing some heavy pressure from Canadian health and legal organizations to decriminalize pot.

They guess: that I wasn't smuggling my stash over the border.

I win again.
The politicians at the House of Cop-outs send someone to play in person to keep negative international press down. I'd think he was rich with that private jet and personal chauffeur, if he didn't have such sweaty pits and bad suits, Ottawa fashion.

"These fucking US bugs is driving me nuts crawling all over my skin all the time," he says when he sits down. "Do you have any rye?"

I guess: that he's hallucinating from his alcohol heebie-jeebies.

He guesses: that pot is a evil poisonous drug, more addictive than beer.

I win the round.
The politician rolls his dice and gets "Double Jeopardy." Rubbing his hands, he calls in the Reagans. Nancy shows up wearing a "Just Say No" button and leading Ronald on a leash. She whispers in his ear. "Your popularity depends on it," she says. "Oh! I mean, drugs are destroying our nation." Nancy unrolls a poster of a crack baby. "And that marijuana cigarette will lead you to crack and prosty-tution if you don't give up yer evil ways."

I guess: that Nancy has a lot of qualudes in her purse.

His first guess: that I'm destined to wear garters and short skirts on Seymour and Howe.

His second guess: that Ronald's grab for a second term, the Drug War, lessened drug use.

I win the round.
"Bitch!" The politician gets all red and angry. "I'll put you in fucking jail for that pot in Canada."

"Hard luck," I say. "I'm from Vancouver, where pot has been decriminalized because the courts were so swamped with possession cases. You can't touch me."

"Fuck!" he says. "Ronald! Call in the DEA!"

Nancy presses a button on Ronald's pace-maker and a SWAT team bursts into the room. Fifty guns are pointed at me.

"You freaking did it again, didn't you Ronald?" says an agent, pushing his way through the crowd. "We can't arrest her. This is one of those eleven fucking decriminalized states!"

A groan rises up from the SWAT team. A weasely guy comes through the crowd and grabs my joint. He takes a drag. "High quality hydroponically grown BC pot," he decides.

"Won third best in the world at this year's Cannabis Cup." He looks around smiling then puts it in his pocket.

The DEA guy turns on the politician. "Didn't you get the hint when the CIA said they were 'concerned' by BC's pot crop? The whole cop industry is on the line here! Get out there and build bigger fucking courts and jails! And Ronald," he adds, "we need you to sign some Contra papers later." The SWAT team leaves.

I guess: that Nancy's Drug War got great coverage from the media and sparked "Canada's Drug War."

He guesses: that they should invade Nicaragua.

I win the round.
The politician is shaking with anger.

"You can't keep a job," he tells me. "They'll catch you with those urine tests."

"Not so," says I. I pull a copy of *Steal This Urine Test* from my backpack.

"Damn!" he says. "I should have banned that fucking book when I had the chance. We'll continue this game in Ottawa."

While we wait for the jet I pull out a brownie and offer him a piece.

"Sporting of you," he grunts as he chows down.

I guess: that he'll love my homemade brownies.

He guesses: that I was really nice when I gave him that brownie.

We tie.
To break the tie, we do trivia questions.

He reads me my question. "How many Canadians have smoked pot?"

"Twenty-five percent!" I say. "And about 30 percent in BC, eleven percent of BC residents smoke regularly."

"You just don't shut up, can you?" he says. I pull out a card and read, "What is BC's primary agricultural product?"

He turns red and scratches his chin. I see the sweat stain shadow under his armpit. "Grapes?"

"Wrong! Pot."

When we arrive at the House of Commons, there's sounds of a party going on inside. Outside, on the lawn, representatives from the Canadian Health Organization, the Addiction Research Foundation, Brian Ford, the Ontario Provincial Police Chief and a couple of criminal law associations are all shivering in a circle, sharing a bowl.

"They won't let us in," they tell me. "Even though they pay us to tell them what we think."

