



Interview with President Andrew Petter

For SFURA Newsletter By Marilyn Bowman, April 3, 2019.

President Andrew Petter was awarded the **Order of Canada** in January this year for his outstanding commitment and leadership in advancing mutual engagement between the university and the community. In the course of his nine years in our community he has lead teams that are giving the campus on Burnaby mountain a new large art museum, a new stadium, and soon, new residences. The Surrey campus will be enhanced by a new engineering building constructed to high environmental standards. He has worked to enhance the cultural significance of the Harbour Centre campus with more community alliances and public events.

Petter has also created special forums to enhance conversations between the university and the community. He created an Aboriginal Reconciliation Council to help the university build on the recommendations of the national commission, and established a major public educational event in the form of the *SFU Public Square*, an annual week-long series of public events discussing important public policy issues. This year the topic is *“Confronting the Disinformation Age”*, and includes a major forum including international speakers at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre on April 16. All these and more initiatives have involved leadership and teamwork, and I was interested in getting to know the man behind the work that is so publicly known.

The minute I sat down and opened my folder of notes, Petter spotted a book of poetry I had brought and began reciting from memory a poem *“Dog”* by Beat poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti. I had brought this book because Petter had used Ferlinghetti cadences in a poem Petter wrote and recited, *“We the City”*, at a festive SFU Public Square event in 2015. *“Dog”* is an irreverent and playful poke at human grandiosity. *“The dog trots freely in the street... Congressman Doyle is just another fire hydrant to him...”*. Petter also confessed a weakness for the surreal comedy of the Marx brothers. As our interview quickly moved to very serious and complex issues, I soon recognized that Petter’ playfulness is grounded in a deeply egalitarian view of people in the world.



He laughed apologetically while revealing that during his teenage years in Nelson he was given a penalty for charing in peewee hockey. Later his interest in the way communities operate to help people began to dominate his development. He read anarchists such as Emma Goldman, the Beat poets of the 50’s, C.S. Lewis, and political books that discussed the exploitation of the disadvantaged. He was deeply affected by the US Civil Rights movement, was sympathetic to the anti-Vietnam draft-dodgers who came to Nelson, and found John Kennedy’s speeches so inspirational he bought a record of them. Petter’s father was a Quaker and a pacifist who sent his son to CCF camps in the summer, where he was inspired by talks from Tommy Douglas. That calm, thoughtful, and hopeful Quaker approach seems to have guided Petter’s interests toward social justice, and his career into law went into

continued on page 4

In this issue

- 1 Interview with President Andrew Petter
- 2 President’s Report
- 3 SFURA to Offer National Writing Award
- 5 On Reflection
- 6 Socialist Report
- 7 For a Good Read
- 8 Co-operative Education
- 9 How The Failure To Ask A Single Question When Joining SFU In 1974 Cost Me More Than a Million Dollars!
- 10 Writing on the Edge
- 11 The Untold Story Of The School Of Criminology At SFU And How The Challenges Of Starting A New Program Were Met
- 15 It’s All About You
- 18 In Memoriam
- 19 Remembering George Stuart
- 20 Obituary of James W. Dean
- 21 Skin and Ageing
- 24 Editorial

EDITOR

Maurice Gibbons

DESIGN & PRODUCTION EDITOR

Walter Piovesan

PHOTO COORDINATOR

Ron Long



Simon Fraser University Retirees Association

Executive

PRESIDENT

Frances Atkinson

VICE PRESIDENT

Walter Piovesan

TREASURER

Jay Burr

SECRETARY

Jean Trask

PAST PRESIDENTS

John D'Auria, Jim Boyd

BOARD MEMBER

Allen Seager

BOARD MEMBER

Neil Abramson

BOARD MEMBER

Evelyn Palmer

BOARD ADVISORS

Len Evenden, Tom O'Shea,
Ralph Korteling

NEWSLETTER

Maurice Gibbons

SPEAKERS PROGRAM

Apollonia Cifarelli

President's Report

Frances Atkinson



Dear Members

Once again it has been my pleasure to serve as the President of the SFU Retirees Association for the past year. Our goals over the year have been to provide a range of social opportunities for interaction and community building among fellow retirees, to keep retirees informed of key topics, and to liaise with the university on behalf of retirees' concerns.

Key social events this year included the annual September Welcome Back Lunch at Taverna Greka in New Westminster, the Fall Dinner at the Italian Cultural Centre in Vancouver, an informal lunch in January at The Admiral in Burnaby, the Ides of March Reception at SFU Harbour Centre, and the AGM dinner at the Burnaby Mountain Clubhouse Restaurant. The Board continues to explore using a variety of venues for our events and was pleased to see a good mix of regular and new attendees at this year's events.

A highlight of this past year was celebration of the 20th anniversary of the formation of the SFU Retirees Association. A dedicated team of people produced an attractive and comprehensive anniversary booklet for this occasion. Evelyn Palmer played a key leadership role in determining scope, content, timelines, and finding many contributors, while Percilla Groves (editor) and Walter Piovesan (layout and design) did outstanding jobs, as did the many contributors whose names can be found in the booklet available from the SFURA Office. The 20th anniversary was celebrated at the Fall Dinner, during which all former Board members were honoured.

Another highlight this year was the Board's decision to produce and perform an adapted segment from Shakespeare's play Julius Caesar at the annual Ides of March Reception, featuring Maurice Gibbons as writer and director par excellence, Allen Seager as "Big Julie" facing his bloody end with panache and conviction--"not the Ides of March but the Tides of March"--and other board members artfully delivering their lines, all arrayed in Roman togas. Perhaps the most notable aspect of this endeavour was that your Board proved we are quite prepared to make fools of ourselves! At the Ides of March Reception we presented our members who are at least 85 years of age with lifetime memberships. We were pleased that a good number of our elders were able to attend in person to receive this honour.

