



UBC REPORTS



3
PLANT SENSORS



4
MATH AND CULTURE



5
BRAINS & BONES



8
HOME & AWAY

Reforming Canada's Record on Human Trafficking

BY LORRAINE CHAN

A young woman answers a job ad that offers a prepaid air ticket and glamorous work as an international model. She leaves home – perhaps from a city in Eastern Europe or Southeast Asia.

Upon arriving in Canada, she discovers to her horror that she has been lured into the sex trade and faces “debts” that she must now pay off. Somehow she escapes her captors and looks for help. The authorities detain, interrogate and then deport her.

Until recently, this was how Canada routinely treated human trafficking victims – as illegal migrants, says Benjamin Perrin, an assistant professor who joined the UBC Faculty of Law in August.

Perrin’s teaching and research interests include domestic and international criminal law, international humanitarian law and comparative constitutional law and human trafficking.

The RCMP estimates that 600 people are trafficked into Canada for sexual exploitation each year. As a transit



PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Benjamin Perrin aims to strengthen Canada's ability to put away criminals who traffic in human lives.

country, another 1,500 and 2,200 people are trafficked from Canada into the United States. These estimates are believed to very conservative, says Perrin.

In 2006, Perrin completed a research report investigating how victims had been treated in Canada, in conjunction with The Future Group – a non-governmental organization he founded in 2000 to work directly with victims of human trafficking overseas.

“It is quite shocking to see how poor Canada’s record has been,” says Perrin.

He says that Canada deported victims without any kind of emergency support or psychological counseling. “The police were forced to cobble together resources to provide that care because there was no system in place to protect victims.”

In fact, Perrin’s research gave Canada a failing grade when compared to how countries like Germany, Italy, Australia, the United States, Sweden and Norway handled trafficking cases.

While these other countries provide victims with

continued on page 7

UBC Intern Raises Funds for Former Child Soldier

BY BASIL WAUGH

He took an abandoned building and made a schoolhouse. Given a pile of rickety bikes, he created a fleet of bicycle taxis.

Call it the Midas touch, but Selemán Nizeyimana, the 26-year-old former child soldier who founded the Association for Youth Literacy and Trades Education (ASOLATE), is giving the orphans of Rwanda’s bloody 1994 genocide something more valuable than gold. He’s giving them hope.

Since 2004, ASOLATE has offered Rwandan street kids aged 13 to 25 basic classes in French and math and a variety of trades including soldering and electrical, soap, candle and paint-making, sewing, and project management and development.

“ASOLATE is teaching these orphans employable skills so that they can sustain themselves,” says UBC’s Sara Elder, who is traveling to Africa this month to give Nizeyimana’s project a financial and organizational boost.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF SELEMAN NIZEYIMANA AND SARAH ELDER

Centre: UBC's Sarah Elder, with UN and Rwandan officials. Surrounding: ASOLATE is teaching Rwandan street kids employable skills so they can sustain themselves.


Elder met Nizeyimana while working with the United Nations in Rwanda, an experience made possible by the UBC Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability’s (IRES) International Internship Program.

“The positive impact ASOLATE was having on the community was so evident,” Elder says. “When I completed my internship and thought about my next step, I just knew

I wanted to get involved.”


Elder aims to raise \$6,000 annually for ASOLATE through fundraising events in Vancouver, is also applying for funding grants and has created a website for the organization. When she returns to Rwanda, she plans to document ASOLATE’s success at reducing poverty in a video-journal.

continued on page 6




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IN THE NEWS

Highlights of UBC Media Coverage in August 2007. COMPILED BY BASIL WAUGH

Language Expert Comments on Toddler 'Word Spurts'

UBC language development specialist **Janet Werker** featured prominently in international news coverage of a U.S. study on "word spurts," when a toddler's vocabulary explodes, seemingly overnight.

According to the study, babies start really talking after they've mastered enough easy words to tackle more of the harder ones.

"The work is extremely creative," said Werker, whose comments appeared in *The New York Times*, *Associated Press*, *CNN News* and *Fox News*. "It suggests that the fact that some words are more difficult to learn than others is part of what propels the vocabulary explosion. That's really insightful."