The politician is looking anxious. "I need a fucking drink!" he says. "Look. Pot is dangerous. I'm doing the best I can for my nation." He notices the what-a-jerkoff look on our faces.

"Listen!" he says, pointing to an article in *The Montreal Gazette*. He reads, "Drug-treatment experts and law-enforcement officials say," (his righteous tone is making me gag) "use is closely linked to teen violence, crime, sex and HIV transmission. See?"

"You'd rather listen to newspaper sex-and-violence hype than your own researchers?" I ask.

"You spent billions on these guys and on the LeDain commission, which decided that pot should be legalized," I say.

"Just fucking hurry up and come inside," he says, stomping off.

I guess: that pot has been called "harmless" by the Addiction Research Foundation.

He guesses: that he's feeling good because he's home.

I win the round.
In the House lounge we find Kim Campbell, Jean Charest and Bill Clinton giggling as they try to figure out how to build a bong. "We can't find anything that seals," Kim says.

"Your travel mug might work," I tell her.

"Oh fuck!" Jean yells. "Call the Mounties!"

"Ha!" says the politician. "You'll never work again!"

"Who wants to be a cop?" I say. I pull out my pile of research books. "Over 50 percent of all the criminal charges in Canada are possession charges. Do you seriously want to ruin all those people?"

"Goddamn it!" he says. "You can't have a bunch of pot-heads running parliament!"

I guess: that pot laws are wrecking a lot of lives. He guesses: that changing a pot law might be bad for a conservative politician's reputation.

We tie, but we all know who's winning.
The politician picks up a card that says, "Go to the Pot Rally at City Hall on February 3 at 3:00pm. Bring your dope."

"What's that?" he asks.

"A rally to pressure the Senate to dismiss the bill and send it back to the House of Commons to be revised so that pot is decriminalized."

"Damn it!" he says. "That'll get pot in the papers!"

"You remember that brownie?" I ask him. "It was full of pot."

"Oh, is that it?" he says. "That wasn't so bad..."

In Vancouver, we march with a crowd of pot smokers and cannabis farmers. We run into Marc Emery, owner of Hemp BC, and three of his minimum wage

employees. They're all facing possible sentences of life in prison for selling pot seeds and bong.

The politician's beeper goes off. He walks away talking into his cellular phone, then returns.

"Hey Marc," he says. "Do you have any seeds left over from the raid? Me and my friends..." I win the game.

The Ubysey voting list (as of February 2)

The following people have made three contributions this term, so are eligible to vote in the upcoming Ubysey editorial by-election:

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The following have made two contributions:

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Mark Brooks	Michael Laanela	Patti Sontag
Alaina Burnett	Gillian Long	Lindsay Stephens
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Jan Cook	Ed Mou	Edith Tam
Chris Chiarenza	Alannah New-Small	Mark Thompson
Juliana Dowling	Chris Nuttall-Smith	Dan Tencer
Tanya Dubick	Christine Price	Sarah Weber
Jeremy Forst	Doug Quan	Ken Wu
Ian Gunn	Judy Quan	Teresa Yep
Nicole Guy	Melanie Seto	Cynthia Yip

If your name does not appear on this list and you think it should, or if you think you have made more contributions than you have been credited for, please come to SUB 241K Wednesday afternoon to talk to the coordinating editor.

Nominations for The Ubysey Publications Society Board of Directors

The Ubysey Publications Society is currently seeking candidates to fill five positions on our nine member Board of Directors, including the president, who chairs UPS board meetings.

The Board acts as publisher of your student newspaper, *The Ubysey*. It looks after administrative and financial aspects of publishing the paper, including setting the operating budget.

The term of office is from March 15, 1996 to March 1, 1997. The Board meets at least once a month.

The persons nominated must be members of the Society in good standing, who are not staff members or regular contributors to *The Ubysey*, or members of AMS Students' Council.