This year the Board offered another interesting series of talks under our Speakers Program. In addition, the SFURA Financial Interest Group (FIG), comprising Philip Mah, Tom O'Shea, and Marv Wideen, organized seminars. We were pleased that two members, Yasmin Jamal and Ted Cohn, organized very successful small group tours to the Ismaili Centre in Burnaby and Temple Sholom in Vancouver respectively. The Board expresses our thanks to all members who participate in organizing events.

Two topics the Board hears about often from members are inadequacies in our extended health benefits plan, and understanding the intricacies of travel insurance. Recently we created a Benefits Review Committee that will soon begin to work on comparing our benefit plans with others across Canada, seeking input from a variety of sources, and creating a position paper to guide

future negotiations. If you have skills or interest to contribute to this initiative, please let me know.

Running the SFU Retirees Association involves a lot of volunteer work. I would like to extend sincere thanks to all Board members and to the many other volunteers for all your efforts this year.

Finally, I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to our administrative assistant Annie Ye for staffing the SFURA office and undertaking the many essential tasks that keep us well organized.

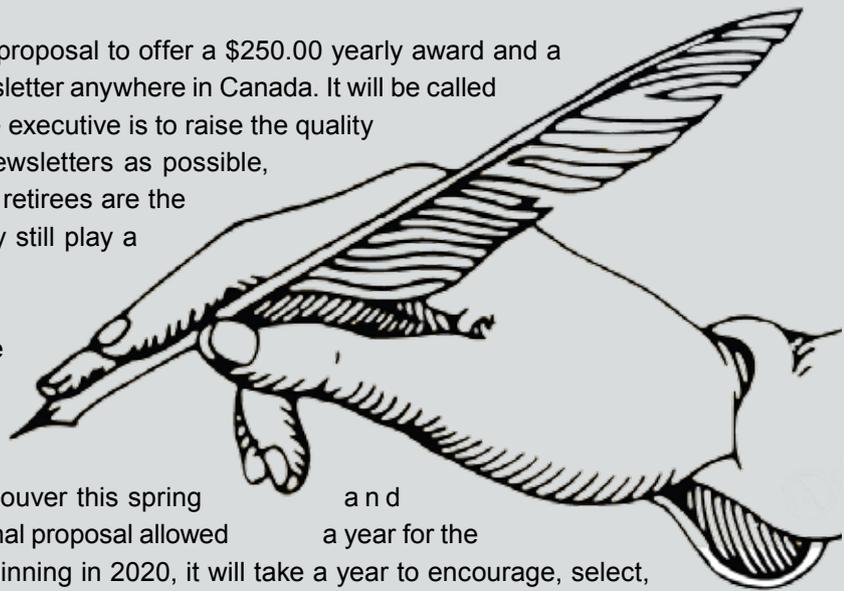
Thank you to all who have participated in any way to ensure SFURA continues to be a vital asset in our lives. ❖



SFURA to Offer National Writing Award

The executive of the SFURA has just accepted a proposal to offer a \$250.00 yearly award and a citation for the best article in a university retirees' newsletter anywhere in Canada. It will be called The SFU Retirees Writing Award. The intention of the executive is to raise the quality of writing in SFU's newsletter and as many other newsletters as possible, and by this means to remind every university that its retirees are the university's memory, and to remind retirees that they still play a vital role in the institution.

Fred Fletcher, the member of CURAC in charge of newsletters, has agreed to cooperate with SFU's representative, Maurice Gibbons, in promoting the proposal and working out the processes by which the competition will operate. Fletcher will be in Vancouver this spring and the two will meet and set up the competition. The original proposal allowed a year for the development of processes and criteria, but even beginning in 2020, it will take a year to encourage, select, and collect the articles from a number of universities and that should provide ample time for the directors to work out how it can all be done.



So this is a call to writers in participating universities: start thinking about what sort of an article you might write, starting in January 2020 and running for the year, through however many issues you produce. Remember that CURAC newsletters are not research journals written for academics, but are journals where many members may have been staff not professors, so a more general readership is likely the case. It is also true that the issues of retirement are very different from the issues of regular university practice, so think broadly about what topic you will choose. Humour is acceptable, so are any of the issues of aging: Where shall I travel? How can I remain youthful? How can I keep healthy? What should I do with my money? All of these are examples of acceptable arenas to write about.

The length is 600 to 800 words published in the acknowledged newsletter for retirees from a university. All entries should be typed and there will be instructions about details that we will circulate as soon as they are developed. Once an initiative is launched, many more like it may appear, so keep a sharp eye out for further details of other awards. We intend to offer winning articles to every participating newsletter for possible publication, so winners may be read by many. If you are getting the pitch of the hall, this article has 425 words. Writers, start your engines! ❖

continued from page1

that direction. There, constitutional issues and the Charter of Rights became very important to him.

Not being an experienced reporter, (my previous interview experience was diagnostic, almost entirely with head-injured people), I pursued topics of public policy that Petter's history in the BC government suggested to me. I asked about the policy problems of regulating casinos when they provide a government with strong income. When he had been named Minister of Justice, Petter asked to be relieved of the gambling portfolio because the industry creates addictions that harm poor people, and that conflicted with his ideas of good social policy. Asked about his work with the ground-breaking Nisga'a treaty, he explained it did not really create a template for other negotiations because it was such a new process that both sides were just learning how to work with each other. Each treaty negotiation will be quite individual because of the great diversity of First Nations groups in our province, ranging from remote to urban, and with more groups and languages than found in all of Europe. I raised the currently hot national topic of the roles and powers of a Minister of Justice and an Attorney-General, and Petter recommended a model proposed for BC by Stephen Owen. In that model, prosecutorial decisions at the top level of government should not be completely removed from over-riding issues of public policy that have broad social implications, but this should only be done through directives that are Gazetted and thus, public.