Russia's Deep-Sea Flag-Planting at North Pole Strikes a Chill in Canada

The Washington Post, *Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, and *Toronto Star* reported on a dramatic submarine dive to plant the Russian flag on the seabed at the North Pole.

Canada and the United States scoffed at the legal significance of act, but the move underscores the growing stakes as the ice cap melts



PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

UBC international law expert **Michael Byers** has commented widely on Arctic sovereignty issues.

in the oil-rich Arctic.

"The huge irony is that we are only talking about this because humanity has burned so much oil and gas that the ice is melting," said UBC international law expert **Michael Byers**.

"It could be a vicious cycle," Byers added. "Climate change is opening up the Arctic to oil and gas drilling, which almost certainly will cause more climate change."

Bulk Buying of Drugs Would Save Canadians Billions

A UBC study has found that Canadians could save billions of dollars a year on prescription medicines if governments

negotiated bulk-buying discounts from drug manufacturers.

Reported by *CanWest News*, *Global National Online* and *The Vancouver Sun*, the UBC Centre for Health Services and Policy Research used New Zealand as an example to show how strong negotiations can reduce expenditures by up to 90 per cent on some types of commonly used drugs.

"Canada can, and should, expect manufacturers of tried-and-true medicines to price them competitively," said lead author **Steve Morgan**. "The New Zealand experience shows that tough but fair negotiation is more powerful than regulation." ■

LETTERS

More work to be done on reducing UBC GHG emissions

Dear Editor:

UBC has claimed success in reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) to six per cent below 1990 levels, thus meeting 2012 Kyoto targets (UBC Reports July, 2007). While this article accurately reflects public information from the UBC Sustainability Office (UBC-SO), actual GHGs are more likely over 50 per cent higher than 1990 levels. UBC's Kyoto analysis is not public information, but the UBC-SO did kindly provide clarifications to me upon request.

The reality is that UBC's Kyoto analysis only counts academic and ancillary building operations such as space heat and maintenance vans. In spite of U Pass, ground transportation GHGs (by faculty, staff, & students) have increased roughly 25 per cent since 1990, but are not counted. Electricity use has grown from 145 to 165 million kWh since 2004 (due to growth in electric baseboard heat), but there is no accounting for BC Hydro's need to import coal-fired power (at 45 times higher GHG intensity) since 2004.

UBC is projected to collect \$1.3 billion in endowment revenue by leasing land which is subsequently deforested, constructed with housing and shops, and populated with people driving cars. Yet this massive development effort is assumed to be 100 per cent someone else's responsibility. If other companies, institutions, or governments at any level use the same GHG accounting, then the majority of global GHG growth will not be counted by anyone.

The UBC-SO deserves kudos for its outstanding efforts. However we, collectively as a University Town, have only scratched the surface in capping our GHGs to 1990 levels. To truly make progress towards a climate neutral community, we need complete and public accounting of all GHG emissions (including air travel, and UBC's off campus assets), transparent reporting of assumed responsibilities for emissions, aggressive GHG reduction programs, and (at least in the near term) purchases of large quantities of offsets.

— **Eric Mazzi, Ph.D. Candidate, Institute for Resources, Environment, & Sustainability**

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Help Me! *Plant sensor could tell when your tomatoes are singing the blues*

BY LORRAINE CHAN with files from Jennifer Honeybourn

Aphids, spider mites and whiteflies, beware. Your days of pillaging may be over.

UBC graduate student Saber Miresmailli is devising a monitoring device and sensory system that can head pests off at the pass. He envisions a sophisticated system that would allow growers to intercept warning signs from plants that forecast problems to prevent outbreaks.

“Some plants emit a kind of SOS chemical signal when they are in distress,” says Miresmailli, a Land and Food Systems PhD student working with Dean Murray Isman. Scientists have shown these signals are produced and emitted in response to herbivores. “We can use these signals to monitor their state of health.”

Agricultural crops, especially greenhouse vegetables, are highly susceptible to pests and diseases. The same conditions that make it worthwhile to grow crops in a greenhouse – heat, moisture and monoculture – are also a boon to herbivore insects. In B.C., the greenhouse vegetable industry generates more than \$2 billion annually, but 10-20 per cent of those earnings can be swallowed up by pest prevention and crop loss.