Nominations close Tuesday, February 13, 1996 at 5pm.

For more info contact the UPS in SUB 245, or call 822-6681.



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Shamanism as Folk Existentialism
(in English & Korean)
Presented by Yunsik Chang, Dept. of Anthropology/Sociology, UBC
Thu. Feb. 8 - 7:30 pm

Shamanism, the oldest belief system in Korea, has survived for more than 2,000 years, penetrating the minds of Koreans despite ever hostile environments. What is the source of its appeal? What does it offer that the great religions do not?

History and Culture of Taiwan
(in English & Minnan Dialect)
Presented by Harry Hsiao, Dept. of Pacific and Asian Studies
Thu. Feb. 15 - 7:30 pm

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CBC: here today—and hopefully here tomorrow

It's here again—not to say that it's been a long time coming. Newspapers across the country have the CBC splashed over their front pages asking, "Is the CBC viable in a multi-channel universe?" and "Can we afford the CBC?"

If Irony could laugh, you can bet there would be laughter rolling from its tongue. The *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, while hanging from the taut wire of Canada's economy, has brought west coast to east in its present struggle to stay viable. "Only connect," E.M. Forster's *lieu motif* recalls again and again in *Howard's End*. Only connect—Canada is one of the most diverse countries on the planet, and here we are deliberating over whether one of our few concrete connections is viable.

There is a perception that the CBC has strayed from its mandate to promote Canadian arts and culture. In fact, the statistics seem to prove the contrary. For example, "CBC Research" reports that its Canadian content between 7:00 pm and 11:00 pm increased to 81.7 from 62 percent in 1985. None of the other Canadian broadcasters even scratch 20 percent in that time slot.

It would be ideal for the CBC to maintain 100 percent Canadian content and to leave the Fresh Prince, day-time talk shows and soaps to American broadcasters, but at its present level of funding the CBC's hands are tied. They

are forced to bow to the same advertising pressures as their competitors. Perhaps the very fact that the CBC has to compete is the problem; it was never designed to compete, it was designed to inform, entertain and unite a sprawling and diverse nation.

Those who have watched public television in Britain, France or Japan can appreciate the value of quality, non-commercial programming. Most disturbing about cable television is the frequent interruptions of inane, local, low budget commercials that taunt us with their product. "Half price now! Blah, blah, blah. Half price now!" and so on.

"Half price now" is not an attitude we ought to take with public broadcasting. Our friendly (nauseating?) neighbours south of the border illustrate this example. In their (and, increasingly, our) world of three digit channels, it is often a struggle to find even a single consistently high-calibre broadcaster. In Britain there are (for the most part) four channels; but you never hear, "Crap. Fifty channels of fucking crap."

But a better, financially autonomous CBC is going to cost. The Juneau report proposes new taxes to replace the Corporation's present sources of funding and increase its budget to \$1.1 billion from \$300 million by the year 2000.

This will involve choosing between one of three proposed "new" taxes. The most controversial of these, and

the one recommended by the Juneau committee, is a 7.5 percent tax on all telecommunications bills including long distance telephone calls.

The two other options include simply dropping the GST into the CBC and the other would collect revenue through income tax.

Thursday's *Vancouver Sun* was quick to slam the proposal with a headline that read, "Consumer revolt predicted if CBC tax wins approval." While it sounds melodramatic, it is a likely consequence—coming from a society with a penchant for wanting to have its cake and eat it too. Let's face it, after forcing Roger's to get on their knees and beg for forgiveness after attempting fee increases last year, no one is going to let the CBC try the same.