We discussed the many pressure groups that try to get a university president to advance their causes, and Petter explained that he considers his role is to defend the university, to foster its education, research, and scholarship, and to defend the right of university members to argue about contentious issues. As to broader public concerns, when they affect the university the President has to act to protect the institution, as he led the Board to do when the creation of a 'tank farm' was threatened for Burnaby Mountain. Where contentious public topics require debate and the use of evidence, fostering that debate is the role the president should take. His initiative in creating the *SFU Public Square* annual forum is an example of this engagement of issues with the wider community.

Reading is always a window to the inner spirit of a person, and Petter continues to devour a wide range of books. He is currently enjoying reading major biographies of Huey Long, Robert Moses, and Teddy Roosevelt. Along with his long interest in enhancing communities through political and educational work, Petter's mind still has easy access to the comic side of life, from the jazzy playful social commentaries of Ferlinghetti's poems, to the sly nonsense of the Marx brothers. We laughed over New Yorker /Montrealer Adam Gopnik's book of essays about his five years in Paris, '*Paris to the Moon*', relishing his description of the way in which Parisiens go to their neighbourhood gyms to wear chic clothing and talk, never bothering to actually exercise. (SFU conferred an honorary doctorate last fall to Alison Gopnik, Adam's sister, for her work in cognitive science). Petter is full of energy, appreciates clever irreverence, and does not take his status overly seriously even though he takes issues very seriously.

We closed the interview with Petter making a heartfelt expression of how much he appreciates the community of people at SFU. He loves that it has a truly unique style, "free to tilt at windmills" with a special SFU quirkiness that is all rooted in socially progressive values. He does not yet have a specific plan in mind for his life after retiring from the Presidency next year, but from past examples, it seems certain to be something interesting that fosters well-being beyond his own. ❖



On Safety

Marilyn Bowman

I have been struck by a recent obsession with safety within our culture. Adults worry about children being safe in playgrounds, about ‘chemicals’ in their food, about vaccinations, and about strangers kidnapping their children. New kinds of worries keep arising. Some university students worry about being faced with unpleasant or horrific information being presented in class, labs, or readings, others worry about walking alone at night, or being faced with a unisex toilet room.

In response to feelings of needing greater physical safety, children’s playgrounds have been dramatically altered so that there is almost no risk of falling or other harms during play. We have created environments that provide us with clean water, healthful food, effective sewage, safer cars and roads, lower crime rates, and longer lives.

Against this background of vastly improved physical safety there is a growing preoccupation with psychological safety. Parents hire ‘ringers’ to write university entrance exams to bypass their child’s fear of failing to get into a preferred school. Television shows and even news broadcasts routinely provide “trigger warnings” for content with violence or sexuality, to allow viewers to change to “safer” shows. At university, to protect students from feeling frightened by exposure to challenging historical or biological material, there are reports that some instructors provide similar trigger warnings to the class, so that students who consider themselves at risk from this exposure can protect their feeling of safety by leaving.

The situation of safety and risk is actually quite complex. It is becoming apparent that too much safety insulation from risks in the physical world can create new problems. Long bed-rest creates significant muscle atrophy and other health problems. Antibiotics treat infections but attack important gut bacteria. Overly-antiseptic environments are accompanied by increased rates of allergies and auto-immune disorders, now linked to inadequate exposure of children to a good range of messy real-world immune-system challenges. This excessive safety focus contributes to physiological over-reactions when exposure occurs later in life.

In response to this excessive safety model, in the physical world there have been recent moves designed to create challenges in order to help develop physical and psychological resilience. Designers are now building playgrounds providing rough materials, wood, hammers, and steep ladders, so that children can take risks, accept physical challenges, and learn to respond with resilience when they encounter problems. Exposure to challenge is often necessary for effective physiological functioning, as with immunization against infections. This provides a slight risk in order to challenge the body’s immune system to learn how to become effective. The hot topic in gastroenterology today is the value of having diverse gut bacteria, and manufacturers are jumping on the opportunity to promote “probiotic” products claimed to enhance these bacteria.

The final complication is that the feeling of being safe is a psychological construction, and different people interpret an identical physical or psychological event very differently. We all construct subjective meaning out of life events, and these meanings feed into emotions. Driving on an icy mountain highway suddenly enveloped in a blizzard may be frightening to some, exhilarating to another (crazy me). Television news may trigger satire in one, fearful anxiety in another, or moral outrage in a third.

These subjective responses represent long-standing individual differences and cannot be fully affected by public policy. It is not possible to legislate so that everyone feels safe, and a whole life cannot be protected to be safe from all dangers. Being protected from unsettling challenges in the name of safety may paradoxically increase our probability of fearing for our safety. Perhaps it is time within our subjective psychological world to recognize the value of facing risks and managing them, just as immunization adds value to our ability to resist infections. Resilience and a belief in personal competence and agency when faced with challenges, is hard to develop in lives safely protected from all risks. The emotional regulation needed in life is gradually learned through experience with moderately challenging situations. Psychological safety is fostered by developing skills at interpreting events in ways that help regulate emotions and generate effective coping.

We live in one of the safest places in the safest era of human history, and fears for safety need to be understood in proportion within that basic truth. Whether risks are physical or psychological, we are not safer when we try to live in cocoon worlds designed to avoid or eliminate every challenge. Having practice in responding helps us to thrive. ❖





Intellectual engagement for socialists

Tom O'Shea

You go to a party and the conversation inevitably turns to what you've been watching on TV. "OMG, did you see the first episode of the final season of Game of Thrones?" "No," I respond, "I stopped watching after all the gratuitous violence of the Red Wedding episode, so I couldn't care less whether the White Walkers destroy King's Landing or whatever." Game of Thrones aside, there's no denying the quality and appeal of many series on cable or streaming services. But what is out there that deals with the reality of life after loss or the waning of physical and mental powers? I suggest, for those of us who might be interested in the lives and affairs (yes) of the senior set, a number of candidates for your viewing pleasure. All use compassion and humour to tell their stories.