PhD student Sabre Miresmailli looks for pests. Scientists have shown plants emit an S.O.S. chemical signal when under attack by insects.

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE



is the half-millimetre spider mite, which is smaller than a flea, and whose 0.05 mm eggs can only be seen with a microscope. “By the time these mites are visible to the naked eye, it’s already too late,” says Miresmailli.

Worse yet, he says, these scouts sometimes aid and abet the very

predatory insects or mites can be more effective.”

Over the next year, Miresmailli will be compiling a database of plant’s chemical compounds, known as volatiles, from both healthy and distressed plants. He has established research agreements with nine commercial greenhouses in Langley, Delta and Abbotsford through the BC Greenhouse Growers’ Association. Miresmailli will collect the volatile samples of three major crops

with a cognitive software program that can analyze environmental factors such as air flow, light, temperature, humidity, time of year and exact geographic location.

“I want to design a holistic system that’s intelligent and intuitive,” says Miresmailli, “one that can read the plant within its

environment and indicate when it’s vulnerable long before it’s in actual trouble.”

He says the end result of his research could be a portable, hand-held monitoring device or perhaps a wagon-mounted system that slides back and forth on rails between the long stretches of greenhouse plants. **R**

Miresmailli will use existing chemo-sensor technology, which has been developed by the military to detect explosives.

While traditional methods of pest monitoring have focused specifically on bugs, Miresmailli’s project shifts attention to the plant itself. At present, pest management programs in greenhouses consist of sticky traps and random spot checks.

“With some greenhouses encompassing more than eight acres, this can be a challenge.”

Zippering around on golf cart-like vehicles, scouts patrol miles of aisles inspecting plants for signs of infestation or disease.

A common foe of tomato plants

bugs they’re hunting. “Workers can inadvertently spread the pests as they move from one plant to another since they pick up the eggs on their tools or clothing.”

When confronted with a pest problem, growers can fight back by releasing predators that eat the pests, or if the infestation becomes too dense, by applying pesticide sprays.

“That’s why I want to invent an alternative,” says Miresmailli. “If we can catch pests before their populations grow exponentially, biological controls such as

– tomatoes, cucumbers and bell peppers – from the day they’re planted to when they’re discarded.

After analyzing these compounds, he will then isolate the chemical signals that will help the sensory system detect variations and report changes.

Miresmailli will use existing chemo-sensor technology, which has been developed by the military to detect explosives. “They can scan for chemicals in concentrations as low as parts per trillion.”

He aims to couple this sensitivity

Natural Defence: *Finding why some bugs can’t get a grip*

BY HAN NAH KIM

Have you ever asked yourself how a plant defends itself from environmental threats, without the ability to run away?

An interdisciplinary group of UBC researchers is studying plant self-defense mechanisms, with a particular focus on plant surface coating.

Led by Reinhard Jetter, an associate professor in botany and chemistry, they are exploring the possibility of replicating protective functions from one plant to another. If they discover what causes the surface of some plants to be slippery

for walking insects, says Jetter, researchers might genetically manipulate a crop species to give it a surface that is resistant to insect herbivores.

“The process of reproduction could further be used in materials production,” says Jetter, “perhaps to even discover in the long run a substitute for plastic coatings.”

Jetter and his team, which includes biology and chemistry graduate students, are examining not only the chemical make-up of plant surfaces, but also the genes and enzymes responsible for it. **R**

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Math Teaching and First Nations Culture



Assoc. Prof. Cynthia Nicol explains how cultural values are at the heart of math.

BY JULIE-ANN BACKHOUSE

In Haida Gwaii, off British Columbia's remote northwest coast, teachers are exploring connections between oral stories and mathematical problem solving.

"How might we teach math so that all students, particularly Aboriginal, are more interested, more engaged and ultimately successful?" asks Cynthia Nicol, UBC Associate Professor, Department of Curriculum Studies and former math teacher in Haida Gwaii. One answer is connecting math teaching to culture and place.

Teachers have used stories like *Raven Steals the Light* – in which Raven-the-trickster steals a light from three nested boxes to create the sun and stars – to prompt

students to build box paper models that helps them learn about surface area, perimeter and volume.