But these three recommendations are possibly the most ingenious aspect of the Juneau report, moving the debate away from the issue of *whether* Canadians should fund the CBC, but *how*. There are always going to be people like the Reform MP's in Parliament and headline writers who blow things out of proportion, but quite frankly, we believe Canadians should be willing to fund the CBC. Too many of us have grown up watching "Hockey Night in Canada," "Road to Avonlea," "Mr. Dress-Up" and "The National," or listening to CBC radio, to let it die.

the ubyssey

February 2, 1996
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It was a wild and glorious party. We kicked things off early that New Year's eve at Edith Tam's thirty-four storey bungalow, mingling from floor to floor. "Mr. Chattaway?" Someone shouted. "Peter T. Chattaway?" He was stuck in a corner, with folks in the biz. Désirée Agib, the photographer, was on him with half a dozen cameras, while Scott Hayward and Melanie Seto from *Il Fiummifero* magazine kept shouting, "Tell us who she is. Please, Peter!" Other reporters, small fry, were hollering their guesses. "Sarah O'Donnell? Or no, Alison Cole. Yes!" And another would disagree. "Oh, don't be crazy, Douglas, it can only be Wah Kee. I've heard from reliable sources. I'm telling you—Federico Barahano, he knows." Just then someone squeezed through. "Mr. Chattaway, it's Pati Sontag. She's gone too far!" In a chair where some folks were gathered I saw Siobhán look up; everyone saw. "Oh, Ms. Roantree!" they seemed to say. "Listen here," she said to the messenger. "What's your name?" The lad looked uncomfortable. "Muttanatt... Thompson." Siobhán shifted in her plush chair. "You know? I've had people come and go from here? Like Joe Clark, and Wolf Depner, and Andy Barham... and well, you know what they all had in common?" The young man looked defiantly at the floor. "No." His questioner crossed her legs, smiling. "What they had in common was that none of them knew the answer to that question!" The crowd was hysterical, breaking into paroxysms of teary-eyed laughter and holding their stomachs. Later, at Jenn Kuo Manor, we seemed still to be laughing. I remember Chris Brayshaw wondering if it would ever end. Tanya Dubick and Judy Quan looked like cherubs, with light from the morning sun animating something from within. A new day had come. New Year's had ended—it was February.

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Photo Coordinator: Jenn Kuo

letters

"Eat slow, die old."

My first reaction to the cover story of this past Tuesday's *Ubyyssey* newspaper was first shock and then laughter. How ironically comical life can be... Corporation presence at UBC, considered by some to be sell-out and others investment, has increased considerably and has become very noticeable this year. The pseudo-protest and banner hanging at the campus McDonald's demonstrated that some students don't want to sit on their butts while buy-out occurs. I call it buy-out because it seems that UBC favours the highest bidder instead of upholding the virtues of university as a thoughtful place and supporting more socially sound operations. As with other realms of life it seems that education has become an economic enterprise. As so, this world is a monetary one... this would perhaps not be so evil if the corporate giants, like McDonald's, weren't also mass producing cattle and garbage and preservatives and... I do agree with Jan Cook and her claim of McDonald's many

wrongs. If UBC is the institution of education it claims to be and the students it is 'producing' are the thoughtful people their degrees say they are then let's all think! What shocked me into a depressed sort of laughter was not all this stuff that can be said till we are blue in the face but rather the comments of the "crew manager" who said "If you don't like McDonald's why don't you leave UBC?". This statement plainly, and ironically, uncloaks the issue of corporatization at UBC. The manager spoke as though McDonald's belongs at UBC before the students. If this is the pattern of thought that is emerging around this university then this truly is no longer a place of thought and exploration. Nor could UBC claim to be a leading institution of true education. Instead we would be following the path of the herd, much like the cows McDonald's owns. And so my plea is to the 'culture jammers' to organize and not take their banners down in defeat, ever. But to instead keep thinking and doing and kicking us in the butt! Moo!!

Susan Cargill
Arts 2

Bye, Andre

The final day of operation of Mr. Tube Steak sent a clear contrast of class between the private proprietor Andre Chandler and his colleagues chose to donate their last days' proceeds to the British Columbia's Children's Hospital Foundation, it is unclear whether the decision-making body of the university is really interested in serving its students with better food services, let alone "giving back" to the community.

