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# UofT Magazine

WINTER 2010

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Curator, U of T Arts Centre*

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Community/Social Coordinator  
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Aerodynamics Leader  
Formula SAE Racing*

*Ayomide Sami-Orungbe, BAsC 2010  
Choral Singer, U of T Gospel Choir*

*Armana Arefeen, BComm 2008  
Lab Assistant, Rotman Finance Lab*

*Ibad Raees, BComm 2010  
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*Hamza Khan, BA 2010  
Marketing & Design Coordinator  
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# Winter 2010



COVER ILLUSTRATION: ROBERT SAMUEL HANSON, CONTENTS PHOTO: RITA LEISTNER

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Kerry Clare's winning story,  
"Georgia Coffee Star."  
Cory Ingram wins for his  
poem "Bubbles."

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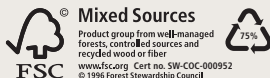
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## Departments

# “Survivors need to be encouraged to speak out”

*Author Marina Nemat on the situation in Iran's prisons, p. 57*



Wendy Freedman wins a major cosmology prize



U of T programs help immigrants re-establish their careers in Canada



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# “U of T alumni should be proud of the fact that their alma mater recognizes and celebrates minorities.”

– *Kunal Chaudhry* TORONTO

## Were Iran's Elections Rigged?

Your story on the Citizen Lab (“The New Freedom Fighters,” Autumn 2009) is guilty of two glaring omissions. First, it does not tell us if the presidential elections in Iran were, in fact, rigged to an extent that the rigging would have altered the outcome. The *Washington Post* and other American newspapers reported that Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was leading by a margin of more than two to one in pre-election polls.

The second omission is that a large number of Iranians live in socially conservative urban and rural communities where YouTube, Twitter and Facebook have not yet set foot. These conservative Iranians look and think differently from the jeans and T-shirt-wearing urban youth you have highlighted in the article.

Personally, I am deeply saddened by Ahmadinejad's re-election. I think Iranians deserve a better, more progressive leadership that recognizes and adheres to its domestic and international obligations. However, until such leadership is

elected by the Iranians, they should not be turned into (Citizen) lab rats where the West tries to mould Iranians to alien dress codes and ideologies.

– *Murtaza Haider* MASc 1999, PhD 2003  
TORONTO

## The “Gay Agenda”

The letters in the last issue and on the magazine's website that condemned the choice of “Out and Proud” (Summer 2009) as a cover topic, voiced concern about “the gay agenda” and denounced the degree programs in sexual diversity studies really concern me.

To the first matter: Given the prevalence with which matters concerning heterosexuals dominate the media, is it really so problematic to devote one cover article to a sexual minority group? Would the same be said if *U of T Magazine* featured African-Canadian rights struggles on its cover? I don't think so.

As for the second matter, the “gay agenda” is a propaganda tool created by homophobic, narrow-minded heterosexuals who refuse to realize that the

only “agenda” LGBTQ people have is to obtain the same rights as heterosexuals in terms of marriage, employment benefits, legal rights and public acceptance. Heterosexuals would be left stunned if the rights we as LGBTQ people are fighting for were removed from them. Yet this is how LGBTQ people live every day in most of the world – without protection from discrimination, without the ability to marry and receive spousal employment and health benefits, and without many other rights heterosexuals take for granted.

The third matter is equally concerning. The legitimacy of earning “a degree in the study of [our] own sexual practices” has been questioned. Yet should racial minorities not be able to study their own racial and cultural background, as in East Asian Studies or African and Caribbean studies? Or how about a woman who wants to study her sex and gender in women's studies? The Sexual Diversity Studies program combines psychology, anthropology, gender studies, literature studies, sociology, epidemiology and a plethora of other fields in its multi-dimensional analysis of sexuality and gender. If that's not a legitimate strand of study, I don't know what is.

I still fail to understand why educated individuals seem to lose all ability to reason when sexual diversity matters come into play. These comments make me ashamed to call such people my fellow alumni.

– *Stephanie Cook* BPHE 2009  
TORONTO

### Proud of U of T

I was thoroughly stunned by the number of letters in your autumn issue objecting to – nay, ranting about – “Out and Proud.” Unlike Mike Scapillato and John Adamkovics, I am indeed proud that my alma mater has made such strides in welcoming LGBTQ students and nurturing their sense of self and community. And unlike D.R. Stoll, I understand extremely well why “we” don’t feel the need to proclaim “our” heterosexuality in the street – it’s out there already, all the time, proclaimed without shame or fear on our behalf in ways many gay, lesbian and trans men and women still can barely imagine. Your correspondents seem to miss the fundamental point of your story: that U of T is building a more democratic, more ethically sound campus by giving space, voice and power to a group of students whose predecessors had to

hide – both for fear, and for shame – in the shadows.

– *Kim Solga* PhD 2004  
LONDON, ONTARIO

### Canada's True Culture

U of T alumni should be proud of the fact that their alma mater recognizes and celebrates minorities. If it were up to people such as D.R. Stoll, who would prefer not to read about “fringe populations” (Letters, Autumn 2009), then I suppose *U of T Magazine's* autumn issue would not have featured important stories about democracy in Iran, or how U of T Scarborough helps Chinese students adapt to Canadian culture, or New College's Buddhism, Psychology and Mental Health program or Toronto's new Afrocentric school.

U of T encompasses a mosaic of cultures – gay and straight, white and black, Asian and European – because *that* is the

true culture of Canada. To suggest otherwise is frankly insulting to a large number of U of T alumni.

– *Kunal Chaudhry* MASTER OF  
URBAN DESIGN 2009  
TORONTO

### Double Standard?

Why is publishing blatantly homophobic letters still considered “representing all viewpoints,” whereas similar comments about race, gender, ability, class and so on would be relegated to the “unfit for print” pile (and rightly so)? I assume that *U of T Magazine* adheres to some kind of standards – would you publish similar letters if they were blatantly anti-Semitic? Or anti-poor? Homophobia seems to be the last domain where it is perfectly fine to be offensive and call it a “point of view.”

– *Jeff Myers* MA 2007 OISE  
TORONTO

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS *for alumni members of the governing council*

**ARE YOU ACTIVELY INVOLVED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO? Would you or someone you know like to help shape its future?** If so, consider applying to serve on the Governing Council, the senior body that oversees the academic, business, and student affairs of the University.

**APPLICATIONS FOR ALUMNI MEMBERS** of the Governing Council will be accepted from Friday, January 8, 2010 at 12 noon to Friday, February 5, 2010 at 4:00 p.m. Three incumbents' terms will end on June 30, 2010. All are eligible for re-election, should they choose to let their names stand. Each of the three positions is for a three-year term from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2013.

Eight of the 50 members of the Governing Council are alumni, and all members serve as volunteers.

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- Available to attend regular meetings on campus between September and June.

The membership of the Governing Council should reflect the diversity of the University. Nominations are, therefore, encouraged from a wide variety of individuals.

Information about the Governing Council is available on the website: [www.governing-council.utoronto.ca](http://www.governing-council.utoronto.ca)

Application forms will be available starting at 12 noon on Friday, January 8, 2010 on the Governing Council website [www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca). Paper application forms may be obtained from the Office of the Governing Council, Simcoe Hall, 27 King's College Circle, Room 106, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 1A1. Inquiries may be directed to the Secretary of the College of Electors by phone (416-978-6576) or by email ([governing.council@utoronto.ca](mailto:governing.council@utoronto.ca)).



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### Straight and Narrow

I generally enjoy *U of T Magazine* but lately I've been growing tired of the imagery celebrating heterosexual liaisons (see pages 39 and 52 of the Autumn 2009 issue). I have no problem with heterosexuals. A few of them are my friends. But what people do in private should be kept private. Why does their chosen way of life have to be rammed down my throat every time I read the magazine?

— Graeme Parry BA 1995 INNIS  
TORONTO

### ASK First

In “Out and Proud,” Anne Perdue refers to the founding of the University of Toronto Homophile Association in 1969 and asserts that it was, “arguably, the first gay liberation organization in the country.” The association may have been the first lesbian and gay rights organization in Toronto, but certainly not in Canada.

The Association for Social Knowledge (“ASK”), formed in April 1964 in Vancouver, was the first lesbian and gay rights organization in Canada. Its objectives included public education and supporting law reform. Lesbians, gay men and heterosexuals were members. ASK organized lectures and community events, opened the first lesbian and gay community centre in Canada, and published a newsletter. It disbanded in early 1969.

The history of ASK is considered in detail in standard references such as Gary Kinsman's *The Regulation of Desire* and Donald McLeod's *Lesbian and Gay Liberation in Canada*.

— Donald Casswell BSc 1972 UC, LL.M 1980  
PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF LAW  
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

### Fluid Identities

As an LGBT student at the University of Toronto, I feel that Anne Perdue's article

“Out and Proud” is a testament to the tolerance I have found in the university community. Increasingly, society is accepting people like me, and is allowing us to lead more “normal” lives.

LGBT political activism arises from years of discrimination, marginalization and homophobic policies. I would recommend that alumni interested in the subject read Ritch C. Savin-Williams' book *The New Gay Teenager* (Harvard University Press, 2005). It discusses the attitudes of LGBT teenagers toward their sexuality, and how vocal they are about it. He finds that, among teenagers, sexual identities are becoming more fluid and less easy to define. Thus, the political significance of Pride marches and protests seems to be declining.

— Matthew Gray SECOND-YEAR INTERNATIONAL  
RELATIONS STUDENT  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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**Respecting Beliefs**

It's interesting to learn that the head of Citizen Lab once thought that "breaking into churches to wolf down communion wafers" was a way to have a good time ("The Troublemaker," Autumn 2009). Perhaps it was only predictable that Ron Deibert often made trouble by questioning the nuns and Church dogma since he "thought it was all nonsense." Thank goodness – or whatever force we should be thanking – that sports and reading saved him from purgatory!

I'm not sure whether the writer considers these stories to be chummy little anecdotes that will build empathy for Professor Deibert. Some people will consider the first reference sacrilegious. Many more would consider such behaviour a sure sign that he was never taught how to behave in church, or how to respect the beliefs of others. This is unfortunate, because his views on free-

dom of expression and his work in promoting it certainly sound very valuable, and important to the upholding of freedom of religious belief as well as freedom of expression.

- Joanne McGarry EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
CATHOLIC CIVIL RIGHTS LEAGUE  
TORONTO

**Legal Weapons**

Please reel in any urban-parochial impulses when casually commenting about "criminal activities, such as... possessing weapons" ("Exit Strategy," Autumn 2009). In free countries such as ours, a variety of weapons may be legally possessed, such as those found in any kitchen or many pockets, or used by members of your late Hart House Rifle and Revolver Clubs.

- Frank Eigler B.A.Sc 1995, M.Eng 2000  
BRANTFORD, ONTARIO

**Pedestrian Rage**

Kristen Courtney wonders when city


streets will be safe for cyclists ("Breaking the Cycle," Autumn 2009). My question is, when will pedestrians be safe from cyclists?

Many cyclists have no regard for people who are walking. Twice I have been hit by bikes and verbally abused because I had the audacity to get in their way. In both cases, I had the green light, so I was in a legal position to cross the street.

It's bad enough that drivers don't understand the rules of the road – and there are many of those – but I see a lot of "sidewalk rage" building between cyclists and pedestrians. This is unfortunate because there are so many healthy aspects to walking. I wonder what rights Courtney thinks pedestrians should have.

- Lynne Ross FACULTY/FACILITIES ASSISTANT,  
FACULTY OF LAW  
TORONTO

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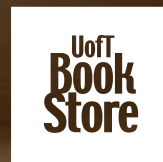
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## A Better Balance

# Canada must devise a plan for its universities

CANADIANS LIKE TO THINK OF THEMSELVES as one of the best educated populations in the world. A recent report by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) suggests otherwise. The number of Canadians who earn bachelor's and graduate degrees is below the OECD average and well behind many other nations. Ample data also suggest that we will lose ground economically unless these gaps are closed.

In response, recession-wracked governments must make some hard choices. More co-ordinated planning, more generous funding and smarter alignment of incentives is needed if we are to accommodate growth in enrolments without eroding the undergraduate student experience in multiple provinces.

This context is part of what led the University of Toronto to undertake the *Towards 2030* planning process. Our long-term goal is to rebalance enrolments, improve the undergraduate student experience and capitalize on the unparalleled research strength of the university across all three campuses. It's a slow slog, largely because the incentives remain strongly and perversely stacked against research-intensive universities.

On that point, I don't believe that superior research performance means that a particular university is better than others. Stronger research performance, however, does mean that a given university is better suited than others to educating larger numbers of graduate students and may well have advantages in some professional programs. Research universities can also be very propitious places for academically gifted undergraduates. They give young people exposure to some of the finest minds in the country – scholars who share their knowledge in the classroom even as they redefine entire fields.

At the same time, many undergraduates will do as well or better in quite different environments, such as regional comprehensive and undergraduate-focused universities. That's why major enrolment growth cannot proceed without a rationally diversified system.

There are lessons here from Asia. For example, I have visited top Chinese research-focused institutions such as Peking, Tsinghua and Shanghai Jiao Tong. They are much smaller than most Canadian research universities, and

have 50 per cent graduate enrolments. All students live on campus – that's a requirement. The campuses are large and extremely well equipped. Their student-faculty ratios are also strikingly low, enabling more personalized instruction for the undergraduates who win national competitions to enter these universities.

How did this happen? The Chinese government has explicitly diversified the post-secondary system, positioning 10 universities out of thousands to compete globally in reputation, while supporting a further 90 to be strong national innovators and funding countless other universities to deliver both undergraduate education and selective graduate programming.

We don't need to emulate the Chinese model, of course, but we can and should learn a few lessons from international trends. Our funding models too often provide incentives for universities to expand undergraduate programs, and penalize them for graduate growth and research intensity. This model is simply not sustainable if Canada is to operate a cost-effective higher-education system and compete in the global knowledge economy.

Last summer, the heads of five institutions that account for a substantial amount of the research and graduate education in Canada had a conversation with *Maclean's* magazine and raised these concerns. At first the message was distorted by loud complaints from sister institutions that the "Big Five" were simply seeking to make off with all the research money, or close off the opportunities for other institutions to participate in graduate education. Those misplaced anxieties were stoked by the media, who loved the idea of a food-fight among university leaders.


As the dust settled, however, something interesting happened. It became clear that, while there are some genuine disagreements about how the university system should evolve, the points of convergence are overwhelming. I am struck that many colleagues in leadership roles at universities across Canada are willing to acknowledge that it would be useful to clarify who is supposed to do what, as long as all boats rise, all institutions are respected and supported appropriately, and institutional creativity and entrepreneurship aren't stifled.

Obviously, that's a vision that is easier to articulate than achieve. But I sincerely hope we shall make the required efforts to strengthen post-secondary education coast to coast. A diversified and better-balanced university system is absolutely essential if Canada is to succeed in a globally competitive innovation economy. Our future prosperity depends on it.

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# Calendar of Events

 **MORE EVENTS!**  
Check out the latest campus happenings at [www.utoronto.ca](http://www.utoronto.ca).

**FEBRUARY  
4 TO 7**



**Opera: Bernstein's *Candide* at MacMillan Theatre.** The U of T Symphony Orchestra, the MacMillan Singers and the Opera Division are joining forces for four

performances of Leonard Bernstein's 20<sup>th</sup>-century masterpiece. Based on Voltaire's 18<sup>th</sup>-century satirical novella, Bernstein's operetta first appeared on Broadway in 1956 and has been performed on opera stages throughout the world. David Briskin conducts this Faculty of Music première with choral direction by Doreen Rao and stage direction by Michael Patrick Albano. Tickets: \$26 (seniors/students, \$16). Feb. 4, 5 and 6 at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 7 at 2:30 p.m. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. For tickets, call (416) 978-3744.

||  For more info: [www.music.utoronto.ca/events/candide](http://www.music.utoronto.ca/events/candide).