"For students, it shows that we can see math in what is around us," says Nicol. "For teachers, it is clear that from an early age students understand math concepts and have a strong, emotional connection with community."

In British Columbia, provincial assessments have consistently shown a significant number of Aboriginal students (44 per cent

at Grade 10) are not meeting grade-level expectations in school mathematics.

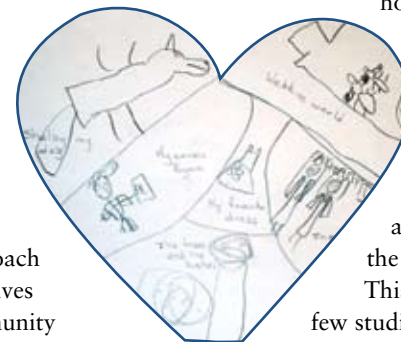
UBC researchers are helping address a fundamental need to find new ways to teach math in Aboriginal communities.

For the past two years, Nicol

and a team of UBC education scholars have been collaborating with the Haida Gwaii and Nisga'a nations to transform the teaching and learning of mathematics for Aboriginal school students. Cultural values are at the heart of this long-term study.

"A culturally responsive approach to teaching involves respecting community values and views, and honouring traditional knowledge that may have been lost, or never valued, in our school system," says Nicol.

This study has involved Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers, parents, school administrators, elders, and scholars, to bring people together to think holistically about math. As Nicol notes, it takes time to develop respectful, responsive and reciprocal



relationships, and that has been a large part of the project.

Teachers – both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – are examining their understanding of

how students learn math, of culture and its role in the math classroom, and of math as a way of seeing the world.

This is one of a few studies in the world examining Aboriginal mathematics education. According to the researchers, studies in Alaska, Australia, New Zealand and Brazil have looked at specific elements of indigenous mathematics education, yet

this is a unique initiative for its collaborative approach, rooted within First Nations communities, and its focus on culture and place.

Nicol and faculty members Jo-ann Archibald, Heather Kelleher and Lee Brown view the partnership with the Haida Gwaii and Nisga'a nations, Haida Gwaii and Nisga'a school districts, and the Vancouver School Board as a long-term commitment.

Funding for this study has been received from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Canadian Council on Learning, and The Vancouver Foundation.

More information is available at www.cust.educ.ubc.ca/team

Groundwater Energy to Make Okanagan Campus Emissions-Free

BY BUD MORTENSON

When the Fipke Centre for Innovative Research opens in Spring 2008, it will be the first building at UBC Okanagan with heating and cooling supplied directly by Mother Nature.

In fact, says Aidan Kiernan, UBC Okanagan's Assoc. Vice President of Operations, over the next several years all academic buildings on the 105-hectare campus will use thermal energy extracted from groundwater under the campus.

"By 2010, this campus will be virtually emissions-free," says Kiernan. In a process called geexchange, water pumped from the ground will be used at its natural temperature of 10.5 °C to cool buildings during notoriously hot Okanagan summers. In winter, the water will be compressed to raise its temperature to about 54°C.

The geexchange system will eventually replace an existing natural-gas-fired plant, reducing energy costs by about \$100,000 a year, Kiernan says.

Having done its job heating or

cooling the buildings, water will be pumped back into the ground – returned to an immense aquifer, or natural underground reservoir, in the gravel deposits that form much of the campus geology.

"We're in an explosive growth of construction," says Kiernan. In addition to the 6,500 sq. m. (68,000 sq. ft.) Fipke Centre for Innovative Research, he cites as examples three other major construction

projects: the Meekison Student Centre starting this month, and the UBC Okanagan Arts and Sciences II and Engineering and Management buildings, both expected to start construction this year.

"All our new buildings are designed to use the geo-exchange system," says Kiernan. "And by 2010 all existing buildings will be retrofitted to use geexchange technology for heating and cooling."




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Pumping Iron Aids Brains and Bones

New study examines impact of resistance training on cognitive ability and risk of falling

BY HILARY THOMSON

Hitting the gym may give seniors more than muscle – it may reduce risk of fractures by improving not only bone health but also cognitive function.

According to Teresa Liu-Ambrose, UBC assistant professor in the Faculty of Medicine's Dept. of Physical Therapy, one-third of hip fracture hospital admissions internationally occur in seniors with cognitive impairment – a condition that may be prevented or minimized with regular physical activity, including resistance training (RT), or exercising with weights to develop strength.