Grace and Frankie (Netflix). Jane Fonda (Grace) and Lily Tomlin (Frankie) are surprised, not surprisingly, when their husbands of many years announce they have found love elsewhere, i.e., themselves. Grace and Frankie, very different in their lifestyles, move in together and they have to learn to adapt to their new situation. Now in its sixth season.

The Kominsky Method (Netflix) my favourite. Michael Douglas (Kominsky) and Alan Arkin (Norman) are old friends. Norman's wife dies of cancer but he continues conversations with her. Kominsky starts an affair with one of his acting studio students. Complications arise from a prostate biopsy. Very touching and intimate look at life, loss, and friendship. Won the 2018 Golden Globe award for best TV series. Second season scheduled for 2019.

After Life (Netflix). Ricky Gervais's (Tony) life is upended after his wife dies from breast cancer. He considers suicide but instead decides to live long enough to punish the world for his wife's death by saying and doing whatever he wants. You have to be prepared for Gervais's typical profanity but he and the other characters are compelling as Tony learns to accept his lot in life. Funny and sardonic. Second season scheduled for 2020.

Last Tango in Halifax (DVDs from Vancouver Public Library). Derek Jacobi and Anne Reid, former childhood sweethearts, after fifty years meet again, fall in love, and plan to marry. Their plans become complicated because of their daughters' activities, mainly with lovers of both sexes. Jacobi and Reid are wonderful at portraying the wonder of rediscovered love. I get tearful just writing this. The Halifax in the series is in England, not Nova Scotia. The series was created by the BBC, starting in 2012, and shown on PBS in the USA. Four seasons in total.

So there you are. About 100 hours of binge watching on rainy days. Don't forget to do your kegels (see Kominsky, above) as you sit on your paisley sofa.

Take time out to join us for our annual baseball game at Nat Bailey later this summer. ❖





He Speaks Volumes: A Biography of George Bowering, Rebecca Wigod / by Jerry Zaslove

George Bowering, Canada's First Parliamentary Poet, does "speak in volumes" which the catchy title announces. Turning the "volume" down would never happen with George Bowering's more than hundred titles of a dizzying variety of writings: poems, long poems, novels, historical fiction, histories, baseball books from stadiums in baseball towns around the Continent, and of course his own reflections in *Writing the Okanagan* (Talonbooks, 2008), accounts of the everlasting presence of the Okanagan Valley in his writing.

So, given the presence of autobiographical recountings in Bowering's writing, and plying the aesthetic of place and time and the different deliberate voices that even spoof voices, I had to wonder, why a biography was needed. Is it news? But Rebecca Wigod, a former editor of the Vancouver Sun's books pages is not only a fan, but a super fan. The biography chronicles the literary times, but does not steer away into other territory, like the political and cultural conditions of writing. Bowering gave Wigod access to his diaries and archive and sat for many interviews. It is a road map with many byroads, bumpy trails, potholes, and intimate meanderings into the personal. Itinerant teaching in Montréal and Calgary as well being present at winning prize awards mark a growing national reputation.

Linking a personal creative project – the agony and comedy of a writer's self-creation – with a public persona is here more a literary adventure. Wait: Is there a bigger picture in which authorship can be explained or illuminated? So, a disclaimer: I am not a fan of biographies, although I have recently read biographies of Anton Chekhov and Samuel Beckett and Virginia Woolf that ask: Can this life explain this writing?

Yet, here is a biography with a cast of characters, living and dying friends, editors, intimates, circles of writers that some readers will know, and many will not know. This gives the biography a sense of chaos in George Bowering's life of negotiating and bargaining with a life of a poet, academic, teacher, trickster, chaos- and nostalgia-maker of memories and history and naming authors that share his vision of writing. It is not clear when he found time to read all these writers Wigod notes, but he did with great finesse. But here's the news: he and his writer companions changed how Canadian poetry is staged through an ever-widening circle of Canadian, American, European, and San Francisco poets which he began to read while in the Royal Canadian Air Force in the early fifties. [Breaking News: In March, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, cofounder in 1953 of City Lights Bookstore, had his hundredth birthday, which was celebrated by the mayor and by people of San Francisco.]

“Ron Baker, the Head of English, had a creative vision that an English Department could include writers.

When Simon Fraser University was founded in 1965, I with others came to help "create the new" and think through the traditions. Ron Baker, the head of English, had a creative vision that an English department could include writers. He used the phrase "Our house has many mansions" to me when we were constructing the first curriculum. George Bowering came into the English department a little later, at the cusp of the seventies, having taught in Calgary and Montréal.

This Protean English department was a force field of creative historical and textual scholarship, with poets, novelists, dramatists, and biographers. The faculty were creating deep and lasting scholarship. Poetic worlds belonged. Wigod's biography names many of the writers and students who came into this challenging milieu. These were the times in which Bowering's writing began to flourish. I have named these times the "University as a Social movement." I recall years later a hallway contretemps with someone who asserted that Bowering was really an "American." Well now, how about a serious round table about influences, histories, literary forbearers, and contemporary conditions of the Institution of Writing at SFU and Canada – are you up for that? He walked away. Bowering's writing provoked in some unashamed aggression against Bowering's promised land of a Canadian modernism that included his and many voices.