## ALUMNI

*December 17  
Hart House*

**EngSci 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.** Concert at Hart House Theatre, 6:30 p.m. Engineering science alumni dinner in the Great Hall at Hart House, 7:45 p.m. 7 Hart House Circle. Tickets available at [www.uofttix.ca/view.php?id=529](http://www.uofttix.ca/view.php?id=529).

*January 7*

**Medical Sciences Building Civil and Mineral Engineering Career Fair.** 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Lobby, Medical Sciences Building,

1 King's College Circle. To register as an exhibitor, contact Nelly Pietropaolo at [nelly@civ.utoronto.ca](mailto:nelly@civ.utoronto.ca).

*January 13  
Montreal*

**Alumni reception** hosted by Chancellor David R. Peterson. Location and time TBA. For info, visit [www.alumni.utoronto.ca/regional](http://www.alumni.utoronto.ca/regional) or contact Teo Salgado at (416) 978-2368 or [teo.salgado@utoronto.ca](mailto:teo.salgado@utoronto.ca).

*January 14  
University College*

**UC Book Club featuring Nino Ricci.** Group discussion with the

Governor General's Award-winning author. Ricci talks about his novel *The Origin of Species*. Open to University College and U of T alumni, as well as friends of UC. \$15. Limit of 25 people. 6 p.m. in UC H-012. 15 King's College Circle. For info: (416) 978-2968. Order tickets at [www.alumni.utoronto.ca/uc-ricci](http://www.alumni.utoronto.ca/uc-ricci).

*January 19*

**Galbraith Building Skule Mentorship Career Nite.** 6-8 p.m. Galbraith Building, 35 St. George St., Room 202. For more details, contact Mary Butera at [butera@ecf.utoronto.ca](mailto:butera@ecf.utoronto.ca) or visit [www.engineering.utoronto.ca](http://www.engineering.utoronto.ca).

*January 25*

*Oakville, Ontario*

**Alumni reception** hosted by Chancellor David R. Peterson. Location and time TBA. For info, visit [www.alumni.utoronto.ca/regional](http://www.alumni.utoronto.ca/regional) or contact Teo Salgado at (416) 978-2368 or [teo.salgado@utoronto.ca](mailto:teo.salgado@utoronto.ca).

*February 1*

*Winnipeg*

**Alumni reception** hosted by Chancellor David R. Peterson. Location and time TBA. For info, visit [www.alumni.utoronto.ca/regional](http://www.alumni.utoronto.ca/regional) or contact Teo Salgado at (416) 978-2368 or [teo.salgado@utoronto.ca](mailto:teo.salgado@utoronto.ca).

*February 26*

*Chestnut Conference Centre*

**Civil and Mineral Engineering Alumni Dinner.** The second annual alumni dinner for civil and mineral engineering graduates. \$75. Reception: 6:30 p.m. Dinner: 7 p.m. Colony Grande Ballroom, Chestnut Conference Centre, 89 Chestnut St. For more information, contact Nelly Pietropaolo at [nelly@civ.utoronto.ca](mailto:nelly@civ.utoronto.ca).

*April 24*

*Toronto*

**Hana's Suitcase.** The true story of a child's suitcase from Auschwitz that makes an amazing journey. Post-show ice-cream party for U of T alumni and friends. \$16. 2 p.m. Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People, 165 Front St. E. Contact Sabrina Martinez at (416) 978-5881 or [sabrina.martinez@utoronto.ca](mailto:sabrina.martinez@utoronto.ca), or visit [www.alumni.utoronto.ca/hanassuitcase](http://www.alumni.utoronto.ca/hanassuitcase).

*May 27 to 30*

*Toronto*

**Spring Reunion 2010** honours alumni who graduated in a year ending in a "5" or "0." For more

**Ebène Quartet performs at Walter Hall on February 8 as part of the Faculty of Music's Chamber Music Series**



PHOTO: JULIEN MIGNOT

information, please contact (416) 978-5881 or [spring.reunion@utoronto.ca](mailto:spring.reunion@utoronto.ca), or visit [www.alumni.utoronto.ca/springreunion](http://www.alumni.utoronto.ca/springreunion).

**EXHIBITIONS**

*January 13 to February 24*  
**Doris McCarthy Gallery**  
*U of T Scarborough*

**Jon Sasaki: Good Intentions**, curated by Ann MacDonald. Using film, video, objects, performance and installation, Sasaki investigates expectations, failure and eternal optimism. Tues. to Fri., 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Sun., 12-5 p.m. 1265 Military Trail. (416) 287-7007, [dmg@utsc.utoronto.ca](mailto:dmg@utsc.utoronto.ca) or [www.utsc.utoronto.ca/dmg](http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/dmg).

*January 19 to March 13*  
**U of T Art Centre**

**Portrait of a Patron: The Dukszta Collection.** Janusz Dukszta first commissioned a portrait of himself from Olaf von Brinkenhuuff in 1953, and has now built a collection of almost 100 portraits from various artists. The exhibition will comprise 60 to 70 of these works. Tues. to Fri., 12-5 p.m., Sat., 12-4 p.m. 15 King's College Circle. (416) 978-1838 or [www.utac.utoronto.ca](http://www.utac.utoronto.ca).

*January 25 to April 30*  
**Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library**

**Wenceslaus Hollar: Prints for a Changing World.** An exhibition of book illustrations and prints by the 17<sup>th</sup>-century bohemian artist who spent most of his working life in London. The library holds one of the world's finest collections of Hollar's work. Mon. to Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. 120 St. George St. (416) 978-5285 or [www.library.utoronto.ca/fisher/exhibitions/current.html](http://www.library.utoronto.ca/fisher/exhibitions/current.html).

**FESTIVALS**

*January 21 to 23*  
**Robert Gill Theatre**

**FOOT 2010 Performing Space and Space in Performance.** A student-organized conference/arts festival, sponsored by the Graduate Centre for Study of Drama, which brings together academia and the arts. Program for panels and performances at [www.gradrama.utoronto.ca/newsEvents\\_foot10.html](http://www.gradrama.utoronto.ca/newsEvents_foot10.html). Robert Gill Theatre, 214 College St.

**LECTURES**

*February 8 to 11*  
**University College**

**2010 Alexander Lecture: Theory of the Lyric** by Prof. Jonathan Culler, chair of the Department of Romance Studies, Cornell University. Co-sponsored by the Jackman Humanities Institute. 4:30 p.m. in UC 140. 15 King's College Circle. For info: (416) 978-3160 or [www.uc.utoronto.ca](http://www.uc.utoronto.ca).

*February 9*  
**U of T Scarborough**

**Dr. Gabor Maté**, author of *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction*. Part of the Inside the Leaders' Circle series. 11 a.m. Rex's Den, lower level of the Student Centre, 1265 Military Trail. Free, but seating is limited. Reserve tickets at [www.utsc-leaderscircle.ca](http://www.utsc-leaderscircle.ca) or (416) 208-4760.

*February 11*  
**U of T Scarborough**

**John Ibbitson**, the *Globe and Mail's* Ottawa bureau chief. Part of the Dialogues series. 6 p.m. Rex's Den, lower level of the Student Centre, 1265 Military Trail. Free, but seating is limited. Reserve tickets at [www.utsc-dialogues.ca](http://www.utsc-dialogues.ca) or (416) 208-4760.

**MUSIC**

*January 25 to 31*  
**Faculty of Music**  
**University of Toronto New Music Festival**

featuring Krzysztof Penderecki, Roger D. Moore Distinguished Visitor in Composition. Events include a panel discussion with Penderecki, and concerts showcasing his work. For details, visit [www.music.utoronto.ca/events/nmf](http://www.music.utoronto.ca/events/nmf).

*February 8*  
**Walter Hall**

**Chamber Music Series: Ebène Quartet.** The Toronto debut of this French quartet. Works include Haydn *Quartet in G Minor, Op. 74, No. 3 (The Rider)*, Brahms *Quartet in C Minor, Op. 51, No. 1* and Debussy *Quartet in G Minor*. Tickets: \$25 (seniors/students, \$15). 7:30 p.m. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. Tickets at (416) 978-3744 or [boxoffice.music@utoronto.ca](mailto:boxoffice.music@utoronto.ca). For more information, visit [www.music.utoronto.ca](http://www.music.utoronto.ca).

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

*January 13*  
**U of T Mississauga**  
**Summer Job Fair** for U of T grads from the past two years, and U of T students (student ID required). 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Recreation, Athletic and Wellness Centre, 3359 Mississauga Rd. N., U of T Mississauga. (905) 828-5451 or [www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/summer\\_fair.html](http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/summer_fair.html).

**SPORTS**

*February 18 to 20*  
**Athletic Centre**  
**2009-10 Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) Swimming Championships.** Come see the top swimmers in the country vie for CIS

championship titles. Varsity Pool, Athletic Centre, 55 Harbord St. Ticket info and more details at [www.varsityblues.ca](http://www.varsityblues.ca).

**THEATRE**

*January 15 to 30*  
**Hart House Theatre**  
**High Fidelity.** A musical about life, love and mix tapes. This Canadian première is based on Nick Hornby's novel and tells the story of a young man experiencing a quarter-life crisis. Director Mark Selby. Music by Tom Kitt. Tickets: \$25 (students/seniors, \$15). \$10 student tickets every Wed. night. Shows at 8 p.m. on Jan. 15 and 16; Jan. 20 to 23; Jan. 27 to 30. (2 p.m. matinée on the 30<sup>th</sup>.) For tickets: [www.uoftix.ca](http://www.uoftix.ca) or (416) 978-8849. For more information: [www.harthousetheatre.ca](http://www.harthousetheatre.ca).

*January 21 to 24*  
**Helen Gardiner Phelan Playhouse**  
**The 2009-10 Directors' Showcase**, part of the UC Drama Program. Works include: **Insomnia**, by Daniel Brooks with Guillermo Verdecchia, in which a man is obsessed with changing the world but, unable to sleep, can't even change his own situation. Directed by Joshua Perry. **Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mama's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feelin' So Sad**, by Arthur L. Kopit. This farce examines purity, fear of freedom and entrapment within human relationships. Directed by Joy Lee. **Body and Soul**, by John Mighton, questions the extent to which our desire is conditioned, and travels to a place where love, biology and technology meet. Directed by Janina Kowalski. At the Helen Gardiner Phelan Playhouse, 79A St. George St. For more information: [www.uc.utoronto.ca/drama](http://www.uc.utoronto.ca/drama). For tickets: [uc.drama@utoronto.ca](mailto:uc.drama@utoronto.ca) or (416) 978-8099.





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# Life on Campus



## **Boosting Your Cultural IQ** U of T programs help immigrants such as Norma Mendez re-establish their careers in Canada

In July 2005, Norma Mendez's career screeched to a stop. In San Luis Potosí, Mexico, she had headed human resources for the Latin American operations of a multinational corporation. She flew from city to city, recruiting, training, chairing meetings, and enjoying her life as a coveted executive. Then Mendez moved to Toronto, where the

employment guru had to pound the pavement for eight months before finding someone who recognized her skill set and offered her a job. "I really struggled," says Mendez. "Everyone asked for Canadian work experience and, of course, I didn't have any. I could have been the president of my old country, and they still wouldn't have hired me." >>>

➤➤ Re-establishing a career in a new culture poses myriad challenges – and U of T offers everything from English lessons, to academic courses, mentoring and employment counselling to enable international talent to contribute their diverse skills to the workforce.

Eventually Scotiabank hired Mendez, and then in 2008 St. Michael's Hospital snatched her up as a senior consultant in leadership and staff development. Recognizing Mendez's potential, St. Mike's sent her to a pilot program offered by the Rotman School of Management that had been designed to help participants develop the soft skills, such as interpersonal communication, needed to succeed in a job in Canada. At the Business Edge for Internationally Trained Women Professionals, Mendez's classmates included a foreign trained lawyer, teachers and several managers. The program – which will be offered again this spring – did a great job addressing communication, negotiation and presentation skills, career management and many aspects of Canadian business culture, says Mendez.

The Rotman instructors not only recognized the workplace issues Mendez was grappling with, they offered her strategies to handle them. One of the big adjustments for Mendez is working in an environment that's more hierarchical than what she's used to. "It's more flat in Mexico," she says. "Everyone spoke with and helped everyone, and you didn't really have to network. Through the Rotman program, I learned that here, I need to make networking a number one priority."

Mendez's experience was somewhat unusual in her class. Some of her classmates who had emigrated from China and India, for example, were finding the Canadian work terrain much less hierarchical. Tiška Wiedermann, a coach for international professionals who works with Business Edge, notes "In hierarchical workplaces, the assumption is that the people on top will pull you up. Here we believe, 'My career is of my own making. To progress, it's up to me.'"

U of T assists a variety of internationally trained professionals to practise in their adopted home. Since 2001, the International Pharmacy Graduate Program has helped about 600 pharmacists gain Canadian accreditation. U of T's School of Continuing Studies offers Pathways to Employment in Canadian Project Management. And the Faculty of Law will soon help up to 95 immigrant lawyers a year navigate the accreditation process and secure articling positions. The Internationally Trained Lawyers Program starts in May. – Susan Pedwell

|| ☞ To learn more about U of T programs for internationally trained professionals, visit [www.magazine.utoronto.ca](http://www.magazine.utoronto.ca).



## Messenger of Peace

### Student journalist Jasmeet Sidhu is named one of *Glamour's* Top 10 College Women

**G**LAMOUR MAGAZINE'S "TOP 10 COLLEGE WOMEN," an annual feature that honours young leaders, had a rare inclusion this year: a Canadian. Trinity College student Jasmeet Sidhu, 21, was selected from among thousands of applicants for the distinction. It seems impossible *not* to notice Sidhu, who had founded an environmental alliance, earned a prestigious BMO Scholarship to U of T, worked on HIV-AIDS projects in Africa and written for the *Toronto Star* – all by the age of 20. "What links all of these issues for me is a broader picture about social justice," says Sidhu, who is a fourth-year peace





**Mining Innovations**

The University of Toronto has received \$4 million each from mining entrepreneur Pierre Lassonde and Goldcorp Inc., a gold producer, to help fund a new mining centre.

The Innovation Centre for the Canadian Mining Industry will be constructed in previously unused space on the top floor and on the roof of the Mining Building, a century-old heritage structure located at 170 College St. The entire facility will be renamed the Lassonde Mining Building.

In 1996, a major gift from Lassonde (DEng Hon. 2001) established the Lassonde Institute and the Lassonde Mineral Engineering Program at U of T. He also recently donated \$1 million for mining scholarships.

Goldcorp's gift will support an academic and research facility within the new centre for graduate students and post-doctoral researchers. "We hope to attract and train top talent to ensure that innovation in the Canadian mining sector continues," says Ian Telfer (BA 1968 Victoria), chair of Goldcorp.

The renovated building will incorporate such green features as rooftop solar cells, energy-efficient lighting, and water conservation and recycling. Construction is expected to be completed by spring 2011. The federal and provincial governments have also each pledged \$5.5 million toward the centre. – Laurie Stephens

and conflict studies specialist. "I see journalism as a part of that, too. You call attention to the issues to care about."