She believes RT can help reduce risk of fracture in cognitively impaired individuals in two ways: by improving bone health and by increasing levels of insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1) that promotes brain cell growth and survival. RT also decreases serum homocysteine, an amino acid that in high levels is associated with impaired cognitive performance.

"The relative risk of hip fracture among those with cognitive impairment ranges from double to seven times the risk compared to those with no cognitive impairment," says



Study participant Donna Templeton works the weights to build bone strength and improve cognitive performance.

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

as many are caring for spouses or grandchildren," says Liu-Ambrose. "We need to promote and enable exercise opportunities for seniors."

Women in the study are evaluated for key factors related to hip fracture risk, such as bone health, balance, and performance of cognitive executive functions, using pen and paper tests. In addition, participants will undergo functional magnetic resonance imaging to determine if brain function changes with RT.

Participant Donna Templeton calls the program "a life-changing blessing." Diagnosed with osteopenia – often a precursor to the bone-thinning disease osteoporosis – the active 68-year-old former nurse has been training twice a week for five months and feels much stronger, especially in her upper body. She won't know about any cognitive improvements until her upcoming assessment.

A veteran of four fractures in 12 years, Templeton says the slow healing associated with osteopenia affects the whole family and can be depressing. She finds the one-on-one attention and group support helps her stick to her schedule and carefully increase the weights. An unexpected benefit has been significant reduction in pain from migraine headaches.

Her advice is have bone density tested as young as 30 to get a baseline and then hit the gym. "The sooner you start with the help of a qualified instructor, the better."

For more information on the study, contact Liu-Ambrose at 604.875.4111, ext. 69059.

Liu-Ambrose, a member of the Centre for Hip Health, part of Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (VCHRI). "Although there is a large body of research about reducing falls and fractures among cognitively healthy seniors, little research has targeted bone health among those with cognitive

initial one-year phase of her five-to six-year research program that will also reach the Vancouver suburb of Tsawwassen and Qualicum Beach on Vancouver Island. The program is unique in North America because it brings together researchers from disciplines that include psychology, geriatric medicine,

"The relative risk of hip fracture among those with cognitive impairment ranges from double to seven times the risk compared to those with no cognitive impairment."

impairment."

More Canadian women die annually following hip fractures than from breast cancer, says Liu-Ambrose, who joined UBC in 2006. The incidence of hip fracture among Canadian men and women, mostly over 70 years, is 24,000 annually with a health-care price tag that can exceed \$1.3 billion each year, she adds.

Researchers will look at the effects of RT on bone health, physiological function and cognitive function, with a focus on the brain's executive functions or higher-order processes, such as the ability to multi-task. Falls often result from impairments in these processes. Other research has shown that cardiovascular training can benefit executive functioning but similar positive effects of RT are virtually unknown, says Liu-Ambrose.

Vancouver is the site of an

orthopedics and radiology; has a large sample size of 220 participants per community; and looks at the minimum amount of RT required to make a difference.

Collaborators include Maureen Ashe, a post-doctoral Fellow at the Centre for Hip Health and UBC Asst. Prof. Todd Handy from Psychology.

The Vancouver study is being conducted at the South Slope YMCA and the Centre for Hip Health. Classes of up to 10 women aged 65-75 years are led by certified fitness instructors and focus on using weight machines and free weights to build strength. Women come to classes as a group and participate either once, twice or three times per week.

"I've been surprised by how difficult it can be for women in this age group to take the time to participate in physical activity,

Support for this research has been provided by the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Vancouver Foundation.

VCHRI is the research body of Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. In academic partnership with UBC, the institute advances health research and innovation across B.C., Canada, and beyond.

The Centre for Hip Health conducts innovative research programs to decrease the burden of hip fracture and hip osteoarthritis across B.C., Canada, and the world. It is the first international research centre to broadly focus on problems affecting the human hip across the lifespan by integrating researchers in various aspects of bone health, falls prevention, and osteoarthritis. **R**



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CHILD SOLDIER *continued from page 1*

That Elder's work in Rwanda continues a year after her internship speaks to the impact these experiences have on participants, says IRES' Terre Satterfield, faculty supervisor of the internship program.

