No cash, no crime?

Andrew Riley

The Canadian government could save an amount equal to 50 per cent of the country’s 2012 fiscal deficit, if cash were cut.

With people now able to buy things with a tweet, and Apple poised to push their mobile devices as electronic wallets, cash is not to take a serious diminution from its position as king.

A recent study from the University of British Columbia’s Sauder School of Business now shows that not only is cash becoming increasingly redundant, but governments could save big by using currency all together.

Even after accounting for revenue gained by printing money (a value referred to as seigniorage) the study by Sauder finance professor Mauricio Levi says the government could save an amount equal to 50 per cent of the country’s 2012 fiscal deficit, if cash were cut.

Levi says similar savings would be found in other western countries.

“When you consider the cost cash creates for governments through tax evasion and its role in illicit markets, such as the drug trade, combined with the increasing number of electronic alternatives, it makes sense to stop the printing process at the Bank of Canada,” says Levi, whose study, Fiscal consequences of scrapping cash, is published in the most recent edition of the Journal of Payment Strategy and Systems.

In a world without cash, a trail of all payments and receipts could be followed to track down criminals and used as evidence in prosecutions, acting as a major deterrent for would-be criminals, says the researcher.

“Cash is the only payment method that preserves privacy and does not leave any trail, which is why it’s the currency of choice for criminals and tax evaders,” Levi’s study endeavors to estimate the full cost of the illicit activity associated with cash in Canada, including tax fraud and money laundering. He also accounts for costs of law enforcement, incarceration and adverse health resulting from the drug trade facilitated by anonymous cash transactions.

When the figures are added up, based on estimates by Statistics Canada and other studies sponsored by federal and provincial ministries, Levi suggests the government is out $27.8-billion per year.

This far outweighs the federal government is accruing by supplying money to the Canadian market. By eliminating cash means huge savings for governments, says Sauder School of Business Prof. Mauricio Levi.
A brave new beginning

Since 1955 UBC Reports has reflected the stories of our academic community—from the curious, to the considerable—in print

Lucie McNeill

There are always mixed feelings at the onset of momentous changes. And this one is no exception.

With this last regular print edition of UBC Reports, we morph a chronicle that has been a UBC mainstay since 1955. In April, UBC Reports will only be distributed via email as a digital edition. And although May will see us produce a print graduation special focusing on the Class of 2013, from June onwards our feature stories will be posted on the soon-to-be-launched UBC News website.

It’s a bold step to take—and a bit of a tumble. For the past 58 years, UBC Reports has been an attentive witness to the university's stunning growth, news and debates, the visionary thinkers, students and leaders, as well as the odd character or two. Our retrospective look at UBC’s shape-shifting will undoubtedly elicit a tinge of nostalgia among longtime readers.

Through its many editions and thousands of stories, UBC Reports has reflected the university’s evolution and growing ambitions. At first written for a local campus readership, UBC Reports is now aimed at a broader audience as a monthly digest of features on university life, teaching, research and learning. Former director Scott Macrae’s approach, launched in 2001, has been good for UBC’s reputation. Today roughly 60 per cent of UBC Reports stories inspire further mainstream media coverage. Many of us still get pleasure reading something tangible that can be scribbled on, highlighted, clipped and saved. Some will feel, and perhaps even resent, the loss of what has been an award-winning magazine, edited by Randy Schmidt, designed by Arlene Dax, and featuring Martin Dev's stunning photography, and the insightful stories told by Public Affairs writers and campus colleagues. Not everyone enjoys firing up a computer to get caught up on news. But there’s no fighting the digital tsunami. Leading universities in Canada and beyond have been switching to online newsmagazines—and not for the reasons you would expect. Publication and distribution costs are not the big driver. An important argument for UBC is sustainability. Intent on living our Place and Promises strategic commitments, it’s hard to justify putting out print publications when so many copies languish in distribution boxes. Yet the decisive argument was the imperative to reach greater audiences, at times through mainstream media. A digital news site allows us to bring attention to momentous research and UBC’s breadth of expertise, to more people, in more creative and numerous ways, and in a much more timely manner.

Think about it. No more artificial monthly print cycle— the stories can be told when they’re fresh. No limit to this number of stories or their length—we can feature noteworthy content from diverse university sources. And we won’t be bound by text and photos—we will publish video, images, motion graphics, audio, text and social media elements in a seamless and engaging news website.

We believe we can reach a greater number of you, further afield, and in ways that you will readily adopt. We think you will appreciate being able to pick and choose what you want from our offerings. And yes, you will also be able to subscribe to the new digital UBC Reports—the emailable link to the collected features of the month.