He Speaks Volumes could be a beginning for such a history, a future study of the historical-aesthetic conditions of a Canadian neo-modernism. Wigod sketches in the many-sided origin of Bowering's poetic that began in the University of British Columbia's English department inspired by Warren Tallman and Ellen Tallman and the influence of writers like Charles Olson, Alan Ginsberg, William Carlos Williams, Ezra Pound, Robin Blaser, Robert Creeley, Daphne Marlatt, Al

Purdy, Michael Ondaatje, Robert Duncan, and many others. The historical-aesthetic borders were being broken and breathing holes opened alongside of the orthodoxies.

Autobiographical writing, formative, playful, and serious, was alive. Havoc seemed planned. Place, neighbourhoods, mapping origins, and reading Canada became the scene. The register of writing was moving; however, one could stray into cultic corners and clumsy communes, or personal controversies and coteries and ungenerous judgments, too. The staging of a new productive understanding of the poetic world was the object of learning; the boundaries were being changed in front of us, even as sides were drawn up.

Personalities dominated. The classroom and the lecture hall were laboratories and studios, and Bowering was in great form in his lectures, and in his essays embellished with opinions, positions, controversies, laments, and sometimes overstated. Critical positions were named and often brushed aside in order to circle the wagons around “language,” the ultimate judge of quality. Bowering was known not to truck with mediocrity in the classroom. But who did?

Language and voice “speak” in and through the Bowering aura. The reader will find evidence for political and social views against the grain. They are part of his staging effort to remap “literary watersheds.” He draws attention. Not least what might be labelled his autobiographies: *Autobiology*, *A Magpie Life: Growing a Writer*, and *Baseball Love*.

The history of the myth-making period of Vancouver and British Columbia poetics has not been written. Bowering’s Menippean myth-making persona touches too many writers and publishers to mention in this short review. The reader will find them and the core “informants” in the narrative and the acknowledgments. They belong to the many close readers of Bowering’s writings. Rebecca Wigod has tracked many of them. They gave the biographer attention – in keeping with the title – of listening in to the voice of the author. Listening is hard work. Finding the larger cultural-literary picture is even more difficult. ❖

Co-operative Education

By Albert Curzon

One reason that some students attend university is to obtain training in subjects which will enable them to obtain well-paying jobs in the future. For these students co-operative education can be important. In physics a student works for a company for a semester and at the end writes a report on the activities of the semester. This report is submitted to the faculty member responsible for co-op education in the department. The advantage of co-op education is that industries become familiar with Simon Fraser University and possible future workers and the students get a chance to assess where they might like to work after obtaining a degree. The long-term existence of co-op education in several SFU departments confirms its importance and I thought a brief history for one department might be of interest.

Doreen Godwin who came here from industry in 1975 played a vital role in co-op education. At that time only the University of Waterloo had a co-op education program and Doreen had interacted with their students so her initial efforts were based on the University of Waterloo system. Martin Hendy was also associated with co-op and I remember interacting with him.

University-wide regulations for co-op June 1978, and the initial proposal was limited Kinesiology. Physics and Chemistry were the fact that the University of Victoria was required jobs were not abundant locally but Physics and Chemistry were added to the remember that it was not always plain sailing co-op job positions. At one large BC company my request for jobs was refused because a union was opposed to the co-op idea.



education were considered by Senate in to Computing Science, Mathematics and excluded for reasons associated with already active in these areas and the Klaus Rieckhoff of Physics objected and three other departments just mentioned. I when visiting companies in order to solicit

The first student to receive credit for a co-op course in physics did so in 1980. It was for PHYS-335. The first student who passed all four required co-op courses for a co-op degree, ending with Phys-436, did so in the summer of 1982. I was director of co-op education in Physics from 1980 to 1997 and when I had a sabbatical leave from 87-2 to 88-2, I was replaced by Konrad Colbow. Two members of the Dean of Science office were a great help. They were John Simms and Dawne Dadswell. It was a pleasure to interact with colleagues in other departments and I am sure the survival and growth of the co-op education scheme proves that SFU, industry and students have all benefitted from the scheme. A feature which I really liked was that I had to visit many companies and I learned a great deal about Canada. A company in Alberta said “Ta” to me for my visit by presenting me with a few ta sands, pieces which I still have! ❖

How The Failure To Ask A Single Question When Joining SFU In 1974 Cost Me More Than a Million Dollars!

By Ezzat A. Fattah

At a time when life for senior citizens is becoming harder and harder every year due to prolonged record low interest rates coupled with inflation, retirees are bound to look back at the employment decisions they made early on when they were members of the work force. This is the story of how I personally failed to ask one question when joining SFU in 1974 and the negative economic consequences that ensued.

In 1968 upon completion of my Ph.D., I was hired as an assistant professor at the School of Criminology, University of Montreal. In 1971 I was promoted to associate professor with tenure and in 1974 I was about to be considered for a full professorship. In March of that year I received a phone call from Dr. Robert C. Brown who at the time was dean of the Faculty of Interdisciplinary studies at Simon Fraser University. With his well known charm and eloquence he went on and on singing the praise of the young institution that SFU was: its small size, its small group teaching philosophy, its tutorial system, its intimate collegial ambiance, its avant-garde spirit shown by hiring the first female president in Canada, Dr. Pauline Jewett, its modern architectural design, its beautiful location on top of Burnaby Mountain, etc., etc. While listening carefully to his “sales pitch” I was more intrigued by the formidable challenge he was offering me. As history later showed, the task of founding a new department from scratch, in a discipline that, at the time, was not as well known as other social sciences and was often confused with “Criminalistics”, (now referred to as “forensic science”), proved to be an enormous undertaking. But the attraction of having such a unique opportunity to implement my criminological ideas in practice, to create a new department that was to be unique in Western Canada, was too hard to resist. So while trying to play it cool by insisting that I have to consult my wife and to think about the life-changing decision of moving from a francophone environment to an anglophone one, there was very little hesitation in my mind about accepting this welcome opportunity to move to the milder climate of the West Coast and to the beautiful city of Vancouver. I asked Dean Brown some general questions about the University and the city. We discussed the salary and the issue of tenure and I promised to get back to him with my final decision a couple of days later which I did. Destiny plays a significant role in those life-altering decisions. This is not to blame destiny for NOT asking Dean Brown the one question that turned out to be the most important for my future economic well-being. I have only myself to blame even though I feel even today that I was totally justified in not asking him about SFU’s pension plan!