"For most students, the internships are life-changing experiences," Satterfield says. "It gives participants the opportunity to put their research and learning into practice, but also transforms their lens on the world."

Since it was created in 1998, the program has placed 51 young professionals in paid international work experiences in environmental sustainability, resources management and sustainable community development.

Open to Canadians under the age of 30 with at least a bachelor's degree, the program is made possible with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Canadian Water Network.

This year, 10 interns will travel to New Zealand, Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa, Uruguay and Nicaragua. Placements are made possible through UBC international research links.

For her internship, Elder traveled around Rwanda, monitoring and evaluating two UN World Food Programs (WFP). One program that gave families cooking oil in exchange for the attendance of young girls at school was "an overwhelming success," Elder says.

"I was skeptical at first, but for many girls it was the difference between getting an education or being kept at home. Some of the girls I talked to said the program saved them from having to raise money for school supplies through prostitution."

Less successful was a WFP program that gave families affected by HIV/AIDS food in exchange for their attendance at NGO-sponsored training on crop planting techniques.

"The program had its heart in the right place, but the desired effect was to make these families more self-sufficient – and for several reasons that just wasn't happening."

Former Student Draws Prof to Africa



Judy McLean is head of nutrition for a village of 600 Rwandan widows and orphans.

BY BASIL WAUGH

During her internship, Sara Elder successfully coaxed UBC nutrition expert Judy McLean to Rwanda, a move that is helping to improve the country's nutrition levels.

"After the genocide, I don't think there was a single Rwandan with a PhD in nutrition," says McLean, an adjunct professor in UBC's Faculty of Land and Food Systems. "They were either among the 800,000 killed or they fled in the diaspora."

Elder contacted her former professor during a four-month internship at Rwanda's University of Agriculture, Technology and Education of Kibungo (UNATEK), where she was responsible for marketing and fundraising.

"One day, Sara called looking for nutritionists," says McLean. "Next thing I knew, I was in Rwanda teaching a class. In a way, the tables were turned. Here was a former student calling me up, giving me the opportunity of a lifetime."

McLean's course addressed common forms of malnutrition in Central Africa, including deficiencies in energy, protein, fat iron, and vitamin A. Many of these problems can be addressed through education and minor changes in diet, she says.

"The common Rwandan staple of green bananas, cassava flour and beans does not supply enough of the nine essential amino acids needed for human health," says McLean. "By simply switching from cassava to maize or sorghum flour, both widely available, you get all the amino acids you need for growth."

Although McLean has returned to Canada, she continues to do outreach in Rwanda. In addition to leaving her course materials for future teachers at UNATEK, she was recently appointed Director of Nutrition for Ubuntu (translated as "humanity"), a village of 600 Rwandan widows and orphans on the outskirts of Kigali, the country's capital.

"Science isn't worth anything if we don't apply it," says McLean, who will return to Rwanda next summer. "Information needs to be much more available, in schools, community clinics, hospitals, on posters and in publications."

For more information on Judy McLean's projects, visit: http://www.landfood.ubc.ca/research/faculty_webpages/mclean/. **R**

When Elder pointed out the program's shortcomings in a report, the UN hired her to stay in Rwanda for another three months to implement her recommendations. Elder introduced a monthly monitoring system that has improved communication between

Rwanda's WFP offices and partner NGO's and has helped to better track successes and identify issues with WFP programs.

"Having spoken with the people impacted by these programs, it was incredibly rewarding to make changes that I knew would improve their lives," says Elder, who manages IRES' International Internship Program and is considering graduate programs. "It was really gratifying to be able to make their voices heard at the decision-making level."

Given Elder's successful international track record, Nizeyimana and the students of ASOLATE are looking forward to her impending arrival.

"Now we have more than 150 orphaned street youth at the training center," wrote Nizeyimana in an interview by email, "but I don't have adequate funding to properly accommodate them all. Because of Sara, that is changing and giving the youth hope. These youth are not just 'maibobo' [street children], they are the future of Rwanda."