This is not the end. This last regular print edition heralds a new beginning and celebrates in these pages a proud tradition.

Here’s to the memories—and to the discoveries ahead.

February 1955

Alumni Kick Off 1955

Campaign For University Development Fund

Although no target amount has been specified by Development Fund directors, they are hoping to raise $75,000.

December 12, 1968, page 4

Suzuki captures top

NRC award

UBC geneticist Dr. David Suzuki, 32, has been named the 1969 recipient of the E.W.R. Steacie Memorial Fellowship, one of Canada’s most prestigious scientific awards.

May 1, 1978, page 2

New computer bought by UBC

UBC has purchased a new computer that will increase the processing capacity of its computing centre by more than 60 per cent. Jim Kennedy, director of the computing centre, said the new Amdahl V/6-6, with four megabytes and 12 channels, was purchased for just over $2.7 million.

February 15, 1984

A first for Canada

Robbie, the first child in Canada conceived through in vitro fertilization outside of his mother’s body, weighed two pounds two ounces when he was born two months premature on Christmas Day. The UBC in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer team is led by Dr. Victor Cornel, head of the obstetrics and gynecology department.

April 8, 1993

Summit puts campus on world stage

It’s the casual apparel of UBC students and world leaders—the UBC sweatshirt. U.S. President Bill Clinton jogged Stanley Park’s seawall April 4 sporting the white sweatshirt, a gift from the university during the Vancouver Summit.

May 6, 2004

Nobel Laureates Receive Honorary Degrees from UBC

Canada’s national newspaper called it “a one-of-a-kind traveling road show, and we may never see its likes again.” The Globe and Mail reporter was referring to the historic visit to UBC’s campus of three Nobel Peace Laureates.

February 3, 2010

Insane Pain: Thrill of the skeleton

When Jeff Pain describes himself as a “Type A personality, he’s not kidding. The 39-year-old Pain, who will compete in his third Winter Olympics at Whistler in February, recalls the first skeleton ride he took in November 1994.

May/June, 2013

A new digital platform

What you can expect:• Texture stories• Video clips• Social media sharing• Latest news• Faculty export profiles• Daily UBC in the News summary• Subscription by news beat
A volunteer dentistry mission to India has taught four UBC students to see the whole patient—including his or her social and economic context, cultural beliefs and values—not just the ail ing tooth.

In December, fourth-year dentistry students Akashdeep Villing, Amandeep Hans, Vikrant Sharma and Tanmeet Singh arrived in India to set up dental camps at local factories and elementary schools (see sidebar). They had intended to provide straightforward dental check-ups and extractions, but learned that to get to the tooth, you’ve got to provide straightforward dental advice and counselling about oral health. With the help of the Baba Jaswant Singh Dental College in Ludhiana, Punjab, the Punjabi speaking UBC dentistry students “cut their teeth” on volunteer dentistry throughout their four years at UBC in the faculty’s Community Volunteer Clinic Program (see sidebar). The team has tentative plans to return to the country that raised their parents and shaped much of their lives.
True north
UBC researchers partner on B.C. Vote Compass
Basil Waugh

University of British Columbia political scientists have teamed up with CBC and the popular Vote Compass project to help voters in the upcoming B.C. election assess both party platforms and their own political stance.

Vote Compass, an online electoral literacy tool that helps voters identify the political party that most aligns with their own personal views, has attracted some 3-million participants in the last three federal and provincial campaigns, since making its Canadian debut in 2011. The upcoming campaign will mark its first use in a B.C. provincial election.

Prof Richard Johnston, an international expert on elections, polls and politics, is one of five UBC political scientists serving as consultants on the project.

“Voters are bombarded by so much information during elections, that it can be extremely challenging to make informed decisions,” says Johnston. “A key benefit of Vote Compass is that it helps to nail down where parties stand on the key issues. By helping people to make better decisions, and promoting healthy debate and civic engagement, tools like this make our democracy stronger.”

Johnston has served as an advisor since the project began at the University of Toronto. Other members of the UBC team include Prof. Fred Cutler, Prof. Andrew Owen and graduate students Charles Breton and Parik Pinar. They will collaborate with colleagues across B.C. and Canada.

Before the site’s launch, the B.C. Vote Compass team will ask B.C.’s Liberals, NDP and Greens to provide answers to the 30 questions and preparing to present them to the four main B.C. parties. Johnston says one of their jobs has been to ensure the questions reflect not only “meat and potato” election topics—the economy, health care, taxes, education and transit—but also hot button issues, such as the controversial Enbridge pipeline, Aboriginal land claims and the B.C. carbon tax.