At 16, Sidhu founded a high school environment club, but found it tough to get it going and to work with administrative bureaucracy. Realizing that students at other schools must be facing similar hurdles, she created the Peel Environmental Youth Alliance, an umbrella organization to co-ordinate efforts and to educate environmental activists. At 19, she became the youngest person ever to serve on the *Toronto Star's* community editorial board. Sidhu wrote a series of op-ed pieces for the newspaper, covering gender inequality in Canadian politics, domestic violence, immigration and resources for HIV-positive women. "The biggest thing that has motivated me is that I'm an immigrant myself," says Sidhu, whose family emigrated from Malaysia when she was 11 months old. "I was always aware that I could have been growing up in very different circumstances."

Last year, Sidhu visited Namibia with a small group of students led by U of T anthropology professor Richard Lee.

For four months she worked on several projects, such as helping to set up community support groups with the International Community of Women Living with HIV-AIDS. "I was already involved in the issue, but going to a country where 20 per cent of the population has HIV-AIDS was shocking," she says.

Sidhu still writes for the *Star* – she is covering the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen for the paper – and now blogs for the *Huffington Post*, thanks to a chance meeting with a *Huffington* editor at the *Glamour* awards luncheon in New York.

"My mother used to deliver the *Star*, so I feel like things have come full circle," says Sidhu. "My parents made sacrifices so that I would have these opportunities."

– Hilary Davidson

|| U of T grad Anne Swift was included on *Glamour's* Top 10 College Women list in 2003. Read the *U of T Magazine* article about her at [www.magazine.utoronto.ca](http://www.magazine.utoronto.ca).

PHOTO: CLAY STANG

## Green House



A proposed renovation to the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design calls for the century-old facility to be transformed into a model of sustainability.

The striking design, by Boston-based architects Office dA, would give the building a gleaming new glass “skin” and green roof. The creation of a double facade that can be sealed in winter to keep heat inside and opened at other times to increase airflow will help reduce the building’s energy use by 60 to 70 per cent, according to the architects’ proposal. More efficient plumbing fixtures and the use of rain-water will reduce tap water consumption by 40 per cent.

The renovation, which is contingent on fundraising, would make better use of existing space and allow the faculty to expand. Design studios, which haven’t changed since the 1960s, would be updated, and dedicated space would be created for undergraduate students.

Work on the \$40-million project is expected to begin in late 2010 and proceed in phases while classes continue. The faculty was renamed in 2008 to recognize an historic gift by alumnus John Daniels (BArch 1950) and his wife, Myrna Daniels. – *Scott Anderson*

|| Read more about the Daniels Faculty renovation at [www.magazine.utoronto.ca](http://www.magazine.utoronto.ca).

### Overheard

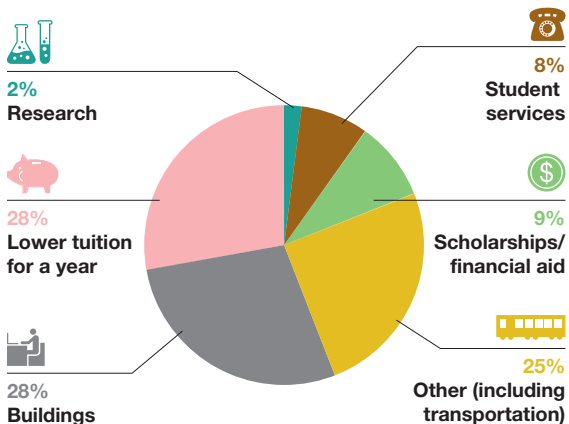


The commodification of food is at the root of hunger. Not lack of food on the planet, not the incapacity of small farms to produce enough food, but the commodification of food. The right to sell is what matters.



**Vandana Shiva**, vice-president of Slow Food International, speaking about industrial agriculture. Hart House Theatre, October 22.

**Poll** | If you were U of T president and received \$25 million to spend on the university, what would you do with the money?



**They benefit from U of T's** strengths and endure its weaknesses, so this autumn we asked students: Given \$25 million for the university, how would you spend it?

Twenty-eight per cent advocated for a temporary financial reprieve: they'd lower tuition for a year. Another 28 per cent would renovate or expand campus buildings – in particular, they'd bump up study spaces and seating.

Some would increase the number of computer terminals in libraries; make textbooks free or discounted; or hire additional faculty to allow for more small classes. But the most creative suggestions were in the area of transportation: one student would develop a monorail for St. George Campus, while another wanted an underground walkway connecting all the buildings – presumably most useful during inclement Canadian winters.

*This highly unscientific poll of 100 students was conducted on St. George Campus in October.*

# How long before rising health-care costs burn a hole in your pocket?

Like it or not, Canada's health-care spending is shifting steadily to private pockets.

According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information,<sup>1</sup> private sector spending has been growing at a faster rate than public sector spending. It reached \$51.6 billion in 2008, with more than half going toward drugs and dentistry.

Let's have a look at these two biggest uses of private health-care dollars.



## Drug costs soar to dizzying heights

Take a peek at medicine cabinets anywhere in Canada and, chances are, you'll find at least one pill bottle. That's because we spent almost \$19 billion<sup>2</sup> on prescription and non-prescription drugs last year, or an average of \$561 per person.

## Dentists take a big bite

No doubt about it, dental services can be costly. Unfortunately, this is what keeps 26% of Canadian adults from seeking needed dental care.<sup>3</sup>

How expensive is it? We spent about \$9.9 billion, or \$348 per person, on dental services in 2008.<sup>1</sup> Not surprisingly, insured Canadians were twice as likely to have consulted a dentist or orthodontist in the past year compared to someone without insurance.

## What can you do?

As governments look at ways to shift health-care costs from the public sector to the private sector, the onus unfortunately falls on households to find ways to reduce out-of-pocket expenses.

Consider equally effective generic alternatives to brand-name prescription drugs. Practice good dental hygiene. Maximize your employer's health and dental benefits. If self-employed, take out private insurance, which can also be tax deductible. And if you belong to an association, take advantage of lower group insurance rates.

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Institute for Health Information, National Health Expenditure Trends, 1975 to 2008

<sup>2</sup> Canadian Institute for Health Information, Drug Expenditure in Canada, 1985 to 2008

<sup>3</sup> Canadian Institute for Health Information, Exploring the 70/30 Split: How Canada's Health System Is Financed, 2005



## Varsity Blues



Alie Brind'Amour-McClure (No. 21) and twin sister Courtney (No. 17) take on Team China

### Double Threat Two new hockey recruits use their “twin telepathy” on the ice

IN SEPTEMBER, U OF T'S VARSITY BLUES women's hockey team played an exhibition game against Team China at Varsity Arena, which ended in a loss of 4-3. The two teams also staged a shootout, with two Varsity players and three Team China players scoring. One of these scorers was rookie Courtney Brind'Amour-McClure. Courtney and her sister, Alie, are identical twin forwards and first-year students, both recruited by the Blues this fall.

At the age of seven, the twins from Waterdown, Ontario, found their game: they switched from soccer to hockey, and

have been on the ice together ever since. Courtney and Alie now play on the same line, left and right wing respectively. Like identical twins Henrik and Daniel Sedin of the Vancouver Canucks, their connection is an advantage. “A lot of people think we have the twin telepathy,” says Courtney. “We have a good sense of each other on the ice.”

In fact, Courtney and Alie have never skated separately. Before U of T, they played in the Lower Lakes Female Hockey League, where they helped propel the Brampton Canadettes midget AA team to a second-place finish in the north-central division. “We’ve been through the same camps, the same practices, we do everything together,” says Alie.

Doing things together just comes naturally to Courtney and Alie – they finish each other’s sentences, and when asked about their strengths and weaknesses on the ice, they can only formulate a collective answer. “We both have a good work ethic, we’re both really gritty and we hate to lose,” says Alie. “I think we’re good with the puck, we have a good sense of where everyone is. We have good vision.”

This season, the twins are working on better defensive zone coverage. Head coach Karen Hughes says that they have a lot of potential. “I think they compete hard. They play well together, they share the puck well with each other,” she says.

Courtney and Alie will go as far as they can with hockey – maybe even all the way to Team Canada. But the twins do have separate aspirations: Courtney is in the Concurrent Teacher Education Program, and wants to teach physical education in French immersion. Alie intends to major in political science and go to law school. And it’s not like they always get along. “We get angry at each other sometimes,” says Alie. “But we try to keep it under control, because the team doesn’t want to hear that.” – *Allison Martell*

TOP PHOTO: LEWKO HRYHORJUK; BOTTOM PHOTO: CAMELIA LINTA

## People and Places

The Royal Society of Canada, the country's most prestigious scholarly organization, recently honoured 14 U of T faculty members. University Professor **Richard Bond** of the Canadian Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics is the winner of the Henry Tory Medal for his outstanding research in

astrophysics. The cosmologist has had major insights into dark matter and energy, the cosmic background radiation, and the structure and evolution of the universe. Prof. **Barth Netterfield**, an observational cosmologist, won the Rutherford Memorial Prize in physics. His research is in the construction and use of balloon-borne telescopes.



Paul Young

Prof. **Paul Young** received the Willet G. Miller Medal for outstanding research in earth

sciences. Young is the Keck Chair of Seismology and Rock Mechanics and vice-president (research) at U of T.

U of T professors elected as Royal Society of Canada fellows are **Raymond Carlberg**, a theorist and observational astronomer who is Canadian project director for the Thirty Meter Telescope; **J.K. (Jack) Chambers**, a sociolinguist and the leading authority on Canadian English; **Anthony Doob**, one of Canada's foremost criminologists; **George Eleftheriades** of electrical and computer engineering, who is

making major contributions to the new area of electromagnetic metamaterials; **Dr. Andres Lozano**, a professor of neurosurgery who is developing novel surgical approaches to treat Parkinson's disease, depression and Alzheimer's disease; **Robert S. Orr** of physics, U of T's team leader on the ATLAS project; **Robert Reisz**, a paleontologist at U of T Mississauga who has conducted innovative work on reptiles, fossilized embryos and the origin of the turtle; **Gregory Scholes** of chemistry, who is a

## Champion of Accessibility

### Professor Rod Michalko works to eradicate prejudices associated with being disabled



PHOTO: DANIEL EHRENWORTH

solar-energy expert; **Philip Sohm**, University Professor and scholar of Italian Renaissance and Baroque art; **Germaine Warkentin** of English, Victoria College, an expert in Renaissance writing and early Canadian exploration literature; and **Min Zhuo** of physiology, who led a team that uncovered a link between dopamine and the genetic variation that causes Fragile X syndrome.

PROFESSOR ROD MICHALKO WAS JUST A TEENAGER when tiny colourful blinking lights began to obscure his field of vision. The process of losing his sight was gradual, and he remembers specks first appearing when he was a child.

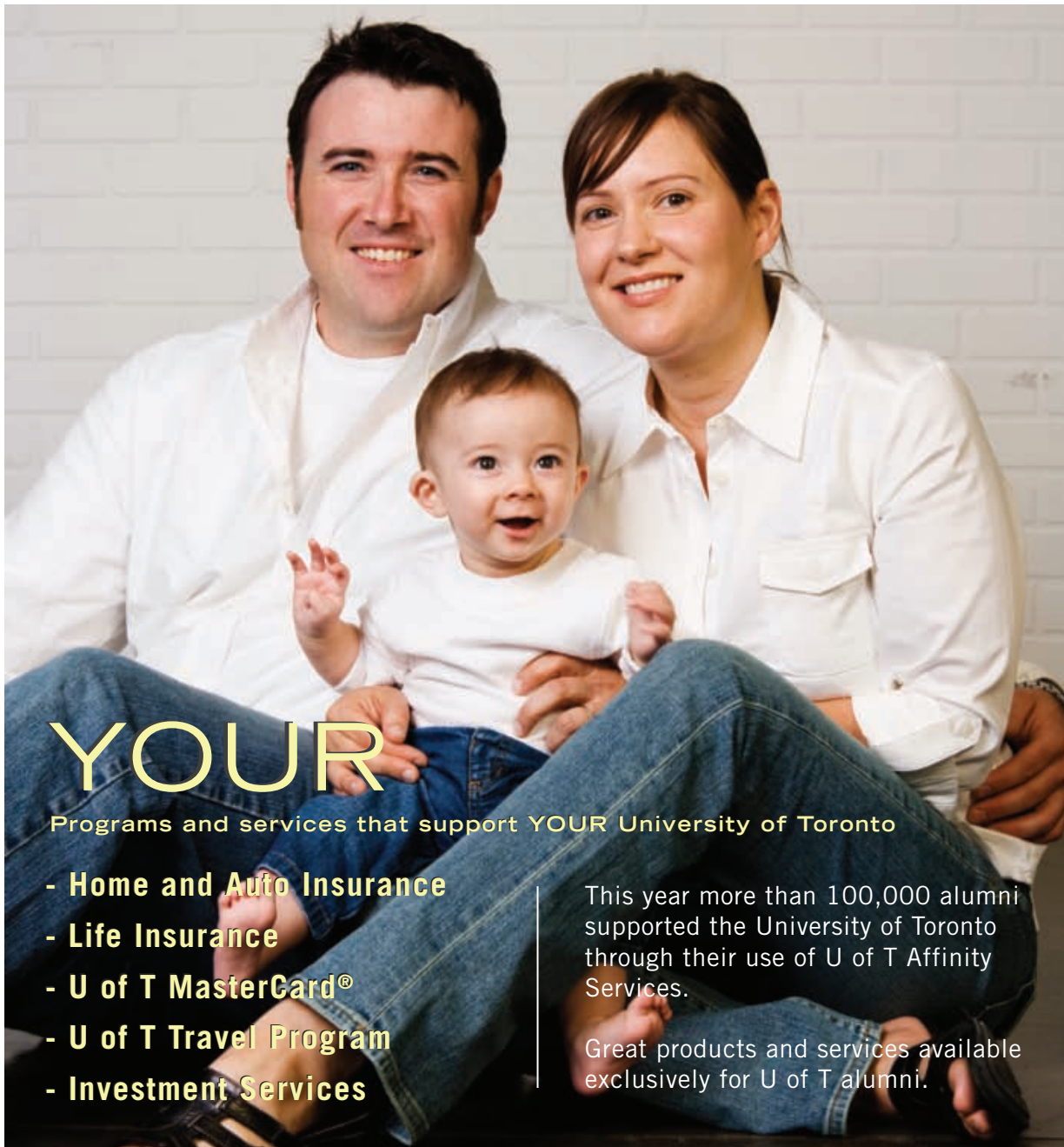
Doctors are unclear about how or why Michalko eventually became blind, but he is not focused on diagnoses or prognoses. Hired by New College in 2007 to develop and teach a Disability Studies stream of four courses (part of the Equity Studies program at New College), Michalko asserts that being disabled is a legitimate way of being in the world. “That’s opposed to our culture’s deep desire to get rid of disability, to either cure it or even rehab it,” he says. “Being blind or being in a wheelchair gives a certain perspective on the world that’s valuable. I say that my blindness is not a condition; it’s part of who I am.”

After completing his PhD in sociology at the University of British Columbia, Michalko taught sociology at several Canadian universities. He has published such books as *The Difference That Disability Makes* (Temple University Press, 2002). Michalko is now working to raise the profile of Disability Studies, which examines prejudices and exclusionary practices through socio-political and cultural studies. He is also developing a speaker series. “Disability Studies examines and interrogates our culture,” he says. “It teaches us a lot about what it’s like to be human.”

When Michalko – who has used a white cane to help him get around since his beloved guide dog, Smokie, passed away in 2001 – explores campus, he is often surrounded by buildings made inaccessible to people with certain disabilities by stairs or narrow bathrooms. Classroom materials on paper, PowerPoint or film exclude non-sighted students, and Michalko says the university still struggles with making web resources optimally usable for everyone. “There are all kinds of ways to make things accessible,” says Michalko, “but first we have to think that’s important.”