For more information on the International Internship Program, visit: <http://www.ires.ubc.ca/students/global/index.html>. For more information on ASOLATE, visit: <http://www.asolate.org>. **R**

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Activist, Legal Reformer, Law Professor

BY LORRAINE CHAN

In 2001, after his undergraduate degree in international business studies at the University of Calgary, Benjamin Perrin travelled to Phnom Penh to work with children whose lives had been shattered by trafficking.

Along with a team of volunteers, Perrin helped implement a project to warn 10,000 at-risk children about trafficking through a public relations campaign with local airlines and travel agents to deter would-be child sex tourists, as well as rehabilitation programs for rescued victims.

Through recovery centres, some of the older girls had learned trades but needed some pointers on how to make a living with their newfound skills in cooking, sewing or hairdressing in their communities.

Perrin created a hands-on small business training program that helped them improve their chances. Through a series of activities and workshops, rescued trafficking victims were taught how to manage their money, market their products, and deal with customers.

“Their stories have never left me and never will. That’s why I’m still working on this issue years later,” says Perrin, who in 2004 was named by Maclean’s magazine as one of the “Best and Brightest.”

He says his earlier activism laid the groundwork for his current mission, to advance research on fighting international crime.

In addition to his fieldwork in Asia, Perrin has also served as a law clerk at the Supreme Court of Canada to the Honourable Madam Justice Marie Deschamps and completed an internship at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague. During his graduate studies in law at McGill University, Perrin was assistant director of the Special Court for Sierra Leone legal clinic that assists the Trial and Appeals Chambers in war crimes prosecutions.

Perrin says international criminal law prosecutions are particularly complex and challenging because they involve a “hybrid legal tradition at the confluence of public international law, international human rights law and national criminal laws.”

The enormous challenge of these cases is not only bringing accused war criminals to justice, but proving relatively new international crimes. He says Canada needs to gain greater experience in organizing such prosecutions, given the scope of international trials.

“They’re much more complicated in terms of what the prosecutor has to prove. Often, the biggest challenge is organizing the case in the midst of special rules for evidence and obtaining access to victims in war-torn countries.”


In recognition of his work in this field, Action Canada named Perrin this summer as one of its 17 Fellows. Action Canada is a national organization based in Vancouver that seeks to create a network of informed, emerging leaders. 



PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Benjamin Perrin travelled to Phnom Penh where he helped organize a campaign to deter would-be sex tourists.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING *continued from page 1*

housing, medical care and temporary work visas, Canada had no such measures in place.

Perrin explains that Canada had made “generic commitments” that never got translated into specific measures. In 2000, along with 117 countries, Canada signed an international protocol that supplemented a United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime “to prevent, suppress and punish” human trafficking.

Other signatory countries put resources and a legal framework in place, and kept close track of how their efforts were working, says Perrin.


“The U.S. has done very well. Their records show they have prosecuted hundreds of traffickers and helped many victims. The reason is that they have engaged civil society organizations to work with them and implement laws to protect victims.”

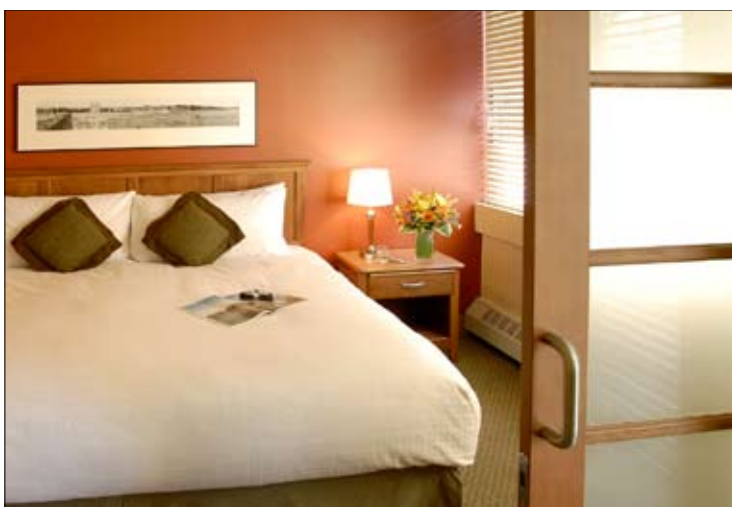
After publishing his research, Perrin was asked by the federal Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to help improve the situation. As a result, the Canadian government agreed to provide temporary residence permits for victims, who are entitled during that time to receive basic medical care and counseling.