For the first time, “Twitter will be used to help gather citizens’ priorities,” says Johnston. “Beyond the benefits of voter literacy, Vote Compass gives researchers a significant amount of opinion data for future studies. While cautioning that it is not the same as a poll—participants are self-selected, and not randomised—Johnston says it will help researchers to study how opinions shift during the election, by region and over time.”

“The sheer amount of raw data power that Vote Compass brings in is very exciting,” says Johnston. “Just compare the average poll, which has hundreds or thousands of responses, to the 2012 Quebec Vote Compass, which had nearly 3-million participants. This data will help researchers to gain better understanding of the election, the underlying political dynamics in B.C., and likely even open up new research possibilities.”

Johnston places Vote Compass among several new advances in the field of political science that seek to improve our ability to understand and predict electoral trends, from poll aggregators, which combine individual polls, to predictions markets, which allow people to buy and sell “shares” in political parties.

Learn more at http://votecompass.ca

People need trees. Cities need forests
Sara Barron wins the world’s largest forestry scholarship
Heather Amos

From promoting recovery in hospitals to reducing stress, there is growing evidence that nature plays an important role in our wellbeing. But according to Sara Barron, suburban communities are going to need more than a few tree-lined streets to be effective.

“People are scared of density,” says Barron, who will begin her PhD research in the Faculty of Forestry in May. “But if you integrate trees and natural spaces within dense areas, it makes neighbourhoods more livable.”

Barron will be working with Professor Stephen Sheppard in the Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning (CALP). Knowing that climate and environments will change in the near future, CALP works with communities to help them plan for adaptation and reduce their contributions to global warming.

“Many suburban residents have high bioenergy potential as facilities can mitigate the effects of climate change,” says Sheppard. “Smart design and management can leverage a healthy urban forest to make higher density acceptable, as well as provide important ecosystem services such as summer cooling, and enhanced property values.”

As part of her doctoral work, Barron intends to generate sub-urban forest design guidelines to help Metro Vancouver planners. This includes finding which trees will be best suited for the region’s future climate and city environment. Barron plans to focus her research on suburbs because of their large footprint.

“Some trees are better than others at surviving in higher carbon environments,” said Barron, noting that the average lifespan of an urban tree is less than 50 years. With such a short cycle, Barron says planners may also want to consider planting community forests with the most bio-energy potential so facilities that burn wood waste into heat and clean energy will likely become more common.

Getting input from community residents will also play an important role in her work. She wants citizens to explain their visions for future environments and what types of plants and trees they would prefer.

“I want to understand how to better integrate where we live with the natural world.”

Barron is the winner of the Future Forests Fellowship, the world’s largest scholarship for forestry research. She will receive up to $240,000—$60,000 annually for up to four years—to study how urban planners can design or retrofit suburbs to balance natural forest environments with the higher density housing that is required to reduce carbon footprints.

The Future Forests Fellowship was created by a private foundation to draw attention to how forestry research impacts global issues. According to the United Nations, more than half of the world’s population currently lives in cities and that number is only expected to grow. Barron’s doctoral research also heat up applicants from a number of countries including Poland, India, Iran, Brazil, the United States and the UK.

“People live in dense neighbourhoods, it has a whole host of benefits. For example, it leaves more land for natural environments which can mitigate the effects of climate change,” says Barron, who has decided to focus her research on suburbs because of their large footprint. Barron will be working with Professor Stephen Sheppard in the Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning (CALP).
You can go home again

Victorious UBC coach returns to Poland for world championships

Heather Amos

After leading UBC’s cross-country running team to a NAIA championship last November, head coach Marek Jedrzejek is off to the world championships this March where he hopes to steer Team Canada to a top ten finish.

Hosted in Poland, the Cross Country World Championships will take Jedrzejek back to the country to which he was born. It will also take him back to the city where he lived and worked before defecting in 1982, when Poland was under a Communist government and part of the Soviet Bloc.

"It was very unstable in Poland," he explains. "The government had instituted martial law in an attempt to crush political opposition and pro-democracy movements."

Jedrzejek was coaching Poland’s national team, competing against other countries in the Eastern Bloc. But in 1982, they went to the European Track and Field Championships in Athens. That’s where Jedrzejek made a break for the Canadian embassy and applied for refugee status.

Since 1989, when Poland made the shift away from communism to democracy, Jedrzejek has returned to the country many times. "I love to visit this place—the place where I grew up as a young kid, sport fields where I played soccer...the lake." During his last couple of trips to the small village of Glubczyn, he brought his two grandchildren, Kate and Cole.

"I was a memorable feeling for me to show my grandchildren the place where their roots come from."