In 1974 the University of Montreal, like all other universities in Canada (with one exception it turned out), had a pension system generally called a “defined benefits plan”. A young faculty member who continued in the service of the university until retirement at age 65 became eligible, depending on his/her years of service, for a pension equalling up to 75% of his salary at retirement. Had I stayed at the University of Montreal, my projected annual salary at the time of retirement at age 65, was to be \$100,000. That would have translated into a yearly pension of between \$65,000 & \$70,000.

I regretfully admit that at the time I joined SFU in September 1974 I did not have the faintest idea that only months before the University had switched, at the urging of some members of its Department of Economics, to a “money purchase plan”. I need not go into the details of this plan as I am sure all my fellow retirees are by now familiar with what was, in 1974, a novel, unconventional and innovative concept. The decision to switch was based largely on mounting fear that universities will not be able to honor their pension obligations were they to continue with defined benefits plans!

Now, it could be the mild climate, it could be the more relaxed life on the west coast. Be this as it may I do consider myself extremely lucky because in a little more than two months from the date I am writing this (namely, on January 1st, 2019) my family and I will be celebrating a quarter of a century since I reached what was then the mandatory retirement age at SFU. It could very well be that had I continued to teach and live in Montreal I would not have survived as long as I did here. But should this stop me from thinking and wondering what if ? After all, it does not require a genius in math to multiply \$70,000 by 25 years to get the figure of one and three quarter million dollars! Even after deducting from this amount what I ended up getting from SFU under the money purchase plan the difference seems not only very substantial but quite astronomical.

Logically, the next question would be “ do you have any regrets” ? Were I to give a true and sincere answer I would say without any hesitation: “Not at All”. And may I take this opportunity to wish my active colleagues at SFU a happy and prosperous future retirement! ❖

Writing on the Edge

Sheila Delany



Writing on the edge is well and good (whatever it may mean); living on the edge not so much. I see a few people living on the edge in my neighborhood; the regulars are Jim, Larry and Stefan. Jim and Larry beg at their regular spots as often as health and weather permit, but aren't homeless; Stefan, homeless, doesn't beg. My residential street is off a busy small-shop thoroughfare: cars and pedestrians Chinese, Indian (Muslim and Hindu), Filipino/a, Latino/a, various European faces and accents, though fewer than when I moved in 33 years ago. The MacDonald's on the corner was replaced by Dairy Queen, the Legion hall by Tim's, St Vincent de Paul by an MCC thrift shop. Dozens of tiny cheap-clothing stores have come and gone; in their stead new dosa, dim sum or pho spots have sprung up. It was only a few years ago that homeless and beggars appeared.

Not everyone agrees about how to treat them. Giving money is the obvious thing, and many people do. Giving food is another option: a soup or sandwich bought to give, or the half of your Indian or Vietnamese dinner you couldn't finish, the homemade bread your neighbor gave you, etc. Some people don't give: they are in principle opposed to private charity, believing (not incorrectly) that it's a government's job to look after its poor. Others opine that what matters most is acknowledgment of personhood: a greeting, a direct look, a smile. (In case anyone's wondering, I give food or money and, as below, have short conversations.)

Stefan, youngest of the three at about 40, with neatly tied-back black hair and beard, sits occasionally in various places: SubWay, Starbucks a few blocks up, or the corner DQ, his presence indicated by a blue-tarp-covered shopping cart parked outside. It's loaded with neatly stacked items: a few pots, suitcases, boots. I think there's a subvisible economy in which such goods are circulated among the poor, bought for cheap or found and sold for a little less cheap. At the DQ, Stefan sits at the last table by the back door and big window where he can keep an eye on the cart. Often he sleeps, head on the table; sometimes I leave food there. Once I asked where he goes when not at the DQ. "Anywhere", he said laughing. He's polite, even somewhat courtly in manner. I saw him shirtless in a nearby park last summer and was surprised at how fit he looked. Occasionally another person, man or woman, joins him at his usual table. He flirts a bit: "Lookin' good, girl" is the usual hello.



The other two regulars are older. Jim, maybe 50, pale and thin, sits outside the Buy-Low next to the curb, with a hat for money. He used to have a room on Fraser but there was a fire a few years ago, the landlord had no insurance, Jim had to move, the projected class-action suit came to nothing. His daughter, Jasmine, a pretty, overweight girl in nurse's training, lives with him; she joined him once or twice as he sat. He's often sick, uses a cane, sometimes sits shivering under an umbrella. Recently he was absent for a month or more; then Jasmine was there with a friend whom she introduced as her wife, Eli. She said that Jim had been run over by a car that mounted the sidewalk; he had a lot of broken bones. An accident: the car skidded in snow.

Larry, 60 (he's not shy about talking about himself) is thin, white-haired, cheerful, diabetic. He sits on a plastic box in front of Maxim's Chinese bakery blowing random notes on a harmonica. He agrees he'd get more money in the hat if he learned a tune. He has a car parked around the corner and recently gave someone a jumpstart. People often stop to chat with him. "Thank you, darlin', god bless" is his usual goodbye. He mentions Jim's accident. I say I hope there's money in it for Jim; "It'll all go to the dealer", Larry replies.