Personally, I am not a frequent customer to Mr. Tube Steak and am quite indifferent of whether or not the campus should have a hot dog vendor near to the bus loop as well as outside Hennings Building. However, I do strongly believe that competitions in business should be conducted in such ways that the ones who can provide the best services should win and those unable to provide a good quality of service should suffer accordingly. If the support Mr. Tube Steak has received recently during our harsh weather is any indication, it shows clearly that Mr. Chandler and his colleagues are providing fast, friendly and hospitable services that are appreciated by the student body in general, or there would not have been all

these students lining up to purchase a hot dog with the temperatures fluttering well below zero, many days with snow falling as well. It is difficult to conclude that Mr. Tube Steak deserves the success it has received.

If people from UBC's Food Services Union feel threatened by the presence of Mr. Tube Steak, the most logical resort would be to make a good attempt to improve the quality of services. They can well be providing more friendly service, improve the quality as well as the selection of food available for students, and so on. I am sure no one would be complaining if Mr. Tube Steak's service is not as adequate and because of its lacking in business, had to leave campus. But instead, a cowardly way of handling the matter was chosen by terminating Mr. Tube Steak's contract to do business on campus. Perhaps it is too idealistic to hope that business competitions within the campus should be conducted in a fair manner, but I fear that at the end, decisions like sending Mr. Chandler and his colleagues packing would only make the students whom the university should be supporting, suffer. Again.

Ed Leung
Biology 3

LETTERS POLICY: Letters to the editor must be under 300 words. "Perspectives" are opinion pieces over 300 words but under 750 words and are run according to space. "Freestyles" are opinion pieces written by Ubyyssey staff members. Priority will be given to letters and perspectives over freestyles unless the latter is time sensitive. Opinion pieces will not be run unless the identity of the writer has been verified. 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 office of The Ubyyssey, otherwise verification will be done by phone.

BC's "Third World" communities speak out

by Douglas Hadfield

The Vancouver Island community of Port Alberni has a history of severe social problems and poverty, according to community activists Kevin McNamee-Annett and Harriet Nahanee.

McNamee-Annett and Nahanee, the two speakers at last Monday's Global Development Centre-sponsored "Third World Conditions in BC," described a community plagued by corruption, sexual abuse of children in residential schools and even murder motivated by racism.

McNamee-Annett, a United Church minister, says he had never encountered living conditions as deplorable as those in "The Flats," Port Alberni's Aboriginal ghetto.

"I've never seen such bad housing...and child malnutrition as in Port Alberni," he said. "This is going on while millions and millions of dollars are being shipped out every day by MacMillan Bloedel in logs."

Soon after moving to Port Alberni in 1992, McNamee-Annett and a group of concerned residents called Low Income Folks Together (LIFT) began a series of initiatives for the community's chronically low-income and unemployed population.

"I've never seen such bad housing...and child malnutrition as in Port Alberni."

—Kevin McNamee-Annett

After opening a local food bank, the group took on the town's major employer and corporate power, MacMillan Bloedel. They set out a plan that included land expropriation and profit sharing and began organizing for a cooperative sawmill to compete with MacMillan Bloedel and ease the area's staggering unemployment.

McNamee-Annett saw "a real

link between racism and poverty" in Port Alberni. "About a third of the local population is Native," he said. "About ninety percent of the Native population is at or below the poverty level."

LIFT quickly earned a reputation as trouble-makers within the divided Island community. "We got our name around town right away as people who raised a lot of shit," he explained. The minister says he began receiving pressure from the community, church and MacMillan Bloedel to back down, even receiving death threats.

That January McNamee-Annett was removed from his Port Alberni ministry. He later lost an appeal in the United Church's highest court and has since moved to Vancouver with his family.

McNamee-Annett cites the resistance against the group's efforts as evidence they were hitting a nerve.