The World Championships will be held on March 24 in the city of Bydgoszcz, and Jedrzejek arrives with an impressive year behind him. Four UBC track and field athletes competed for the Canadian national team, competing against other top-level athletes.

“The team is still quite young so for the next two years we should continue to be strong," he says. "Two of UBC’s own cross-country athletes have made the national team—Maria Bernard and Luc Bruchet. At the NAIA championships, Bernard ran five kilometres in less than 18 minutes finishing fifth, and Bruchet completed an eight-kilometre course in just over 24 minutes, finishing third."

"It is comforting to have someone who is not only your university coach, but also the national team coach be so familiar with international running," says Bernard. "Marek’s experience and guidance are definitely something I value."

Jedrzejek says his achievements have been hard won. He arrived in Canada in 1983, speaking very little English and knowing no one. He spent a year in Penticton and then moved to Vancouver, volunteering as assistant coach for SFU’s track team. "I had to put myself on the map," he says.

UBC Reports  The University of British Columbia  March 2013
Sustainable by design

It’s not easy being green but a UBC study shows the right building design is key.

Salina Marshall

Most people don’t need to be told to “shush” in a library: the studious ambience promotes quiet behaviour. It’s almost like it’s in the air.”

In the same way, UBC researchers found a significant connection between occupying a green building and behaving in a more environmentally friendly manner. The implications could be momentous for sustainability. “There’s a potential that you can design in environmental consciousness,” says Alan Kingstone, who heads UBC’s Department of Psychology. “A green atmosphere promotes more green behaviour. It’s almost like it’s in the air.”

Kingstone is the senior investigator on Sustainability (CIRS) compared to that at the Student Union Building (SUB).

The two buildings are very different from one another. The SUB is a traditional concrete building in the style of its 1940s generation. CIRS is one of the leading regenerative buildings in North America, opened in 2011. Integrated systems were designed to meet goals of zero carbon emissions, water self-sufficiency, net-positive energy performance, and zero-waste.

CIRS was also designed with the intent of creating behavioral change. In the café, no bottled drinks are available for purchase and all utensils are compostable. “It’s a building that has a lot of light, a lot of wood, and it feels clean and fresh and sustainable,” Kingstone notes. Despite the structural differences, the eating areas in both buildings have the same disposable options for compostable and recyclable materials. Yet researchers who observed food disposal behaviour found that patrons of the CIRS café were substantially more conscientious about recycling properly. The accuracy rate was 86 per cent at CIRS versus 58 per cent at the SUB.

Both buildings are used by a broad range of students, and the CIRS building does not host a disproportionate number of environmentally-focused classes. Researchers conducted a patron questionnaire to ensure the results didn’t reflect a sampling bias. “Most students didn’t even know this was a super-green building,” Kingstone says, “yet when they were in the building they behaved more sustainably.”

According to Kingstone, location and situation influence our behaviour. But this study shows that people don’t even need to know the intent behind the building (i.e. libraries are for reading) to adjust their behaviour.

“It’s a cultural thing. You pick up the cues very subtly without even thinking about it,” he explains. “If you’re in an environment that reflects a sustainable way of being, then you yourself will behave in a way that’s more sustainable. You start to go with the flow.”

The implications? As a society, we can create a more environmentally responsible culture without explicitly telling people to change their behaviour. “It seems like design is a useful tool to create a culture in which sustainability is valued,” says David Wu, the study’s lead researcher. From a policy-making perspective, “it definitely adds to the cost-benefit analysis of putting in more green buildings.”

It can also help create a community that reinforces beneficial practices. For example, designing the garbage areas of an apartment complex to have an open, sustainable feel where an individual’s actions may be observed by neighbours could promote more conscientious behaviour.

For more on CIRS, see cirs.ubc.ca
The full study can be read at cirs.ubc.ca/publications

Protecting land, protecting people

Heather Amos

“Working with indigenous peoples to safeguard their rights brings global as well as local benefits.”

From Guyana to Vancouver, Janette Bulkan has built a career on protecting indigenous land rights and access to resources.

Her involvement with social issues in forestry began after she noticed more and more chainsaws in indigenous communities in her homeland of Guyana. The men from those communities were getting into logging.

According to Bulkan, the assumption was that any illegal logging in the country was the work of small-scale, local forestry operations. But after visiting forest sites and documenting practices around the country, she saw that it was the large-scale operations that were not adhering to guidelines and policies.

“Many of these operations were owned by transnational corporations which held, or illegally rented, logging concessions,” she says.

A new UBC faculty member, Bulkan investigated the slipgaps between national policies, and government and private sector practices, in forestry in Guyana for her PhD research, which began in 2003 at Yale University. She also worked with indigenous groups to document how these large companies were violating well-established forestry guidelines, land claims and human rights.