I asked all three whether they prefer food or money. No contest: Money for sure! I observe that the food someone leaves is worth much more than the loonie they might give. But Larry wants to buy food he really likes (pizza from across the street); Jim says he'd never spend that much on a meal anyway and has to feed his daughter; Stefan mentions possible digestive consequences.

Now Jim is back but Larry's missing—hope he's OK. ❖

Science” or with the discipline of “Criminalistics” (currently named “Forensic Science”) a science that deals entirely with crime investigation. I vividly remember the countless times I was told, when I introduced myself as a criminologist, “ah, Sherlock Holmes”! I will never forget when I made a presentation at Crofton House School for girls explaining what criminology is about and why a career in criminology should be pursued, and a girl came to me asking “Prof. Fattah, I want to be a spy. Is criminology for me?” I answered jokingly that “To my knowledge, Mata Hari did not have a criminology degree!” To make a long story short, it turned out that an urgent information and orientation campaign was desperately needed to correct this erroneous view that seemed to prevail about what this emerging social science is all about. And while during my first months, even my first years, at SFU I tried using the written media as well as going on countless radio & TV programs trying to explain the true nature of criminology, the misperceptions still persisted. Even more frustrating were the misconceptions of many student groups at SFU and their resulting negative reactions towards the emerging program.

Opposition And Objections To The New Program From Within The University Overcoming Students’ Suspicions And Misperceptions

Although it was no longer the 1960’s, university students were highly suspicious of, and overtly hostile to, governing authorities and particularly law enforcement agents. A program likely to bring police officers on campus either to study or under the guise of studying was a no no! Through the student newspaper *The Peak* they overtly opposed the program and tried to dissuade students from enrolling in criminology courses. An article in the students’ newspaper *The Peak* was headlined “Criminology not for us” and another one in the issue dated 14/02/1975 warned the students of the dangers of having agents of the state on campus:

“Students who have naturally become accustomed to this mountain sanctuary as a peaceable place to smoke a joint while gazing out on the fabulous scenery now must prepare themselves for the possibility of being busted. Take the studious-looking chap on your right, for instance. Are you sure that he’s not an RCMP officer picking up a few graduate credits while on ‘leave’ from the force?”(unattributed, 14 February 1975).

The students’ warnings, as frivolous as they were, fell on deaf ears. Criminology, despite the erroneous views most people entertained about it, proved to be enormously popular. We had to cap the registration in the first course that I taught in September 1975 (Crim. 101 Introduction to Criminology) at 475, the capacity of the largest lecture hall available at SFU at the time!

Overcoming Other Departments’ Attempts To Have The Program Sacked

Dealing with students’ objections and opposition was not too difficult. It is the hostility and resistance to the program emanating from other academic units that was harder to deal with. The fiercest opposition came from the newly reconstituted Sociology/Anthropology Department. Fearing that their declining enrollments will go down further, due to potential students opting to major in criminology instead of sociology, the Department decided to do everything they could

“Territoriality is well entrenched in Academia. Whenever Academics feel that their turf is being invaded or threatened they immediately fight the intruders.

to stop the program, and if this did not work, to ensure that it did not succeed. They used a fallacious argument to rationalize their opposition, namely that criminology is but a branch of sociology! It follows that if the university is interested in a criminology program it should be developed within the S/A Department not as an autonomous one. My answer to the Chair of the S/A Department was swift, simple and decisive. If criminology is, as he claimed, a branch of sociology, how is it that his Department never offered a single criminology course in its entire history?

The motives of the Political Science Department for opposing criminology were somewhat different. Its new chair, with his distinguished legal credentials, had strong hopes, together with a project, for the creation of a law school at SFU. Fearing that the numerous law courses

in the curriculum of criminology would be a formidable obstacle to his plan, he decided to do everything he could to dissuade the university administrators from going ahead with the program. He claimed that criminology was a peripheral discipline that prepares and trains prison guards and police officers and as such is unlikely to attract top notch or first class faculty to SFU.

Territoriality is well entrenched in Academia. Whenever Academics feel that their turf is being invaded or threatened they immediately fight the intruders. The Psychology Department shared the fears of the S/A Department regarding

potential students opting for criminology rather than psychology. They could not however make the same erroneous claim that criminology is just a branch of psychology. Instead they complained that criminology courses dealing with treatment and rehabilitation are the sole domain of psychology and should not be taught by criminology faculty or instructors who may not be highly qualified psychologists. Their petty objections were discarded and the courses were finally approved as proposed.

There were other complaints that certain courses in the proposed curriculum overlap with courses offered or are the domain of other departments. The Mathematics Department was not pleased about statistics and quantitative methods being included in the proposed curriculum. The Chemistry Department expressed reservations about the proposed "Criminalistics & Forensic Science" course suggesting that one course was actually too little to do justice to the field which would need a more scientific foundation than a social science department could provide.

After working on it diligently for three months, the proposed undergraduate criminology curriculum that I prepared was ready to take through the tedious bureaucratic process of committee after committee before bringing it before the Senate for ultimate approval. At the Senate, the curriculum was approved in one sitting and set an SFU record for the speed with which it was prepared and passed. The University's registrar at the time, the late Harry Evans, voiced high praise for the curriculum, lauding its clarity, coherence and comprehensiveness.

Once the program was implemented, it soon proved the critics wrong. The undergraduate criminology curriculum, true to the multidisciplinary nature of the discipline, contained 44 courses each with its own description. Among those, the curriculum offered a first course of its kind in Canada on "Human Rights and Civil Liberties" (CRIM 335). The curriculum made it mandatory for students who want to major in criminology to take courses offered by the S/A, the Political Science and the Psychology Departments. Ironically, the registration en masse of criminology students in those courses boosted the sagging enrollments and was thus the best thing that happened to the opposing departments in years.