Michalko finds most conceptions of disability “pretty tragic,” and hopes to serve as a role model for students. People with disabilities comprise about 20 per cent of his students. “Not that long ago it was rare for students to be taught by women or people of colour and it’s extremely rare for students to be taught by a professor who’s disabled, even to this day,” he says. – *Sarah Treleaven*





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[www.affinity.utoronto.ca](http://www.affinity.utoronto.ca)





# Leading Edge



## At a Loss for Words Did Alzheimer’s Kill Agatha Christie?

**A**gatha Christie, English literature’s “Queen of Crime,” may have succumbed to Alzheimer’s disease in her later years. It was never diagnosed by doctors, but now two U of T professors say that a trail of evidence left in her published work leads suspiciously in that direction.

One of the most important writers in the mystery genre, Christie wrote some 80 detective novels during her 53-year

career. She is, according to *Guinness World Records*, the best-selling fiction author of all time; only Shakespeare and the Bible have outsold her.

But was something amiss toward the end? Avid Christie fans had the unsettling feeling that there might have been: the plot wasn’t as tight, the mystery not as carefully conceived. In 2004, the English academic Peter Garrard argued that

>> evidence of Iris Murdoch's Alzheimer's disease appeared in her written work even before her doctor diagnosed it. So Ian Lancashire, an English professor at the University of Toronto, decided to analyze a selection of Christie's novels.

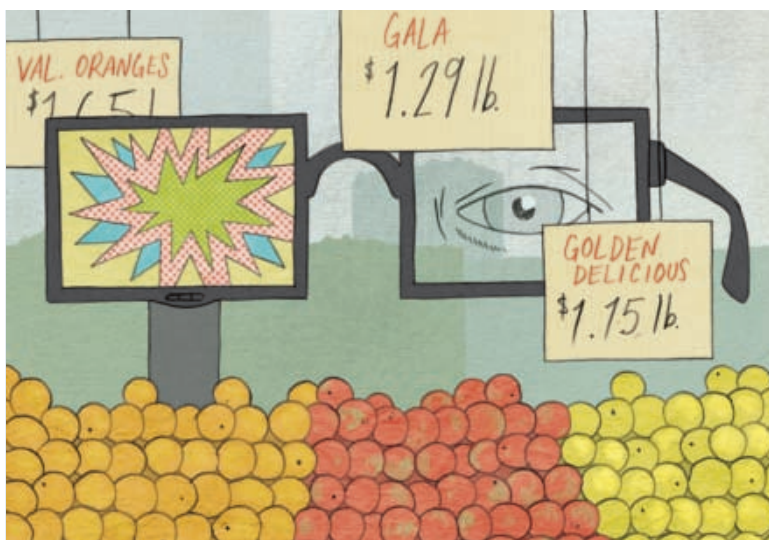
Lancashire teamed up with Graeme Hirst, a professor in the computer science department. After digitizing copies of the books and developing their own analytical software, they examined the first 50,000 words of 16 of Christie's novels. The earliest one, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, was written at the beginning of her career, when she was in her mid-20s. The last one, *Postern of Fate*, was penned when she was 82. She died at 85 of natural causes.

The researchers looked at three aspects of Christie's writing. First, they assessed the richness of her vocabulary by literally counting the number of different words she used. Next, they counted the number of repeated phrases. Last, they identified how often she relied on indefinite words, such as "thing," "anything" and "something," among others, rather than more specific ones.

Lancashire and Hirst found that the richness of Christie's vocabulary fell by one-fifth between the earliest two works and the final two works. They note that her second-last novel, *Elephants Can Remember*, written when she was 81, shows a "staggering drop in vocabulary," down 31 per cent from just 18 years earlier, when she wrote *Destination Unknown*. "I was shocked," says Lancashire.

The use of repeated phrases also increased significantly between early and late works, as did Christie's use of indefinite words. These changes are consistent not with normal aging but with Alzheimer's disease, says Regina Jokel, a University of Toronto professor of speech-language pathology, who is a member of Lancashire's team.

The researchers are now extending their analysis of Christie, and will study P.D. James as a healthy control. They believe that someday the technique might allow us to spot early signs of Alzheimer's not just in novelists, but in any of us – through our emailing, blogging and tweeting. – *Alison Motluk*



## The Ads Have Eyes Software uses tiny cameras to track who's watching digital ad displays

**DIGITAL ADVERTISING IS UBIQUITOUS THESE DAYS:** You can watch TV on the subway platform, in the shopping mall and even in some elevators. And while you might not be aware of it, those TV screens are often watching you.

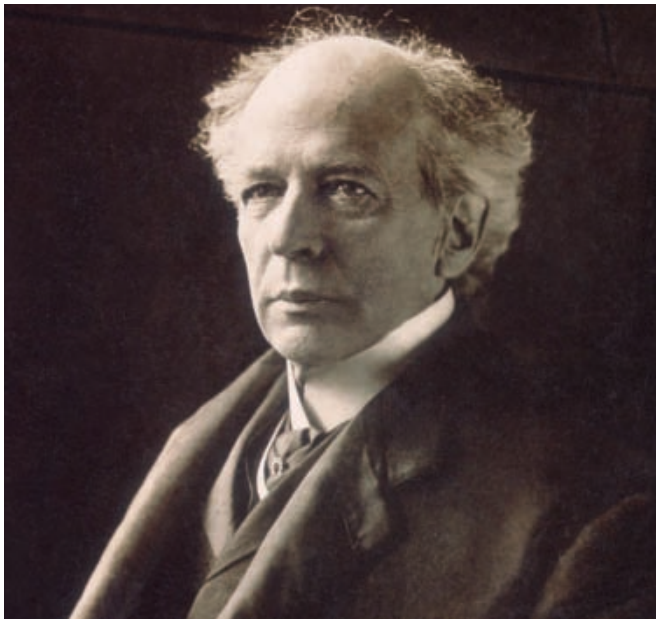
A company called CognoVision has developed software that analyzes the view seen by a tiny camera next to the screen. Developed by a U of T computer science grad, the software can tell how many faces are watching the screen, and for how long. It can also determine, with about 85 per cent accuracy, if the viewer is male or female, and can estimate their age – vital information for advertisers trying to reach a specific demographic.

The program can also change the ads on the fly in response to the audience, explains Shahzad Malik (PhD 2007), one of the three founders of the Markham, Ontario-based company and the brains behind the software. "For example, if there are mostly women in front of a display, the software might choose an ad for cosmetics, while a male-dominant crowd could trigger an ad for a sports car," he says.

CognoVision has also developed an overhead tracking system that uses ceiling-mounted cameras to monitor customer flow through retail spaces such as malls and grocery stores. The software can track the number of people that enter a store each hour, which parts of the store they go to and how long they have to wait at the checkout – information that owners can use to better organize their retail spaces.

Founded in 2006, CognoVision now counts the Canadian chains Whole Foods and Pizza Pizza among its clients. After significant startup costs, Malik says he expects the company to start showing a profit in 2010.

The technology may evoke Big Brother, but Malik stresses that the people the camera "sees" remain completely anonymous. "It doesn't know whose face it's looking at," he says. "All it knows is, 'that's a face.'" – *Dan Falk*



The Big Idea

## Lives Lived A project 50 years in the making tells Canada's story through its people

**F**ON A LARK YOU DECIDED TO ASSEMBLE a scholarly biography of every significant Canadian to have trod these shores since the year 1000, how long would it take? As far as we can say empirically, you'd want to set aside a half-century, to begin with.

It has, in fact, been exactly 50 years since the editors of the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* embarked on this quest. Over the decades, they have methodically created more than 8,400 alphabetized biographies – from Aatsista-Mahkan (the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Blackfoot chief) to Sebastian Zouberbuhler (an early magistrate of Lunenburg). The work comprises 15 volumes, covering Canadians who died before 1931. The 16<sup>th</sup> volume will span the years 1931-40.

The dictionary's editors begin each volume – which covers one decade and can take as long as seven years to produce – by compiling a list of notable deaths for that period. The editors then whittle this down to between 500 and 700 names. The articles, written by historians, range in length from 1,000 to 15,000 words.

As the study of history itself has changed over the past several decades, so has the dictionary's composition. As social history, which emphasizes larger trends over "great men," became more prevalent, the *DCB* began to focus less on military, religious and political leaders, and more on journalists, athletes and cultural figures.

The *DCB's* editors have included articles about Canada's first seven prime ministers, of course, but they have also sought out not-so-famous Canadians who can help flesh out a fuller picture of the country's past. "The people we write about have to have set foot in Canada, and they have to be dead. And that's it," says Robert Fraser, who oversees the *DCB's* daily operations.

Fraser – who's been with the project since 1976, when he was a U of T doctoral student – rattles off some personal favourites: Richard Pierpoint, a West African taken as a British slave who fought as a free Loyalist in the American Revolution, raised a corps of black soldiers to fight in the War of 1812 and later became one of the first to settle near Fergus, Ontario. Or Peter Kerrivan, a storied Robin Hood-like figure from Newfoundland who appears to have been more legend than real.

The *DCB* was set in motion by James Nicholson, a successful Toronto birdseed manufacturer with a fondness for the U.K.'s *Dictionary of National Biography*. Believing that Canada deserved a national biography of its own, Nichol bequeathed the bulk of his estate to U of T to create one. The project officially got underway in 1959.

"Biography seems to be a way to approach the Canadian past that's no longer quite so fashionable with historians, but it's definitely of interest to the general public," notes John English, the current general editor. English estimates that the project should reach 1970 by the 2020s. By that time, Nicholson, the dictionary's founder, might have his own biography included. Not bad for long-term thinking. – *Ivor Tossell*

Lingo



VB6 is short for "Vegan Before 6," the trendy veggie diet that converts say can do wonders for your body and the planet.

Coined by the *New York Times* food writer Mark Bittman, the regime is self-explanatory: no animal products, processed food or simple carbohydrates during the day. After 6 p.m., anything goes.

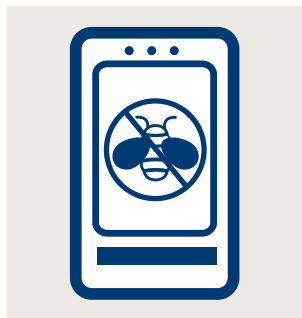
However, David Jenkins, a nutritional expert at

U of T, doesn't put much stock in the concept. He says there's nothing *inherently* healthy about a vegan diet, no matter when you choose to follow it. "You could have a coffee and cigarette for breakfast and a Danish for lunch and that would be vegan," he says. As for saving the planet, Jenkins asserts that a VB6 diet is certainly better for the planet than a diet with no V at all.



Prototype

## Blocking the Buzz New device provides better “masking” for tinnitus sufferers



**IMAGINE FOR A MOMENT** that the loud, incessant buzz of bees inhabits your head. Now, imagine being told by doctors to “get used to it” since there is little, if anything, that can be done to make it stop.

That has been the unfortunate fate of many of the 360,000 Canadians that endure tinnitus – a condition where sufferers hear sounds in one or both ears when there is no external source.

While there is still no cure, researchers and physicians have offered tinnitus sufferers hope

and relief through medications and masking devices, as well as cognitive, relaxation and sound therapies.

Now, work by Dr. Jerry J. Halik, a professor in the department of otolaryngology, offers tinnitus sufferers an improved alternative. Dr. Halik, along with Lorraine Vosu, a Toronto audiologist, and Mike Petroff, a California-based inventor and tinnitus sufferer, have developed a promising new masking therapy called Dynamic Tinnitus Mitigation.

Tinnitus is linked to hearing loss, and can be triggered by exposure to loud noise, head trauma or certain medications. For many sufferers, the condition is a tolerable nuisance. For others, the constant, high-pitched hissing or buzzing, or pulsating sound of crickets, provokes debilitating depression and anxiety.

A universal treatment for tinnitus remains elusive because doctors’ understanding of what causes the condition is still evolving. Previously, researchers believed tinnitus stemmed solely from ear problems. Today, new medical scanning devices have revealed that tinnitus is likely often generated in the brain.

Dr. Halik’s masking therapy uses a device resembling an MP3 player. The mechanism delivers computer-generated sounds via headphones or two miniature speakers. Over time, it helps patients habituate to their particular tinnitus sounds.

Traditional tinnitus masking devices produce steady wind-like sounds that are often easily distinguishable from typical tinnitus, making it difficult to effectively mask the offending noise. What makes Dr. Halik’s device innovative is that it produces pleasant sounds at a low volume and over a broad spectrum of frequencies that can mask and temporarily suppress almost all types of tinnitus.

A study of Dr. Halik’s therapy found that test subjects who were asked whether the new device reduced their annoyance to tinnitus when compared with 11 conventional masking sounds said they found Dr. Halik’s device twice as effective, on average.

Dynamic Tinnitus Mitigation will be available from North American hearing care providers or directly from Audio Bionics by early 2010. – *Andrew Mitrovica*

## Findings



### “Pinocchio” Parenting

Parents may say that honesty is the best policy but they regularly lie to their children as a way of influencing their behaviour and emotions, researchers from the University of Toronto and

the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) have found.

Kang Lee, director of the Institute of Child Study at OISE, and his UCSD colleagues asked American participants in two studies about parents lying to their children – either for the purpose of promoting appropriate behaviour or to make the children happy. In one of the studies, many parents reported they told their young children that bad things would happen if they didn’t go to bed or eat what they were supposed to. For example, one mother said she told her child that if he didn’t finish all of his food he would get pimples all over his face.

Lee said the researchers were surprised by how often parents tell lies: “Even the parents who most strongly promoted the importance of honesty with their children engaged in parenting by lying.” *The Journal of Moral Education* published the research. – *Joyann Callendar*



### Red Tape Blues

Many more low-income students in the U.S. would enter college if they had more information and help filling out financial-aid and application forms, according to researchers from U of T, Harvard University and Stanford University.

The researchers tracked nearly 17,000 low-income Americans to determine whether cumbersome financial-aid forms and lack of information were preventing them from accessing higher education.

“Our study shows that simply helping disadvantaged students complete complex financial-aid and application forms can greatly improve their chances of accessing higher education,” says Philip Oreopoulos, an associate professor of economics at the University of Toronto. “Helping Grade 12 students fill out the financial-aid form increased college enrolment rates by 30 per cent.” – *April Kemick*

Read more about the latest U of T research at [www.magazine.utoronto.ca/category/blogs/eureka](http://www.magazine.utoronto.ca/category/blogs/eureka).

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Brigadier General H.E. (Ted) Brown, U of T alumnus, with a member of the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets

Photo: Moussa Faddoul

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# Q & A

Ask an Expert

Peter Loewen  
Genes and Politics



Do our genes affect our decision to vote or whom we vote for? They may, according to **Peter Loewen**, who is at the forefront of an emerging field called **genopolitics**. Loewen starts as an assistant professor of political science at U of T Mississauga in January. He spoke recently with *U of T*

*Magazine* editor **Scott Anderson** about his research.

**First, what is genopolitics?** Genopolitics takes seriously the possibility that some of the differences we see among individuals, such as their propensity to participate in politics or how they respond to different types of policies, may be due to genetic variations.

**Voting in elections is a modern phenomenon. Are you saying humans have genes that regulate their political views or inclination to vote?** No. There's no single gene that decides if you're conservative or liberal. But if I told you that people who dislike conflict are less likely to vote, and that conflict avoidance has some degree of heritability, then I don't think it's too great a leap to say that the same genes that regulate conflict avoidance also partially regulate engagement in politics.

Genes are rarely deterministic. They influence the tendency toward certain behaviours, but we are still social creatures who are affected by our environment.