"When [we started] saying things like, 'We're going to take back the land,' we're challenging the fundamental way things are done here. That's when repression comes into it," he said.

"When you pose a persistent threat to the way things are, then you will be victimized, and that's a sign that you're on the right track. The real challenge for us is to know what the next step is after something like this has happened."

Harriet Nahanee, the GDC's second speaker, spoke of old, painful wounds in Alberni's residential schools.

The education she received there was brutal, she said.

"We went to [the residential] school in the morning and the rest of the day we washed walls, cleaned windows, peeled potatoes, washed the dishes. So

when we were sent to residential school, it wasn't to learn, very little teaching going on," she said. "We were raised to be

"We were raised to be servants, to be labourers."

—Harriet Nahanee

servants, to be labourers."

Nahanee was often visibly distressed as she skipped from story to story about her experience. "There is so much to tell," she said. "A lot of really horrible things happened: sexual abuse, verbal abuse, physical abuse. We were, we *are* considered not to have souls."

While still a child, Nahanee watched a classmate tumble to her death at the Alberni Residential school—the girl was kicked down a flight of stairs, Nahanee said, by the school's drunken principle.

Nahanee's experiences have left her disenchanted and mistrustful. She represents a small portion of First Nations people who say they are disinterested in land claims because they don't accept the notion that North American lands can be "owned" at all.

"We were told from birth that we look after the land. No one owns the land, the land belongs to our creator."

She is cynical about land claims or financial compensation in return for loss of lands. "Seven billion dollars is spent on Indian Affairs every year," she said. "It doesn't reach us. It goes to all the administration, the bureaucracy."

Nahanee calls Natives "Canada's number one industry," referring to the millions spent each year on First

Nations social programs—programs she sees as useless.

Instead, Nahanee says victims of residential schools should organize their own, informal

ways to gather and talk about their experiences. "And pretty soon everybody will start talking about it. And once you talk about it, it's a healing."

cul de sac

- Amount of waste disposed per capita (kg/person) in 1993 at UBC: 106
- Amount disposed in 1994: 99
- Number of Americans killed with firearms in homicides, suicides, and accidents in 1991: 38,317
- Number of Americans killed in the Korean War (1950-1953): 33,746
- Year in which white women were first able to vote in British Columbia: 1917
- Year First Nations women were first able to vote in British Columbia: 1952
- Percentage of eligible voters who voted in the 1994 US elections: 36.25
- Percentage of eligible voters who voted in Canada's 1993 federal election: 70
- Percentage of eligible voters who voted in last month's AMS elections: 25
- Percentage of Canadian programming on CBC between 7:00 and 11:00pm in 1992/93: 81.7
- Percentage of Canadian programming on CTV between 7:00 and 11:00pm in 1992/93: 17.3
- Rank of "Hockey Night in Canada" among most watched television programs on Canadian networks in 1993-94: 10
- Rank of "Roseanne": 1

(1,2) UBC Reports (3,4)Details, February 1995 (5,6)"Sisterhood" Women for Unionism, Solidarity BC Federation of Labour, October 4, 1995 (10,11) CBC Research, as quoted in The Globe and Mail, Feb 1, 1996 (12,13) The 1995 Canadian Global Almanac

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Deadline for Submission: May 31st of the current year

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- All 3rd and 4th year undergraduate and graduate UBC students are eligible to enter the contest.
- Essays are to be typewritten on numbered pages with double spacing. They are to be in triplicate and of approximately 3,000 words.
- The prize will be awarded on August 31st of this calendar year.

Committee of Judges:
T. James Hanrahan, CSB, BA, MA, LMS, Chair
Dr. Robert M. Clark, Pr. Emeritus Economics
Dr. Kurt Preinsperg, Pr. Philosophy
Dr. Margaret Prang, Pr. Emerita History
Dr. Paul G. Stanwood, Pr. English

The committee reserves the right to withhold the prize if no appropriate essay is received or to divide it if it proves impossible to judge between excellent essays.