The government has also

started to commit resources to investigate and prosecute human trafficking crimes, and allows victims to obtain work permits during their temporary residence status.

“We’re seeing signs of hope. Canada is starting to turn the

corner now, but much work remains to be done,” says Perrin, noting that Canada has yet to successfully prosecute a single person for human trafficking, despite victims continuing to be discovered. 



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Home and Away

Scholar explores why Canadian intellectuals are making the trek to their ancestral European homelands

BY BUD MORTENSON

Novelist and literary scholar

Lisa Grekul is about to become a tourist in her own past.

The fourth-generation Ukrainian Canadian “with no ties to Ukraine” will visit her ancestral homeland next summer, recording the experience through memoirs and on film. In the process she hopes to gain a deeper understanding of a relatively new Canadian cultural phenomenon: the contemporary nomad.

Grekul has coined the term “(Con)temporary nomads” to describe Canadians of Eastern European ancestry who, in growing numbers since the 1980s, travel “home” to Europe

The second is a scholarly book examining other stories of return, the experiences of homelessness and homecoming, exile and migration – plus unique perspectives from Ukrainian scholars about the arrival in the Ukraine of so many home-seekers from abroad.

“I really want to hear how Eastern European people feel about these homecoming Canadians,” she says.

Her plan is that by late 2010, two books, a film and website will be complete. “It’s an ambitious project, but it can be done,” Grekul says, noting that she welcomes the challenge of embarking on an intimate personal narrative and a critical analysis project at the



UBC Okanagan Critical Studies professor Lisa Grekul is examining first-hand the experience of Canadians who return to their ancestral homelands in Europe in search of home.

when the two are thematically related.”

Grekul’s 2003 first novel, *Kalyna’s Song*, is a semi-autobiographical story of a third-

generation Ukrainian Canadian girl who grows up in northeastern Alberta and southern Africa. Grekul completed the novel while preparing her PhD thesis,

which became her second book, *Leaving Shadows: Literature in English by Canada’s Ukrainians*, published in 2005 by the University of Alberta.

“The authors – contemporary

invaluable first-hand insight into the unique challenges faced by contemporary nomads,” says Grekul.

“I’ll make a trip to Ukraine to understand what this sort of journey is about, and to grapple with the implications of traveling home as, more than anything, a tourist.”

for the first time, then return to Canada and write about their experiences.

An assistant professor with UBC Okanagan’s Department of Critical Studies, Grekul has received \$50,847 from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for a new research project, *(Con)temporary Nomads: Canadian Autobiography and the Search for Home*. It will include travel, scholarly literature review, writing, filmmaking and a lot of personal reflection.

Grekul’s maternal and paternal ancestors emigrated from southwestern Ukraine in the late 1890s and early 1900s – leaving behind the village of Szyptoms, bound for Canada. Her research will take her on the reverse journey.

“I’ll make a trip to Ukraine to understand what this sort of journey is about, and to grapple with the implications of traveling home as, more than anything, a tourist,” she says.

Her overarching interest is the study of Canadian public intellectuals, scholars, or established writers who feel an attachment to their ancestral homelands -- such as Janice Kulyk Keefer, whose parents emigrated from Ukraine (then Poland) in the 1930s, and Myrna Kostash, a third-generation Ukrainian Canadian whose grandparents came to Canada in the early 1900s. “What do they hope to accomplish through the publicization of their stories?” she asks.

Grekul will take along a graduate student, video camera in hand, to produce a film and website about the month-long Ukraine experience. She’s planning two major writing projects. The first is a personal account of her “journey home.”

same time – it’s something she’s done before. “I find I am most productive when I’m working, simultaneously, on a creative and a critical project – especially

generation Ukrainian Canadian girl who grows up in northeastern Alberta and southern Africa. Grekul completed the novel while preparing her PhD thesis,

“I believe my personal experiences of both traveling back to Ukraine – back, that is, for the first time – and writing about my travels will provide

nomads – ask us to rethink the ways in which we experience and define ‘home,’ and in sharing their stories of homelessness, they invite us to reconsider our own.” **R**

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