**Is there a genetic basis for political ideology?** Evidence from past twin studies suggests that our basic political attitudes and ideology are partially heritable. And now, recent research has identified an important gene in that process. People who have a certain form of the DRD4 gene *and* in their youth are

exposed to many viewpoints through a large number of friends are more likely to be liberal than people who either don't have that version of the gene or don't have a lot of friends when they're young. This is an example of a relationship that's not purely genetic but is an interaction between one's genes and one's environment.

**You have identified a gene that you believe affects voter turnout. How did you locate that gene?** We got the data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (known as ADD Health) in the U.S. We couldn't look at all 25,000 human genes, so ADD Health picked out candidate genes that are known to affect certain social behaviours. We examined these and asked, "What are the political analogues of the behaviours that are associated with these genes?" One of the genes we looked at, CHRNA6, is associated with impulsive behaviour. An existing theory states that the more impulsive you are, the less likely you are to get involved in politics. Our study showed, in fact, that people with the CHRNA6 gene are significantly less likely to have voted in the 2004 U.S. election.

**Could genopolitics be used to explain why India has a democratic system and China does not?** Absolutely not. Your question reflects a common line of thinking that's incorrect. We are not looking for differences *between* big groups of people; we are looking for differences *within* groups of people. It would not be correct for us to make arguments about differences between large populations.

**What challenges do you face studying genopolitics?** It's still an expensive field. And there are some understandable concerns about studying the genetic basis of political behaviour.

**Such as?** People have a generally rudimentary understanding of behavioural genetics and the function of genes. One of the challenges is bringing folks around to the idea that we can have free will but still be constrained by our genes.

**What aspect of your research has excited you the most?** That it opens up a whole new way of thinking about political behaviour.



## Road Thrill

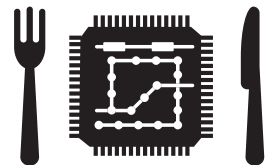
Torontonians have a love-hate relationship with the Gardiner Expressway, but they may find more to like now that a small section has been transformed into a shimmering piece of art.

*Watertable*, an installation by University of Toronto art professors Lisa Steele and Kim Tomczak, uses strings of LED lights to illuminate a 30-metre section of the Gardiner near the new entrance to Fort York. The artists have programmed the lights to glow in sequence, visually echoing the motion of a wave. Speakers emit the sound of lapping water, recorded at the Toronto Islands.

*Watertable* marks the original shoreline of Lake Ontario, and the artists hope that it will prompt viewers to reflect on the city's beginnings. "Everyone who came to this area, including soldiers and native people, arrived by water," says Steele. "This was a place of importance – geologically, geographically – and I think *Watertable* brings a beautiful focus to it again."



## The Lunchtime Cancer Test BlackBerry-sized device developed at U of T can identify cancer type and severity in 30 minutes



U OF T RESEARCHERS HAVE USED nanomaterials to develop an inexpensive microchip that can quickly determine the type and severity of a patient's cancer so that the disease can be detected earlier and treated more effectively.

The researchers' new device senses the unique biomarkers that indicate the presence of cancer at the cellular level, even though these biomolecules – genes that indicate aggressive or benign forms of the disease and differentiate subtypes of the cancer – are generally present only at low levels in biological samples. Analysis can be completed in 30 minutes, a vast improvement over the existing diagnostic procedures that generally take days.

"Today, it takes a room filled with computers to evaluate a clinically relevant sample of cancer biomarkers and the results aren't quickly available," says Shana Kelley, a professor in the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy and the Faculty of

Medicine, who was a lead investigator on the project. "The instrumentation required for this new analysis can be contained within a unit the size of a BlackBerry."

Students working with Kelley and engineering professor Ted Sargent – a fellow lead investigator and U of T's Canada Research Chair in Nanotechnology – found that conventional, flat metal electrical sensors were inadequate to sense cancer's particular biomarkers. Instead, the U of T scientists, working with colleagues from Princess Margaret Hospital and Queen's University, fabricated a chip and decorated it with nanometre-sized wires and molecular "bait" that attracts the cancer biomarkers.

The team's microchip platform has been tested on prostate cancer and models of head and neck cancer. It could potentially be used to diagnose and assess other cancers, as well as infectious diseases such as HIV and H1N1 flu. – *Elaine Smith*





## Moving beyond economic measures of well-being

By Kurt Kleiner



**AS WE WAIT FOR THE END OF** a global economic slowdown, politicians, economists and worried citizens are keeping an eye on month-to-month changes in Canada's national income. They're watching for the sustained uptick that will signal an end to the recession.

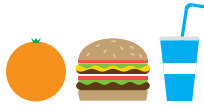
When the collective income of Canadians – or Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – falls significantly, companies go bankrupt, people are thrown out of work, houses are foreclosed on and even those who hold onto their jobs become more insecure and anxious. It's easy to see why GDP, which tallies the market value

of all goods and services produced in a country, has become a de facto measure of well-being and prosperity.

The problem is that GDP was never designed to be any such thing; it was simply intended to measure the economy's ups and downs. Critics say that a focus on this one economic indicator can distract us from other factors that are at least as important to our sense of well-being. At worst, a rise in GDP can suggest that everyone is doing better, even if many people are actually doing worse.

In September, Nobel Prize-winning economists Joseph





“The obsession with GDP is unhealthy. Looking at just GDP is disastrous when it comes to thinking about all the ways we might choose to spend our wealth as Canadians”

Stiglitz and Amartya Sen released a report commissioned by French president Nicolas Sarkozy warning that an over-reliance on GDP might have actually blinded us to the economic problems that led to the most recent recession.

“What you measure affects what you do,” Stiglitz said at an economics seminar after the release of the report. “If you don’t measure the right thing, you don’t do the right thing.”

But figuring out a way to measure our “true” well-being has its own pitfalls. What creates well-being if not wealth? What is true prosperity? How do you measure these things? A number of U of T researchers are investigating such questions in their work.

Hugh Mackenzie is an economic consultant and a research associate at U of T’s Centre for Urban and Community Studies. He has been working with a new organization called the Canadian Institute of Wellbeing, helping to develop the Canadian Index of Wellbeing. The index is intended to be a single number, whose rise and fall can be reported along with GDP, unemployment, the prime rate and other economic indicators. The institute was initially funded by the Atkinson Charitable Foundation, which former *Toronto Star* publisher Joseph E. Atkinson established to promote social and economic justice. The institute has since picked up support from other foundations and the province of Ontario.

“Essentially we’re saying that we’re measuring what matters,” Mackenzie says. “The obverse of that phrase is that if you don’t measure it, it doesn’t count. If we can find ways of measuring such things as health, education and environmental quality, we can also help make those things count when people think about public policy decisions,” he says.

To understand why GDP alone isn’t enough, it’s important to know what it does and does not measure.

GDP adds up the final cost of every good or service that is sold within a country’s borders. It’s a measure of how much an economy produced, or, looked at another way, the total income of everyone living in that country. You can use GDP to compare the sizes of different economies (Canada’s \$1.3-trillion GDP ranks 15<sup>th</sup> in the world), or give a rough idea of how wealthy

individuals are on average (according to the *CIA World Factbook*, our per capita GDP of \$39,100 ranks 22<sup>nd</sup> in the world).

But GDP isn’t a perfect indicator of economic activity. For one thing, it doesn’t account for goods and services that aren’t paid for. So if you do all of your housework and child care yourself, that work is overlooked. On the other hand, if you hire a nanny and a housekeeper, suddenly the same work shows up in the national income.

GDP also doesn’t include value judgments about how or why the money is being spent. So if a steel manufacturer creates huge amounts of pollution, the cost of the steel it makes is added to national income but the harm from the pollution doesn’t show up as a debit. In fact, if other people are forced to take measures to mitigate the harm from the pollution, those measures boost GDP as well.

GDP also says nothing about income distribution. Rising GDP can mean everyone is a getting a little better off – or it can mean a few people are vastly better off, and everyone else is the same or even worse off.

And finally, GDP is bad at measuring public goods. If a country passes environmental regulations that clean up the air and water, national income might increase because of the cost to industry of mitigation measures. But the benefit of clean air and water to health and general enjoyment of life won’t appear anywhere on the ledger.

“The things that we trade in a market economy have prices that we can add up,” says Mackenzie. “But when you start thinking about environmental quality, or income inequality, or social cohesion, or the social benefits to education, or the social benefits associated with a healthier population, those things aren’t traded in the marketplace.”

In his report earlier this year, Stiglitz said that an overemphasis on GDP kept American policy-makers from seeing other signs that the U.S. economy was weak. Huge profits in the financial sector and a spending spree by consumers kept the economy growing. But both profits and spending depended on massive borrowing by banks and consumers. In effect, the increased national income was borrowed from the future,

Stiglitz says. And rising GDP masked the fact that median income in the U.S. had actually fallen between 2000 and 2008, due to increasing income inequality – in other words, the majority of people were actually worse off.

“The obsession with GDP is very unhealthy,” says Joseph Heath, a philosophy professor whose work often deals with economic issues. “Looking at just GDP is really disastrous when it comes to thinking about all the ways in which we might reasonably choose to spend our wealth as Canadians.”

In addition to problems with income inequality and measurement of public goods, GDP says nothing about the value of work versus leisure, or about what we give up to boost national income. For instance, if a change occurred in the economy that boosted GDP but made everyone’s job less secure, overall well-being might actually go down even as it looked like things were getting better, Heath says. “The risk of unemployment is a huge source of ‘illfare,’ or unhappiness,” he adds.

There have been a number of attempts to develop alternatives to the GDP that measure a society’s collective well-being. For instance, the UN Human Development Index combines GDP with measures for health and education. The Happy Planet Index, calculated by the U.K.-based New Economics Foundation, combines life expectancy and subjective life-satisfaction, and also factors in how environmentally sustainable a country’s economic activity is. The country of Bhutan measures Gross National Happiness. There’s also a Genuine Progress Indicator, a Green Gross Domestic Product, a Living Planet Index, a Life Quality Index and more.

Unlike some of the other indicators, though, the Canadian Index of Well-Being (CIW) is not intended to compare countries to one another, but to be specific to Canada. Lynne Slotek, the institute’s CEO, said the group went through a public consultation process, holding meetings around the country to invite input from citizens. Based on those meetings, the institute’s research advisory board drew up a list of eight areas that Canadians think contribute to well-being – living standards, healthy populations, community vitality, environment, education, time use, democratic engagement, and arts, culture and recreation.

The institute is working with researchers across Canada to develop indicators to measure each of these areas. For instance Ilene Hyman, an assistant professor in the epidemiology division at U of T’s Dalla Lana School of Public Health, is helping the CIW select six or eight indicators that will measure changes in time use and how they affect well-being.

The indicators need to measure things such as time spent at work, time spent commuting and time engaged in child care. Other indicators might measure how satisfying or frustrating the time spent at work is, or how the availability of quality child care affects people’s use of time.

“For this index they want to be able to rely on data that’s routinely collected in Canada,” Hyman says. “Unfortunately, when you get into things like work-life conflict, which is emerging as an important issue for Canadians now, there’s no

regularly collected source of data.” Hyman discovered one potentially useful survey, but found that it was conducted only once every 10 years. So in addition to identifying existing sources of information, Hyman will also recommend what information should be collected in the future.

In June, the CIW published the results of its first three domains of well-being – living standards, healthy populations and community vitality. The living standards report looked at nine indicators, including median income and income distribution. The report found that since 1981 Canadians have become wealthier, partly by working longer hours. But income inequality increased, and the poverty rate showed little improvement. The healthy populations report looked at 10 indicators, and found that in general Canadians enjoy good health. But people in the Northern territories have shorter life expectancies (in Nunavut it’s 10 years shorter than the national average), and life expectancy, adjusted for years lived in *good* health, actually peaked in 1996 nationally, and has declined slightly since.

The community vitality report looked at 11 indicators, including volunteer rates, number of close relatives, crime and discrimination. The report found that since the late 1990s people have become more active in organizations and volunteering, even as the size of their social networks has shrunk. Crime has gone down, and most Canadians feel safe walking alone after dark. But 35 per cent of visible minorities reported that they have experienced discrimination.

Eventually, when all of the reports have been published, the CIW will be distilled into a single number that can be tracked over time. Mackenzie envisions newscasters reporting changes to the CIW right alongside GDP and unemployment.

But what will that CIW number mean? One of the thorniest problems to solve in developing alternative measures of a society’s health is in deciding what constitutes well-being, and how to measure it, says Wayne Sumner, University Professor emeritus of philosophy.

The first question to resolve is whether well-being and happiness are, in fact, the same thing. Is well-being a set of good life circumstances that is associated with a subjective feeling of happiness? Or is a happy person by definition experiencing “well-being” regardless of his or her circumstances?

One approach is to concentrate on measurable factors such as longevity, good health and education level. You can measure these indicators, and declare whether well-being is rising or falling, without worrying about whether the citizens of a country actually agree with you.

The other option is to ask people how happy they are, and see how their answers match up with the circumstances of their lives. In fact, “happiness studies” have in recent years become a hot area in psychology.

But even if people report themselves to be happy, that might not be the end of the story, Sumner says. In his book, *Welfare, Happiness and Ethics* (Clarendon Press, 1999), Sumner explored the idea of “authentic” well-being.

Consider that in less developed countries, women tend to report themselves as happier than men do. The reason seems to be, Sumner says, that they are socialized to have lower expectations than men are. But most of us would be uncomfortable saying that a woman in that situation is truly better off. Instead, we would probably think that her sense of well-being was somehow inauthentic – the result of cultural indoctrination that says women shouldn't expect much from life. But Sumner adds that we all undergo social conditioning, and trying to separate normal conditioning from coercive social pressures can be tricky.

Heath warns that alternative indexes necessarily involve value judgments. For instance, the CIW is “welfarist” – it assumes people's welfare is the most important thing. But, in the United States, libertarian groups have their own indexes that assert that economic freedom is the most important value. And Heath cautions that even within a single country there are competing values. “There is no such thing as shared values of Canadians,” he says.

Ulrich Schimmack is a psychology professor at U of T Mississauga who specializes in well-being research. Even if you decide that self-reported life satisfaction is the ultimate indicator of well-being, he says, it's still not clear what you need to do to increase it.

For instance, he says that GDP actually turns out to be a pretty good predictor of well-being, with people in rich countries reporting, for the most part, better life satisfaction than people in poorer ones. In fact, he says that GDP per capita correlates better with life-satisfaction surveys than do scores on the UN Human Development Index, which combines measures of life expectancy, education and GDP.

On the other hand, Schimmack says that economic measures don't tell the whole story. Otherwise, average happiness would tend to increase two or three per cent per year, right along with GDP – and that doesn't happen.

The problem with alternative indexes, Schimmack says, is that they don't necessarily measure variables that have been shown to be correlated with increased life satisfaction. Or, they measure a lot of different variables, all of which are highly correlated with one another, making it hard to figure out which ones are responsible for the increased well-being.

The study of well-being is at an early stage, he says, and it's probably too early to begin making policy decisions based on the research results.

The Martin Prosperity Institute at the Rotman School of Management is also trying to figure out how to measure well-being. Kevin Stolarick, the institute's research director, thinks that a region's well-being – its prosperity – comprises three basic elements. One is how wealthy individuals are. The second is the quality of public goods, which includes the quality of life. Third is how evenly distributed income is.

Researchers are concentrating on the problem of the growing gap between what Richard Florida, director of the Martin Prosperity Institute, has dubbed the high-earning “creative class” and the service class that supports them. “In the next 20 years Ontario needs to boost the percentage of the workforce that works in creative positions from 30 to 50 per cent,” says Stolarick. “But getting to 50 per cent doesn't mean we have to hire a lot more musicians. Getting to 50 per cent means we have to take existing jobs and make them more creative.... We need to increase the skill content, we need to increase the autonomy of the job itself, we need to make the person more responsible.”