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BURNS BOG:

Plan to preserve peatlands

by Andy Barham

"Burns Bog must be saved, all of it!" That's the message sent by international scientists and researchers who gathered last weekend to discuss the future of the Delta bog at the "Peatlands for People" conference.

According to renowned British ecologist David Bellamy, who first visited Burns Bogs 35 years ago, there is still hope for the ailing environmental site.

"With almost no investment at all, Burns Bog can recover, and it won't cost you a penny to look after it," said Bellamy.

While the Bog is still under threat from proposed development and a spreading garbage dump, speakers agreed that the bog is recovering on at least one front. After almost 100 years of peat harvesting, industry representatives are talking about the need to develop a sustainable resource.

"We in Canada have a unique opportunity to maintain peatlands in perpetuity as a renewable resource, provided that we take care to extract the resource in ways which do not permanently damage the

ecosystem," said peat harvesting industry representative Tony Cable.

Cable says the industry has been working with non-governmental organizations, government and other stakeholders to ensure the continued viability of Canada's peatlands.

Conference organizers hope to avoid the fate suffered by many European bogs, now permanently damaged by decades of modern harvesting. Vacuum harvesting permanently destroys the special hydrology that the bogs depend on for their continued well-being.

Don de Mille, a research scientist for the Burns Bog Conservation Society, reported that the bog has already experienced a 60 percent recovery in those areas abandoned by peat harvesters, and should fully recover within the next 50 years if left alone.

Given the Greater Vancouver Regional District's growing air pollution problems, the scientists argue the senselessness of destroying what some experts

have dubbed "the lungs of the Lower Mainland."

"It is a very, very silly place to build on. You have lots of other land about which *isn't* covered with peat," Bellamy said. "Why go to the immense expense of doing real estate on there?"

It makes even less sense, they argue, when one considers the difficulties and expense—likely paid for by the taxpayer—associated with building on a peat bog.

The chief legal obstacle to Burns Bog's protection, says Bill Andrews of the West Coast Environmental Law Association, is the fact that it is privately owned land.

Most of the bog is owned by Western Delta Lands Trust, who also own and operate the Grouse Mountain Ski lift. Western Delta Lands plans to develop their share of Burns Bog as soon as they receive planning permission from the Corporation of Delta.

Conference participants also described the landfill situated on the southwest corner of the bog as an unmitigated disaster that should never have been located

"It is a very, very silly place to build on."

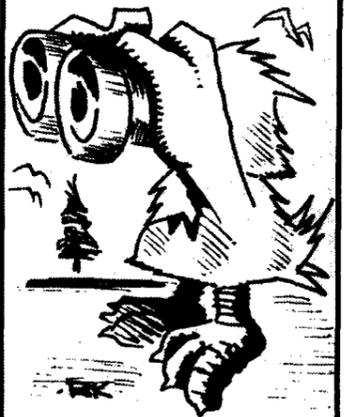
—British ecologist David Bellamy



ENVIRONMENTALISTS Paul Buckland and David Bellamy argue Burns Bog must be preserved.

ANDY BARHAM PHOTO

Bird Watch



UPCOMING EVENTS

Swimming
Friday, Feb. 2, 5:00pm
UBC at Simon Fraser
SFU Aquatic Centre

Hockey
Saturday, Feb. 3, 6:00pm
UBC at Calgary
CiTR Radio 101.9FM

Volleyball
Fri., Feb. 2 - Sat., Feb. 3
vs Saskatchewan
War Memorial Gym, 6:15pm

there. Dr. Richard Hebda, a former UBC graduate who often visited the bog as a student, described his distress upon returning ten years later. "When I saw what had become of those places I used to visit, it brought tears to my eyes," he said.

Wednesday February 7th
7:00pm at New Public Library
7:00pm at Homer

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