They took their concerns to the international banks supporting one of the transnational loggers. As a result, one bank reduced its investments in the sector, and the government imposed penalties on illegal operations.

“Now illegal logging is almost always talked about in the context of what happens on large-scale forestry operations.”

For Bulkan, this was an example of how business contracts may put the security of indigenous people at risk, despite the safeguards put in place to protect these communities.

“They have been living on that land for thousands of years. If their rights to that land are at risk, they are at risk,” she says. “Some of the world’s most biodiverse areas are home to local, indigenous people. So working with indigenous peoples to safeguard their rights brings global as well as local benefits.”

Bulkan is tracking indigenous forestry and community forestry in the Department of Forest Resources Management. She sees many similarities between the obstacles faced by indigenous groups from her home country and those faced by Canada’s First Nations. More than 75 per cent of Guyana’s forested area is indigenous.

For more on the REDD+ approach (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) and other aspects of forest carbon management, visit the World Bank, and other aspects of forest carbon management, visit the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility in Suriname, which is coordinated by the World Bank, and other aspects of forest carbon management under what is known as the REDD+ approach (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation). As one of her next projects, she plans to connect indigenous groups in B.C. and Guyana that may benefit from payments in exchange for protection of one or some of a basket of forest-based environmental services such as sequestered forest carbon, globally important habitat or biodiversity, and supplies of clean water. She wants to help them demonstrate their legal rights to these resources and use those rights to provide small but reliable incomes from environmental services so they can develop long-term strategies to support their growing populations.

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Janette Bulkan is a new professor in the faculty of Forestry.
Research initiatives in the Okanagan grow by 40 per cent
Paul Markc

Sweeping vistas of the Okanagan Valley greet students studying on the bridges connecting classroom and office towers of the $5-million last year and quadrupled its grant total to 137. The Faculty of Health Grant, vice-provost research and dean of the college of graduate studies. 500 grants in 2011-12. Research initiatives address such key emerging issues as: • Water, climate and biodiversity • Cultural and ethnic diversity • Homelessness and affordable housing • Urban sprawl and urban development • Indigenous rights and traditional knowledge • Value-added agriculture and organic farming

Two Outstanding researchers honoured
Patty Wellborn

There was no easy winner this year when it came to the Award for Excellence in Research on UBC’s Okanagan campus—the honour is being shared by Joan Bottorff and Stephen Porter.

As a nursing professor and director of the Institute for Healthy Living and Chronic Disease Prevention, Bottorff has led research programs in some-patient relationships, cancer control, and health promotion. As a mentor and researcher, Bottorff is a co-applicant and faculty supervisor on seven research grants that total more than $12 million including the $928,000 2012 Canadian Cancer Society Grant, which has supported seven doctoral students, and seven masters students.

Bottorff was recently inducted into the American Academy of Nursing as a fellow, an extremely rare honour for a Canadian nurse scientist to receive, says associate professor of Nursing Carole Bottorff, her nominator. “She is a generous colleague who has made a significant contribution to the culture, inclusiveness and sustainability of research scholarship on the Okanagan campus,” says Robinson.

Porter has also earned accolades for his research and classroom work. Along with that he has established the highly popular specialization in forensic psychology within the psychology honours program.

“Porter and Bottorff have been awarded the distinction of Researchers of the Year at UBC’s Okanagan campus.”

UBC’s Okanagan campus research funding has grown by 40 per cent in five years.

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Since participating in UBC’s 2012 Three Minute Thesis competition—an annual event where grad students boil down their research into a three-minute talk—Baillie Redfern has embraced public speaking. Her thesis, on cloning a gene to mimic whale barf and perfume, was selected for animation by renowned cartoonist Jorg Cham after a competition called PHD Comics. In April, she travels to Albuquerque to be the first Meli woman to compete in the Miss Indian World Pageant and has selected storytelling as her traditional talent.

What a Three Minute Thesis finalist is doing one year later. A conversation with Baillie Redfern Genome Science and Technology Program, under the supervision of Dr. Jörg Bohlmann

Students at the University of British Columbia, March 2013

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It's the time in your life when you can explore horizons without timelines. Add to that financial freedom afforded by a smart retirement plan and your life will seem full of endless possibilities. Rogers Group Financial has helped over 300 UBC faculty members realize their ideal retirement by integrating investment strategies and pensions to their utmost potential. And together we can ensure that each and every day of your retirement is as fulfilling and worry free as the last.

Retirement is a whole new beginning.

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rogersgroup.com