Stolarick is familiar with the CIW's index. “They have followed the kitchen sink approach,” he says. “For right now, that's great. Collect as much data as you can possibly collect. Then you can actually start looking at the data.”

But James Pesando, a professor of economics at U of T, is skeptical that anyone will ever come up with a useful single measure of well-being. Trying to decide what measures to include in the index, and how much weight to give to each, is simply too subjective. “The efforts have been here for 40 years, and they'll be here for another 40 years,” he says.

Mackenzie admits the CIW advisers puzzled for a long time over how to weight the factors – how much emphasis to give to a change in the poverty rate versus a change in income distribution versus a change in environmental quality, for instance.

“The psychological breakthrough we made is that it doesn't matter,” he says. The important thing about the index is to get a conversation going about the many factors that affect Canadian well-being. “In a society as diverse and complex as this, you're never going to find a set of weights that everyone will say corresponds to well-being.... The index pulls together a number of different things all in one place and invites people to say, ‘That's interesting.’”

*Kurt Kleiner is a freelance writer in Toronto who reports frequently on science and technology. He wrote “Why Smart People Do Stupid Things” in the Summer 2009 issue.*





The winners of the 2009 *U of T Magazine* Alumni Short Story and Poetry Contest are Kerry Clare (BA 2002 Victoria, MA 2007) for her story “Georgia Coffee Star” and Cory Ingram (BA 2007 Woodsworth) for his poem “Bubbles.” Clare and Ingram each received \$500.



# Georgia Coffee Star

By Kerry Clare

**T**HAT NIGHT MIGHT HAVE ROCKED THEM A LULLABY, had they been more secure. Tucked into twin beds even though they’d booked a double, they’d been travelling long enough not to take any beds for granted. And these ones had such soft mattresses, made up with good linen. A room with a private bath, a nice hotel because they’d had it with hostels. Not realizing they were too old for such accommodation, that they were the problem and the hostels

were exactly what they were supposed to be.

Thomas was sitting up against his pillows, laptop propped up on his knees. The last two days’ photographs transferring from his camera one by one, appearing on the screen to cast his face in various hues. Mo watching him, curled up on her own bed, on her side of the room. The two of them not usually so territorial, but here it was a matter of symmetry. Thomas turning blue in the light, red, then blue again. He’d angled his screen so Mo couldn’t see.

Thunder rumbled far away, the rain falling louder, but neither of them remarked upon the weather. They were tired of weather. They were tired full stop, having had enough of such remarks, of observations lately

That he was looking at a picture of a girl: Transfer Completed. The photo was from the Peace Museum yesterday, the first one he'd taken that morning. A photo of a photo, the woman in sepia tones with her back to the camera, displaying the floral print of a kimono burned onto her skin. That incalculable horror could be represented so uncannily. As contrasted with the mushroom cloud, an iconicity as obscuring as the dust had been, but this woman's back obscured nothing. The imprint of truth here, a photo in a photo. Which was distance, but tangible – Thomas was partial to truths he could hold in his hand.

But he wouldn't show Mo. Six weeks of travelling had made for well over four thousand photos – of various sunsets, vistas, temples and pagodas – but they seemed personal now. Though Mo had been with him the whole time, even appearing in half the shots, this was the world through his eyes. He didn't want to chance what she might reduce it to.

Thomas himself was rarely seen in the pictures, and he'd still been photographer in the ones where he was. With his arm outstretched to hold the camera, his head dipped into a double chin. But even at the best of times Thomas photographed badly, light glaring off his glasses, his jaw stiff and aching when he smiled. Thomas found his comfort behind the lens instead; of all the roles in his life, he liked this one the best. Something formidable had been achieved these last few weeks, and he reported, "Four thousand, three hundred and thirty-seven" without even thinking. For he was of the type that thought sheer volume might constitute an oeuvre.

It was a sticking point. Thomas had viewed so much of their six weeks in Asia through his lens, he might as well have watched it on television. He was utterly incapable of experience, preoccupied with documentation at a level that was disconcerting. Frustrating. Even when his seascapes all just blended into one, he'd argue memories did the same. Which memories didn't do, Mo was sure. Or at least when

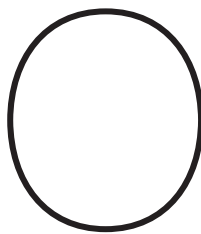
they did, they were supposed to, fading and blending all part of a memory's design.

She was sitting up in bed now. The light from the computer was distracting, the *tap tap* of the keyboard annoying. Illuminated letters spelling "Georgia Coffee Star" were secured to the roof next door, dousing their room in flossy pink, thin curtains shutting out none of the brilliance.

"Almost five thousand photos," said Thomas, who liked his numbers round.

"But not quite," said Mo. "There won't be time for that." Because there wouldn't be. Not during the thirty-six hours they had left. And now Thomas was exhaling through his nose, a rubber tire and she the rusty nail. "But you've got so many already," she said. Thomas was too sensitive. Lying back down, and there it was, almost. Mo closed her eyes. Could it really be that easy?

But there it was, thought Thomas, his camera disconnecting from his laptop with a click. The noise would disturb her. And no matter what she said, it was a triumph, these four thousand, three hundred and thirty-seven photos that proved not only Thomas Whittock Lives, but that There Are Places He Has Been. The whole wide world, if only so far, contained on a hard drive. Chaos, grit and ecstasy shrunk into bytes.



**OUTSIDE THE WIND WAS BLOWING FIERCE**, storm's stirring. A lagging warm front about to clash with its adversary, the first typhoon of the season descending, and Mo and Thomas hadn't realized. Neither one of them noticing the currents in the air, for they thought they'd seen storms before.

Thomas was organizing his photos into albums, and Mo still had her eyes shut but then she opened them again.

"Are you going to be long?" she asked.

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“Don’t know.”

Mo sat back up, turned on the lamp. “Anything good?”

Thomas shrugged. He created a brand new file, “Hiroshima Tuesday.” There won’t be time, she’d said, like the decision was hers, and now it felt like it was.

He continued sorting, and Mo got out of bed. Treading carefully, because the room was dark. In spite of the bedside lamp, the glow from the computer and the pink light across the way. Too bright to sleep, too dark to walk, up here in this bizarre room eighteen storeys into the empyrean and Mo was looking for something to read. There was only the travel guide, battered from weeks of use, from being stuffed into her backpack. Some pages dog-eared, whole sections torn out from day trips when they didn’t want to haul the continent. But there were chapters they hadn’t cracked yet, still places they hadn’t been.

Then at the crash: they looked up together. A tile had come loose from a roof across the street, plunging down against their window. The view obscured as the rain started falling. “Georgia Coffee Star” had turned into an electric blur.

Thomas said, “What was that?”

Mo said, “How would I know?” She had resolved to be kinder, but Thomas made it hard. Behind his screen his head was bowed, shoulders slouched. And now, only now, did she want to push the computer away, the camera too, and crawl into that narrow bed beside him. Only when he wanted nothing to do with her at all.

Because he was reading his emails, using his access to the wireless world, but there was nothing urgent. Junior Associates with their massive quandaries, problems he could solve out of habit. These could wait a day or two. A note from his boss, but just an update, nothing had changed and Thomas clicked the email window shut.

Thunder rumbled far away, the rain falling louder, but neither of them remarked upon the weather. They were tired of weather. They were tired full stop, having had enough of such remarks, of observations lately. Of each other. Even the things they thought but never said seemed so dwelled upon.

Mo skimming a summary of Tibetan customs, and she was thinking about all they would be taking back with them. Bits and pieces picked up along the way – sarongs, and thongs, and ethnic handicrafts.

Thomas was looking at the photos again, beginning a slide show of the whole collection. They’d both lost weight, he realized. Mo no longer smiled with her teeth.

And Mo was turning the page, enacting reading for the sake of comfort. What she would have given for a fat 19<sup>th</sup>-century novel to pass the time, to take her far away from here. Just to be home, where the books were allowed to be heavy because there was no need to carry them around.

Oh home – and she was thinking of bath towels. Her towels hanging on their hooks on the other side of the world and

## Bubbles

By Cory Ingram

Once, I was asked to describe a  
Scene from my boyhood that has lingered  
In my mind through seven decades,  
Five wives and countless would-be successes  
In such elaborate and disparate fields as  
Mechanics and brainstorming, painting and a  
Travelling gig with a Klezmer Band headed by  
A man named Rodolfo (or was it Yago?),  
Who, by the way, wore a plum-coloured tie  
And addressed his wife as Cleopatra –  
Heiress to the desert of his heart and  
Baker of the key lime pie to end all pies,  
And, for that matter, all desserts which  
Take as their base the Caesarian World of Fruits.

Anyway, it was over an apple when  
He asked if I would come and deliver a  
Few words on my favourite memory –  
We were sitting under an elm in a sunny  
Quadrangle, agog at the blue Parulas  
Who appeared to be learning to comb the  
Leaves on the circlets of their heads: I said sure.

With an old guitar string, he cut me a  
Crescent of apple and listened as I explained  
(In my roundabout way) how my scene had  
Come to pass; it was with the cup of my  
Hand on the egg my chin that I told him  
The story of how I was eight years old,  
Scrubbing the muck from the kitchen floor,  
The bubbles gathering like angels or  
Those fluffy bits from the trees in spring,  
When, all of a sudden, a gust from the  
Window sent them, scurrying, to the  
Couch where my Grandmother was  
Napping, up like a bird, one foot off the rug.

Breathing deeply, I rustled her hair and  
Watched as she looked at me with her dodo-eyes  
And penguin-smirk; then I asked her (very softly):  
Why do you sleep with one foot up like that?  
And she said (even softer): with one  
Off the floor, you’re halfway to flying.

Cory Ingram earned a philosophy degree from U of T in 2007. After graduating, he moved to Alberta, and has spent time travelling and writing. In addition to a collection of poetry, Ingram has recently finished his first novel – a gay-themed, coming-of-age story set in Toronto. “Inspiration,” he writes, “is coffee and a willingness to surrender.”



she could see them, memory capturing her senses: fluffy, blue, soft against her cheek, and they smelled like the dryer. The dryer – she’d been rinsing her clothes in the sink for so long now, hanging them up to dry in the shower. Even her tank tops were stiff, nothing ever really got clean. A hotel as nice as this one, and still the towels were rough and worn with loose threads, too small for their purpose. One of the towels had to be the bath mat and it never mattered which.

But that there was a bath mat at all, which meant a bath. Even a shower hadn’t been easy to come by. Once in Mongolia they’d travelled by bus for thirty hours to a destination without running water, so what a relief it was – the bathtub, the end of this journey. Every second’s passage bringing them closer to home, to end up finished where they’d started from.

There was a bolt of lightning then, the room ablaze for an instant, and then more thunder. Thomas considering turning off the computer, but he didn’t want to give her the satisfaction. She was tired, but she was also intolerable. Why should he always have to make it easy?

One pagoda slipping into another, and he was looking at Vietnam. Mo, turning the pages of the travel guide, arrived at Vietnam, barely noticing the end of Tibet. Still thinking about the towels, how with one she could rub her whole body dry. She was staring at the ceiling when the lights went out.

**T**HE WHOLE WORLD DISAPPEARING, evaporating into a pinpoint of light where a stucco swirl had been, and then obliterated altogether – pop. The last of the power when old TVs get turned off, but Mo’s eyes adjusted and she found the world not gone at all. Its shapes instead draped in darkness, just the light from Thomas’s screen.

But the Georgia Coffee Star had been extinguished. Thomas set down the computer and got up to see. Pushing the curtain aside, he looked out the window to see no lights shining, no street below. The 7-Eleven on the corner was gone; there was no sign at all of civilization. They were eighteen storeys above an abyss and now they felt the wind. The gentle sway incongruous with the violent noise outside.

“It must have been the storm,” he said.

Mo tossed the book aside.

Thomas turned away from the window, that blind opening. He sat on the bed, “You’d think they’d have a generator,” he said. “For emergencies.”

“It won’t last long,” said Mo. That sway, that uneasy awful peace. Because earthquake-proof buildings were designed to give way, not to collapse at a tremor, she knew. That the movement meant safety, but it was hard to be convinced. “What’s out there?”

Thomas said, “Just dark, and the rain.”

And neither of them had ever imagined a typhoon, sup-

posing such weather for people prone to hyperbole. Their time in Asia had been so sticky, the heat endless and unbroken. So accustomed to their own perpetual discomfort, they’d hadn’t imagined something different or worse.

A piece of the Georgia Coffee Star sign snapped, part of its scaffolding flying towards them. Arriving with a crash like shattering glass, but still the pane held.

“It’s just the storm,” said Thomas.

“But it’s not.” Thomas would try to make everything manageable. “Debris flying through the sky – what storm is that?” Mo asked.

“Just the wind.”

Wind, Mo thought, being the least of their problems. Looking out the window, straining her eyes to find a world she just couldn’t see, and she imagined a blackened cow flying over a dark slice of moon. The wind getting louder now, like a highway was outside. Rain battering the glass, and they’d never sleep through this racket. “Should we call downstairs?” Thomas asked.

“But what can they do? If they could turn on the lights, I’m sure they would.”

“It might be an emergency.”

“Then we shouldn’t be tying up the phone,” she said. “You wouldn’t understand them anyway.”

**T**HOMAS TURNED OFF THE COMPUTER because the battery was low. The room was dark, finally.

“You’re going to sleep then?” Mo asked him.

Thomas said, “I guess so.” He’d never be able to sleep with the storm, but if the alternative was Mo, he’d try. So he put the laptop away, came back to bed. Pulling down the covers to crawl underneath, though Mo was still on top of hers. His eyes adjusting, and he could see the shape of her – there must be light from somewhere.

The pillow under his head was hard and heavy. He could feel them swaying still; almost peaceful, were it not so imperilling his connection to earth.

It made Mo nervous too. She was freezing, her bed below the air duct, but she didn’t want to move, to pull up her blankets, just in case she sent them toppling. This wasn’t safety, she was sure of it, though of course Thomas would tell her otherwise. He’d find another way to render her anxiety all wrong, and with the cold and wind, she shivered again. The lightning flashing, illuminating the room just like day.

So they were staring at one another, lying both on their sides.

But when the lightning was gone, the darkness again. That one glimpse had changed nothing, and still the thunder rolled.

Thomas gripping the edge of his mattress, ashamed to suppose his stillness might just keep them stable. And yet he

And then the room was flooded with light, as shocking as a sound. Both of them starting, so sure this was it, that the plummet would begin, but the sway kept on, everything pink as a postcard sunset

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couldn't chance it otherwise.

With Mo holding her breath, as though the breeze of respiration even mattered. The flip side of the view was how far they had to fall, and she wondered how long it would take. So it occurred to Mo that she was about to die then. Almost resigned, she realized, with Thomas still thousands of miles away on the other side of the room. She couldn't reach him, even if she stretched out her arm. When she couldn't hold her breath anymore, she exhaled slowly.

Back and forth they blew, just like a bough. It was all give and take.

Thomas clutching the mattress, thinking here was grave danger. Something he'd never experienced, though he'd heard about adrenaline rushes, but here was none of that. His fingers so fixed, he couldn't let go. A dream he couldn't cry out from, and what could he say if he did?

And then the room was flooded with light, as shocking as a sound. Both of them starting, so sure this was it, that the plummet would begin, but the sway kept on, everything pink as a postcard sunset. They even dared to sit up in their beds, to look out towards the electric beacon. For a glimpse to finally change something between them, to see it was the storm after all.

*Kerry Clare (BA 2002, MA 2007) reads and writes in Toronto, where she lives with her husband, Stuart Lawler, and their baby daughter, Harriet. Her fiction, essays and reviews have appeared in the New Quarterly, Quill & Quire, the Globe and Mail and other publications. Online, she writes about books and reading at her blog, Pickle Me This (picklemethis.blogspot.com). Clare is currently on maternity leave from her job as researcher for the Clarkson Centre for Business Ethics and Board Effectiveness at U of T's Rotman School of Management.*

## Readers' Choice Awards and Runners-Up

[Liam Lacey](#) (BA 1978 Victoria) won second place in the short story contest for "Remorse and the Post-Op Denver Convention." In online voting, readers selected his story as their favourite. Lacey is a journalist working in Toronto.

[Luke Henry Howie](#) is runner-up in the poetry contest for "The Dog / Pic Mober." He graduated from U of T with a degree in the study of religion in 2007 and is currently pursuing his bachelor of education at Trent University.

In online voting, readers selected "In Rocco's House (*My Grandmother's Poor Beginning*)," by [Laura Rock](#) (BA 1986 St. Michael's), as their favourite poem. Rock lives in Lakefield, Ontario, with her husband and four children. Her fiction and essays have appeared in the *Antigonish Review*, the *Globe and Mail* and the *Peterborough Examiner*.

|| ☪ Read the runners-up and Readers' Choice Award winners at [www.magazine.utoronto.ca](http://www.magazine.utoronto.ca)

## The Judges

### Poetry Contest

[Shannon Bramer](#) is the author of *The Refrigerator Memory*, published by Coach House Books in 2005.

[Lynn Crosbie](#) (PhD 1996) is a cultural critic, *Globe and Mail* columnist and the author of several books of poetry, including *Missing Children*, *Liar* and *Queen Rat*.

[Ray Hsu](#) (BA 2001 Victoria, MA 2002) is the author of *Anthropy*, which received the League of Canadian Poets' Gerald Lampert Award and was a finalist for the Trillium Book Award for Poetry.

[Zoe Whittall](#) is the author of two novels, *Holding Still For As Long As Possible* and *Bottle Rocket Hearts*, and three books of poetry, most recently *Precordial Thump*.

### Short Story Contest

[Lee Gowan](#) is a writer and head of the Creative Writing Program at the School of Continuing Studies, University of Toronto. His first novel, *Make Believe Love*, was nominated for the Trillium Award in 2002 and his most recent novel, *Confession*, was published by Knopf, Canada this year.

[Allyson Latta](#) is an editor of literary fiction and non-fiction, and a freelance writer. She runs Days Road Writers' Workshops and teaches memoir writing at U of T's School of Continuing Studies.

[Andrew Pyper](#) holds a BA and MA in English Literature from McGill University and a law degree from the University of Toronto. He is the author of four novels, most recently *The Killing Circle*, which was selected a Crime Novel of the Year by the *New York Times*.

[Rebecca Hilda Rosenblum](#)'s fiction collection, *Once*, won the Metcalf-Rooke Award and was one of *Quill & Quire's* 15 Books That Mattered in 2008. She blogs about things she likes at [rebecca-rosenblum.blogspot.com](http://rebecca-rosenblum.blogspot.com). Rosenblum received her master's of English and creative writing from the University of Toronto in 2007.







Look

Photojournalist  
Rita Leistner shines  
a light on native  
communities

By Jason McBride

Closely

Previous page: Baby Cakes and a friend in Haida Gwaii, B.C.  
This page: The interior of the Buffalo Bill Museum in Le Claire, Iowa



TALKING TO RITA LEISTNER is like attending a photography class. Ask her what makes a good picture and she'll answer abstractly at first, with a casual reference to philosopher Roland Barthes. When she pulls out examples, however – an issue of *Canadian Geographic*, say, or a monograph by British photographer Martin Parr – things get very specific very quickly. “This is a beautiful photograph but it has no perception or personality to it,” she says, stabbing at a drab cover shot of the Mackenzie Delta. “It’s the most ordinary picture imaginable. They haven’t even waited for the light to be interesting. It doesn’t go through your eye and hit your brain and your gut.” She opens the Parr book and, with considerably more excitement, points to an off-kilter image of some Walmart employees. “Most people wouldn’t see a picture there,” she says. “But it wouldn’t be a picture without the composition, without the harshness of the flash, the tone in the sky that allows these figures to pop off this bland background.”

In just a few hours, I learn how flash can emphasize the presence of the photographer, the best way to approach a suspicious subject, how lonely the life of a photojournalist can be. Leistner, who’s 45, talks about these things the way she talks about everything – with uncommon candour and the jumpy intensity of someone who’s spent a lot of time in war zones. The first time we meet at her penthouse condo in

Toronto’s Little Italy, she’s dressed in beige linen pants and a youthful Paul Frank tank-top that reveals, thanks to a lifetime of lugging camera gear (and a dedication to exercise), a body-builder’s biceps. Her feet are bare. Her stories – she’s got a lot of them – are punctuated by an exuberant, barking laugh.

Leistner is one of Canada’s foremost photojournalists, a frequent contributor to *Time*, *Vanity Fair*, *Rolling Stone* and the *Walrus*, among other well-known publications. While she didn’t start taking pictures professionally until she was in her late 20s, her East German father was a devoted amateur shutterbug and instilled in her an early affection for the medium. “Photography has always been a part of my life,” Leistner says.

Born and raised in Scarborough, she later studied comparative literature at U of T, earning an MA in 1990. After grad school, she worked in film as a lighting specialist for six years. Frustrated by the chauvinism of that world, she decamped for Cambodia in 1997, becoming an independent photojournalist and staying for a year-and-a-half. In 2000, realizing the need to hone her largely self-taught skills, she enrolled in New York’s prestigious International Center for Photography. There, she learned about Cornell Capa’s concept of “Concerned Photography,” and her subsequent work focused on particularly forbidding – but also particularly arresting – subjects and subcultures: American women wrestlers; female patients at Baghdad’s al Rashad Psychiatric Hospital; Iraqi gravediggers and detainees; crack addicts on Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside. She won three National





1. Easter Sunday at the Anglican Church in Aklavik, N.W.T.
2. Mourners gather to remember Gerald Parnell in Haida Gwaii, B.C.
3. The home of Navajo elder Berta Tom in Rock Springs, New Mexico
4. Kathy in her room on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside

Magazine Awards and co-authored a book called *Unembedded: Four Independent Photojournalists on the War in Iraq*. Teaching gigs, exhibitions and lectures soon followed. New York served as her home base for eight years.

It's an exhausting c.v. even to contemplate. But for all of her accomplishments and despite the exhilaration of the work, Leistner was unsatisfied. "I became a photographer because I wanted to lead many lives," she says, paraphrasing Susan Sontag. But Leistner had grown weary of a life chasing assignments from editors whose sensibilities and mandates were increasingly not her own. This was compounded by a growing sense of personal crisis. Being a photojournalist demanded that she be constantly open and exposed, but, paradoxically, extremely alone. "I spent many nights crying, frustrated, tired and lonely," she says. Fear was a constant, as was alcohol. Relationships floundered. Her work started to suffer. While dismissive of the swashbuckling war photographer stereotype – "I did that work *despite* the adrenaline," she says – Leistner realized that she was becoming a cliché.

She was saved from that fate by Edward Curtis. In 2005, she passed up a fifth trip to Iraq and returned to Toronto to get sober. Soon after, she began developing, with playwright Marie Clements, a unique multimedia work called *The Edward Curtis Project*. The project fuses Leistner's photographs of native communities (from Arizona, New Mexico, Haida Gwaii, Vancouver and the Arctic) with Clements' tale of a contemporary Métis journalist (Clements is herself Métis-Dene) who

travels a century back in time in order to interview Curtis about his controversial photographs.

Most famous for his landmark, early 20<sup>th</sup>-century study, *The North American Indian*, Curtis sought to comprehensively document the 80-odd Aboriginal Peoples populating the continent, from the American border with Mexico to Alaska. Over 30 years, he amassed 20 volumes of work, each containing 75 hand-pressed photogravures (a kind of photo-based etching) and 300 pages of text (he also made thousands of wax recordings of speech and music). His iconic photographs – he produced more than 40,000 throughout the lifetime of the project – are now as familiar as any by Ansel Adams or Edward Weston.

Leistner was herself eager to photograph native communities but also to investigate the complicated notion of colonial photography that's part of Curtis's legacy. Curtis's detractors have long criticized him for his romanticism, nostalgia and manipulation: he occasionally demanded, for instance, that his subjects wear traditional dress when they had stopped wearing such garb years prior. Leistner is entirely familiar with these objections, but is more forgiving. "There are so many ways of seeing Edward Curtis's work" she says. "It can be seen negatively from a methodological point of view, but he shouldn't be criticized retroactively. Curtis was





1-3: Members of the Haida First Nation in Haida Gwaii, B.C.  
 1. Carver Sean Brennan 2. Master carver Leo Gagnon  
 3. Tiffany Vanderhoop 4. Inuvialuit elder Ida Kuneyuna in  
 Ulukhaktok, N.W.T.

a portraitist, not a social activist.”

At the same time, she was wary of repeating any of his mistakes. “How could I photograph Aboriginal Peoples,” she wondered, “without repeating the appropriations and objectifications of colonial photographers and ethnographers?” But her goal, all the while, was simply to show the richness and variety of aboriginal life on this continent. As she points out, there are actually very few photographic representations of this life and what there is tends to focus on misery and poverty in those communities. “It’s an unconscious conspiracy to ignore what’s really going on in native communities,” she says. “The stereotypes and prejudices about Aboriginal Peoples in Canada are undeniable. People don’t know anything about them because we don’t get any information.”

By illustration, Leistner walks me through the pictures from her most recent trip to the Northwest Territories. The dozens of images depict a landscape and lifestyle that’s both alien and familiar: a muskox hunt on the tundra, a church in first snow, a deserted skateboard park, an elderly woman joking with her beloved sister. Some shots are direct homage to Curtis: portraits of clam-diggers, or diptychs that show individuals in both street and ceremonial dress. Her Parr-like use of flash and a

keen eye for the absurd – a slaughtered muskox, for example, its flesh neatly wrapped up in its own fur, might be a giant wig – render these images strange, poetic and singular.

With initial funding from North Vancouver’s Presentation House Theatre (which will premiere *The Edward Curtis Project* just before the 2010 Winter Olympics), Leistner spent a year taking pictures. But she soon realized that this wasn’t enough; the subject was too compelling, too enormous, too personal. She spent \$8,000 of her own money to revisit the Arctic and the friends she now had there. She took thousands more pictures and plans to take more over the next few years. “It’s become part of my story,” she says, “as a documentarian and as a human being.”

Once the play ends in January, the photographs will continue to have a life of their own. Leistner is planning future shows and, she hopes, a book. She gave a guest lecture and slide show at Victoria College in 2008 and has been asked to return next fall as an instructor. For the time being, she has little desire to revisit conventional photojournalism. “I use my camera to make art,” she says. “I’m not trying to create an exact replica of what I see. I’m trying to affect what I see through the tools of photography. So people will look harder.”

*Jason McBride writes about pop culture for Toronto Life, the Globe and Mail, the Believer and many other publications.*

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Wendy Freedman earns major cosmology prize  
for her research into the Hubble constant

**W**hen Wendy Freedman was about 10 years old and on a family trip to Lake Simcoe in Ontario, she recalls staring up at the dark evening sky as her father, Harvey, introduced her to the concept of the speed of light.

Dr. Freedman, who was an associate professor of psychiatry at U of T, told his daughter how the light from those pinpoints – even the closest ones – had been travelling for years before it

reached her eyes. He added, intriguingly, that the stars from which the light originated may have since died out. “*That was just fascinating,*” recalls Wendy.

Freedman went on to study astrophysics at U of T before taking up a fellowship in 1984 at the Carnegie Observatories of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, in Pasadena, California. She joined the permanent faculty in 1987. >>>



## Alumni Connection

### New UTAA president Carl Mitchell aims to increase direct interaction with U of T grads

CARL MITCHELL, THE NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT of the University of Toronto Alumni Association (UTAA), has returned to university life full speed over the last decade. The computer-science grad has served as treasurer on the UTAA Board of Directors, as a member of the industry advisory board for the department of computer science, and as a member of several awards committees. Mitchell (BSc 1984 St. Michael's) was partially motivated to re-engage with U of T to promote the high quality of its computer-science program – especially against rival Waterloo. (He was the first computer graduate to donate to the Bahen Centre for Information Technology, which opened in 2002. A computer lab within the centre bears Mitchell's name.)



A software engineer after graduation, Mitchell is now a partner at the business advisory practice Barrington Capital Corp. Elected in June, he is still setting broad objectives for his tenure – including higher visibility for the association at university events and increased direct interaction with alumni. Mitchell aims to make U of T grads aware of the benefits of networking with an alumni association. “We have a number of highly skilled directors from a wide variety of backgrounds, and I don't think the membership is aware of that,” he says.

Mitchell was born in Jamaica, but has spent almost his entire life in Toronto. He has been married to a fellow alum for 19 years, and they have two children, ages 11 and 14. So is Mitchell steering his kids toward a U of T education? “We've had them on campus tours a couple of times,” he says, “and I'm hoping for future alumni.” – *Sarah Treleaven*

|| ☎ This year's new UTAA board members are Arshia Tabrizi, Ann Peel and Lenna Bradburn. Read about them at [www.magazine.utoronto.ca](http://www.magazine.utoronto.ca).

>> The Carnegie Observatories director since 2003, Freedman recently received the 2009 Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation cosmology prize for groundbreaking research into the Hubble constant. (She was one of three recipients, along with colleagues Robert Kennicutt and Jeremy Mould.) “It's a nice distinction,” says Freedman (BSc 1979 UC, MSc 1980, PhD 1984), who notes that the 2008 winner, J. Richard Bond, is a University Professor at U of T. “Canadians have done well.”

Freedman refines techniques for measuring the speed at which the universe is expanding, known as the Hubble constant. The renowned American astronomer Edwin Hubble discovered this phenomenon, but measuring the distances between diverging galaxies proved to be exceptionally difficult because of the “blurring effect” of intergalactic dust.

For her PhD thesis, Freedman developed techniques for

accounting for those obscurations, basically by examining the relationship between the brightness of distant objects and their rates of oscillation. After NASA launched the Hubble Telescope in 1990, Freedman worked as a project leader on the Extragalactic Distance Scale project, which further refined those measurements and led to a precise assessment of the universe's age (13.5 billion years).

In recent years, Freedman and her colleagues have been studying supernovae, the “dark energy” that seems to be pulling the universe apart, and how new findings relate to Einstein's general theory of relativity.

While her work has practical applications in X-ray technology, Freedman says the research probes at the most fundamental questions of existence because of its focus on the origins of the universe and its present condition. “It really does change our perspective of who we are.” – *John Lorinc*

#### My Favourite...

##### Professor



When I was a first-year student in 2001, Prof. Scott Browning's boyish charm and nerdy jokes compelled some of us to fight for front-row seats in organic chemistry class. Don't get me wrong; Prof. Browning was a fantastic teacher who explained concepts clearly. But some of us were enamoured – one classmate even asked for his autograph on a periodic table.



Regina Lee  
BSc 2005 UC

## Stories from the Intensive Care Unit

### Tilda Shalof's books unmask the high-pressure world of nursing

TILDA SHALOF (BScN 1983) calls herself a nurse first and an author second, but her two professions are intimately connected. "I write because I want people to know that when they come in the hospital, their care is not all dependent on doctors," says Shalof, the author of three memoirs about the often-unseen world of nursing and the editor of *Lives in the Balance*, a new collection of nurses' stories. "I want them to understand the kind of skills and responsibilities we have, and the ways we keep patients safe and help them heal."

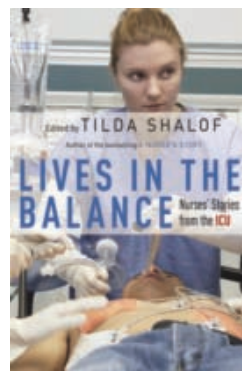
A creative writing course at U of T's School of Continuing Studies in 1993 helped launch Shalof's second career as an author. "I'd always written, but until then I didn't know how to shape my material into stories. It got me thinking about how I could apply what I learned to tell true stories about my life as a nurse," says Shalof, who has been working in Toronto General Hospital's Medical Surgical Intensive Care Unit for 24 years. A Canadian company has recently optioned the rights to the gripping tales in her books *A Nurse's Story: Life, Death, and In-Between in an Intensive Care Unit* and *The Making of a Nurse*, with plans to create a TV series.

In *Lives in the Balance*, Shalof compiles real-life stories by 25

nurses who work in intensive care units across North America. They describe the intellectually demanding, physically draining, messy and emotionally intense job of caring for patients with life-threatening illnesses or injuries – from the thrill of resuscitating a patient in cardiac arrest to the heartbreak of losing a young accident victim.

Born into a family where both parents and one brother had chronic medical conditions, Shalof was a caregiver from her earliest days. Yet becoming a confident, competent ICU nurse was a long struggle, recounted in *The Making of a Nurse*. Her most recent memoir, *Camp Nurse*, is a much lighter read. Out in paperback in April, it chronicles the six summers Shalof has cared for children at camps in northern Ontario – where she encountered everything from homesickness to sleepwalking.

Shalof's frank accounts of nursing life have resonated with readers inside and outside the profession. "Nurses feel very confirmed and proud that someone is telling their story," she says. "Patients and families find it comforting to know that nurses are as skilled and knowledgeable as I portray them. They say my books open up a world they didn't know, and they're grateful to be let in." – Megan Easton



|| ☪ For more info on Shalof and her books, visit [www.nursetilda.com](http://www.nursetilda.com).



#### On the set of *Bloodletting & Miraculous Cures*

Dr. Vincent Lam (left) sees eye-to-eye with Mayko Nguyen as Shawn Ashmore looks on. It's amusing that Lam's short story collection of the same name has turned into a TV series – because Lam (MD 1999) doesn't own a TV. "I'm what is known as a late adopter of technology," he quips.

Lam's short stories, which chronicle the moral dilemmas that physicians face, often focus on Fitz (played by Ashmore) and Ming (played by Nguyen). In 2006, Lam became the youngest and only first-time author to win the Scotiabank Giller Prize, Canada's largest annual fiction award. These days, when not practising in Toronto East General Hospital's emergency room, he is writing his first novel, *Cholon, Near Forgotten*. It's about Percival Chen, a character inspired by Lam's grandfather, who was a headmaster in Vietnam. Chen is a character in the TV series, too. In his final days, when he is very ill, Chen has to choose between ancient remedies and his grandson's high-tech interventions. The eight-episode series is on the Movie Network and Movie Central beginning in January. – Susan Pedwell

The Two of Us

## Ed and Florence Gross



**ED GROSS (MA 1945)** and Florence (Goldman) Gross (MSW 1944) married in 1943 while studying at U of T. Ed became a university professor, and Florence a social worker with the family courts; they worked and lived throughout the United States and in Australia. Now retired and living in Seattle, they have two children, one grandchild and three great-grandchildren.

**Florence:** We met in 1942 at the University of British Columbia. We were both taking undergraduate psychology classes, and sat side by side. Ed became the top student in the entire graduating class – and I got him. Ed’s sister had told me to stay away from him because I would interfere with his schooling. To this day, she can’t forgive me. After graduation, I went to U of T to study social work. Ed and I had decided that if neither of us had found a proper mate in five years, we would marry one another. However, that turned into three months when I got a call from Ed telling me that he was coming to Toronto from UCLA, where he wasn’t enjoying his study of psychology. I had been speaking very highly of the education I was getting. I asked him where he would live, and he suggested that we get married. That was his proposal.



Ed and Florence Gross, after one month of marriage, 1943

**Ed:** Well, it’s not easy to find a place to live. When we met, we both belonged to the Psychology Club. The professor in charge was a practitioner of hypnosis and wanted a couple of subjects. He said, “I understand you’ve been hypnotizing Florence.” I kept trying to get Florence to tell me, in her hypnotic state, that she loved me, but she was very resistant. We married in Toronto in 1943. While Florence earned a master’s in social work, I did a master’s in sociology and economics.

We’ve been married for 66 years and it gets better every day. We recommend it to all the other graduates. Our main advice is: marry young and don’t die. Florence is now 90 and I’m 88 – but I’ve always liked older women. We’re now retired and opera is our life. It both enriches us and impoverishes us.



**When former religious studies major Gabe Thirlwall** (BA 2001 St. Michael’s) came out of the closet and found there weren’t a lot of options for queer women in the Catholic Church, she did what most people would do: she moved to Ottawa and started a small business making political puppets composed of recycled textiles. “It’s a slow town,” she says, “and seeing federal politicians is like celebrity sightings. It’s pathetically exciting when you go to a bar and see them sitting two tables over.”

Thirlwall started with federal MPs and has since moved on to municipal figures, and gay icons such as Harvey Milk. U of T alumni puppets include Michael Ignatieff, Bob Rae and David Miller. The most popular puppet is John Baird, outfitted in pink lamé. Almost no one wants poor old Jim Flaherty, even with his glittery gold shoes. “Maybe I can put him on sale,” muses Thirlwall.

Thirlwall’s political leanings aren’t too tough to gauge from the puppets – she purposely made Stephen Harper pudgier in puppet form – but that’s not the point. “It’s about getting people engaged in politics and asking them if they know what this person stands for,” she says. – Sarah Treleaven





First Person

## Prisoners in Tehran

### Treatment of political detainees hasn't changed – but technology offers hope, writes Marina Nemat

IT HAS BEEN ABOUT THREE YEARS since I stopped paying attention to what Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says. If I see him on TV, I change the channel. I don't even read the Farsi jokes about him that regularly appear in my email box. To me, he is irrelevant. Another puppet in a line of puppets in the hands of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei. And while Iranian politicians spout propaganda and threaten to wipe this and that country off the map, they order the torture, rape and murder of their own young citizens in the prisons of the Islamic Republic. I was arrested in Tehran in 1982 at the age of 16 and spent more than two years suspended between life and death in Evin prison. (I had asked the calculus teacher to teach calculus instead of propaganda, written articles against the government in my school newspaper and attended protest rallies.) When it comes to the treatment of political prisoners, nothing much has changed in that country since then.

The Iranian regime has been in power for more than 30 years, violently and constantly silencing any form of dissidence. In the early '80s, thousands of young Iranians – mostly teenagers – were imprisoned after a wave of mass arrests. During those days, a court consisted of a Sharia judge

sitting in a small room, passing verdicts. A trial usually took about two to five minutes. There were no defence lawyers, and, in many cases, even the accused was not present at his or her own so-called trial. Thousands of prisoners were branded as anti-revolutionaries and were executed. There were rumours that young girls were raped before execution so that they would not go to heaven. Things are not any better today.

Even here in the West, it is difficult for victims of rape to step forward and go public. In a country such as Iran if a woman is raped, she could easily be blamed for it. At the age of 17, I was married off to one of my interrogators in prison. This didn't mean that I was released, but I was forced to spend nights with him in a solitary cell in the 209 section of Evin. I did not talk about my experience until about nine years ago when the past began to catch up with me. After my release, the first night I was home, I ate dinner with my parents and listened to them talk about the weather. They wanted the past to be forgotten. Not that I wanted them to ask me how I had been tortured and raped, but it would have been nice if they had told me that when I was ready to talk, they would be there to listen. But this never came.

After my book, *Prisoner of Tehran* (Viking Canada, 2007), was published, a few Iranians called me a liar, a traitor and a whore. A few others said that I had exaggerated and that it could not have been so bad in Evin. I had brought up issues that were considered unspeakable by many, and I had to pay for my boldness. But things began to change after the 2009 unrest that followed Iran's presidential election. Unlike in the '80s, history was being recorded much more easily. Cellphone cameras documented brutalities on the streets of Tehran, and the world watched as an innocent young woman named Neda Agha-Soltan bled to death on a sidewalk. Iran has had many Nedas who were killed on the streets or in prisons. Some of them were my friends. But their faces never appeared on the front page of newspapers. It was only after Ayatollah Kharroubi, a reformist political candidate, announced that young prisoners had been raped and abused in prisons that many Iranians began asking me about my dark days in Evin. Well, late is better than never.

Iran has been caught in a terrible cycle of revenge, torture, intolerance and hatred for many years. The only way for us to break free from it is to understand and study our past and present with an open mind. Survivors need to be encouraged to speak out. Throughout history, victims have turned into torturers and torturers into victims. Enough is enough.

*Marina Nemat earned a certificate in creative writing in 2007 from U of T's School of Continuing Studies.*

|| U of T Magazine invites alumni to share interesting opinions or unusual experiences. Contact Stacey Gibson at [stacey.gibson@utoronto.ca](mailto:stacey.gibson@utoronto.ca) for more information about contributing.

60 Seconds With

## Robert Herjavec



HE'S A MAN WHO LOVES HIS LAMBORGHINIS, owns a private island and believes in karma. Robert Herjavec (BA 1984 New College) worked his way to the heights of business success with his own network security company, and now has *two* reality-TV gigs: he is a judge on CBC's Gemini Award-winning *Dragons' Den* and the new ABC show *Shark Tank*. In both, budding entrepreneurs pitch their ideas to a panel of fiery judges, who are also the investors. **Lisa Bryn Rundle** pitches her questions to Herjavec.

### What's the appeal of business for you?

I wanted to do something that would result in a pretty good living, and business seemed the route to go.

### Why did you want to become a TV personality, too?

Because somebody lied to me and told me there's lots of money in it.

### Lots of money at the CBC?

Really, it wasn't by choice.... Somebody called. I'm on TV. Four years later, I'm still on TV.

### Now you're on *more* TV. Which is better – being a dragon or a shark?

On *Dragons' Den* it's like being with a bunch of friends you get along really well with but don't see that often. And I enjoy being a shark because it's very high stakes. And Robert Downey Jr. was filming the new *Iron Man* next to us. That's pretty cool.

### But in terms of the beasts...

I loved the entire dragon imagery until I saw an interview with Mark Burnett, who produces *Shark Tank*. They asked him, "Who would win in a fight, a dragon or a shark?" And he basically said, in this incredulous tone, "Duh. Dragons aren't real." Up until then I loved the dragon thing.

### Dragons *do* have a strong place in our cultural imagination.

I think a mystical creature works for the Canadian market. But a shark is a mean, real, predatory animal, and that's definitely more U.S. television. We don't want sharks here. In fact, in Canada I'm surprised it's not called the puppy tank. Or the puppy farm.

### Or the bunny ranch.

Oh no, that's totally different. That's a whole different show.

### Is there a difference between the American and the Canadian contestants?

I would have thought the Americans would be more aggressive and driven, but nope.

### Is the real business world as dramatic as the shows make it seem?

Ninety-eight per cent of the people I work with in business are good people. But you can't be a pushover.

### So I shouldn't ask you about your most cutthroat move?

I'm always careful about how I treat others, because you never know. It's just bad karma. The hardest thing you have to learn is not to be cutthroat, but to say no.

### It must be easier when the pitches are bad.

Well, except when you're on TV it's more like, No! No! No! No!

## Milestones



**Atom Egoyan** (BA 1982 Trinity) might have been busy directing his new movie, *Chloe*, this year, but he also found time to establish a scholarship for graduate students at U of T's Cinema Studies Institute and to mentor students at Innis College. Egoyan was one of 69 recipients of U of T's Arbor Awards, which recognize volunteers for their outstanding personal service to the university. The ceremony took place in September at the President's Residence.

Other Arbor Award recipients include **Miriam Kaufman**, a member of the advisory board of the Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies at University College for over 10 years. Kaufman helped launch the centre's mentorship program, and is a mentor herself. **Dan Feraday** (BA 1982 St. Michael's), one of the most successful quarterbacks in Varsity Blues football history, has helped with promotions and game-day operations, and has recruited and mentored Blues players and coaches. For 36 years, **Rob West** (BASc 1981) has helped engineering students mount the faculty's annual musical-comedy revue, *Skule Nite*. The Engineering Alumni Council member has served as a writer, stage manager, director and self-described "fossil" (director emeritus) for the revue.

An Arbor Award was granted posthumously to **Sister Marion Norman** IBVM (BA 1939 St. Michael's, MA 1940). The former professor of English at St. Michael's College was a mentor to undergraduate women in residence, and a founding instructor and member of the St. Michael's College Council for continuing education.

To read bios of all Arbor Award recipients, visit [www.alumni.utoronto.ca/arbor](http://www.alumni.utoronto.ca/arbor).

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PHOTO: RUSSELL MONK

1986

## Chemical Reaction

### Professor John Polanyi's groundbreaking work earns him a Nobel Prize

On the morning of October 15, 1986, Professor John Polanyi was awakened by a news service phoning to ask him what he had won the Nobel Prize for. This was no prank call: It turned out that Sweden's Nobel Foundation had awarded the prestigious prize to Polanyi, along with two other scientists, for his work in chemistry. In his acceptance speech in Stockholm, Polanyi shone the spotlight on science itself. "When, as we must often do, we fear science, we really fear ourselves," he said.

The equipment in this photo consists of "high-vacuum chambers in which we channel molecules to see if they exchange atoms when they collide," says Polanyi. His casual explanation belies the decades of research that preceded his Nobel win. By measuring infrared light emitted by reacting mol-

ecules, Polanyi and his team came to understand the motions of atoms in that fleeting instant when chemical reactions occur – work that led to the development of the chemical laser.

The scientist has also made his mark as a public intellectual, pleading passionately against nuclear armament and war. When asked if the Nobel Prize changed his life, Polanyi draws attention away from himself. "I have a lively research group working with me, just as I had in the past," he says. "We're still asking questions about how molecules behave." A salutary difference: "Modern science has provided us with wonderful new tools to examine single molecules before and after they've 'changed partners.' More than ever we can see the molecular dance in action." – *Gabrielle Bauer*

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# Dinner with 12 Strangers

SPRING  
2010

Interested in an evening of great conversation? Curious to meet members of today's university community? U of T is looking for Toronto-area grads to host an informal dinner party for a group of 12 students, faculty and fellow alumni.

Help make a large university a more welcoming place for new students. Hosts volunteer to provide a meal at their own expense (prepared, catered or purchased), and a space – preferably in their own home – for the dinner to take place.

Alumni interested in hosting a dinner (which can also be arranged for fewer than 12 people) should call Jonathan Cheevers at (416) 978-2221. Spots are available as early as February. For more information, visit [alumni.utoronto.ca/dinnerwith12](http://alumni.utoronto.ca/dinnerwith12)

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"I cannot remember the last time I participated in a discussion about so many different topics in such a short time span. The evening was something I will not forget any time soon."

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– Kusala, student

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– Emily, student

"The dinner and gathering were perfect. I have been in Canada for just seven months and I got to meet many new people that I otherwise wouldn't have had the chance to meet."

– Golnaz, student

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