Overcoming The External Opposition To Criminology's Humanitarian Perspective And Mission

When the general public confused criminology with police science or forensic science, they were generally supportive of it. Once the true nature of criminology became evident, their attitudes decidedly changed. It is no secret that Canadians are a punitive bunch, though not to the same extent that Americans are. One only needs to watch their recent furor resulting from the transfer of a female prisoner to a healing lodge and how they only calmed down when the decision was reversed! Regardless of how long I may live I will never forget the animosity, the hostility I encountered when I campaigned for the abolition of the death penalty in the early 1970's especially when a conservative member of Parliament in Ottawa demanded that I go back to Egypt where I came from. Or how can I forget the attacks directed at me by no less than a judge, Judge Les Bewley, when I gave a public lecture in down town Vancouver maintaining that prisons have no future and the earlier they are abolished the better it is for society. All this came as no surprise as research has abundantly shown that the more religious people are the more punitive their attitudes are and the more likely they are to believe in the religious dogma/doctrine of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Once the general public realized that criminology is a social science advocating and struggling for a humane justice system and a forgiving progressive society, criminology was no longer their cup of tea. It became clear early on that one of the primary missions of the new program is to try, through information and education, to gradually and slowly change those entrenched punitive attitudes. Sad to say that, almost half a century later, that struggle still goes on and to realize that the battle for mercy and kindness has not yet been won!

“ The undergraduate criminology curriculum was prepared and approved without a single faculty member, other than me

The Challenge Of Hiring Qualified Faculty In A Young Emerging Discipline

With criminology officially set to start in September 1975 it soon became clear to me that my biggest challenge still laid ahead.

The undergraduate criminology curriculum was prepared and approved without a single faculty member, other than me, having been hired. Hiring faculty to teach a reasonable number of preliminary courses in the Fall of 1975 was a formidable task. It was not helping that SFU at the time was under censure by CAUT (Canadian Association of University Teachers). As a starter, I asked for, and was authorized to hire, eight faculty members. The criticism, the negative attitude that prevailed among social sciences departments at SFU made it imperative that those hired, particularly the first ones, be of such high calibre as to silence the critics. It was essential to attract top notch teachers to prove that the skepticism

about the quality of the program was unwarranted. But how to do that when only three universities in the world were, at the time, producing Ph.D.s in criminology? It seemed as a hopeless endeavor.

The first appointment I made was Dr. Ehor Boyanowsky who was teaching at Dalhousie University in Halifax. The second appointee was a British legal scholar teaching in Sydney, Australia. A man with outstanding credentials including an M.A. in criminology from the University of Cambridge and a doctorate in Law from Yale University. To his credit, Dr. Simon Verdun-Jones was exceptionally hired without the usual person-to-person interview, based on solid and raving recommendations I got from a colleague of mine, a criminologist at the University of Toronto.

I decided to advertise the remaining authorized positions worldwide with an emphasis on Canada and the USA. With a relatively high number of positions (6) to simultaneously fill and supposedly 15 to 18 candidates, I opted for a novel model for interviewing and judging the applicants. Once sufficient applications were in, I prepared a short list based on who would teach which of the courses to be offered. Instead of inviting the candidates individually to campus to be interviewed, I asked each to provide me with the title of the sample lecture he/she will give. Having those in hand, I organized what I called a "symposium" and arranged the topics nicely in various sessions that were attended by the Dean, the members of the steering committee, and the other candidates. The format proved to be very popular creating a friendly social environment, prolonged interaction with the applicants and above all it allowed each candidate to challenge and ask the other candidates questions, following their presentations, thus making it possible for them to personally judge those they are competing with. As the positive reviews came in, the symposium format of interviewing was repeated and became the usual pattern in criminology. One symposium was organized at the Empress Hotel in Victoria, another at the Westminster Abbey in Mission, etc.

“

Dr. Jewett, whose background was in federal politics and who served the country as a Member of Parliament in Ottawa, was a staunch supporter of Canadians and women.

Following the first symposium and with input from the steering committee, I selected five of the interviewed candidates. They were approved by the dean who sent their files to the President, Dr. Pauline Jewett, for approval and forwarding to the Board of Governors. What was to be expected, and did happen, is that only one of the five candidates was Canadian and the other four were American. The president, Dr. Jewett, whose background was in federal politics and who served the country as a Member of Parliament in Ottawa, was a staunch supporter of Canadians and women. Her nationalism was such that she insisted to only serve BC wines at her residence and at university events despite the poor quality of BC wines in the early 1970s! Apparently shocked to see that only one of the five candidates is Canadian, she contacted Dean Brown telling him bluntly

that under no circumstances is she going to approve those candidates or take their appointments to the BOG. My own reaction was swift. Shocked to realize that all the work I have done and the success I have achieved with the curriculum were about to go down the drain, I decided to take a firm stand and not to let nationalistic considerations take the upper hand or to prevail over the academic viability of the program. To his credit, Dean Brown was very supportive of my stand and assured me that he will abide by my decision.

Together we went to meet Dr. Jewett. We explained to her that the only University in Canada that graduates Ph.D.s in criminology is the French-speaking Universite de Montreal. Those Ph.D.s are very few in number and are unwilling for personal, social and linguistic reasons to move west and start teaching in English. We told her about all the steps we took and all the efforts we made to recruit high quality faculty who meet the required qualifications to teach the courses in this young emerging science. Without using threatening language we made it abundantly clear that unless she goes ahead with the five appointments we will have no option but to resign and leave her with an orphan program. Being a politician Dr. Jewett quickly realized that we were not bluffing and knew very well that she had a real crisis on her hand, a crisis of her own making. Terminating the criminology program that was widely and universally advertised would create a huge scandal for an institution that was trying to recover from the turmoil of the 1960's and was still under censure by the CAUT. She asked us for some time to think the matter over and shortly after agreed to approve the appointments with the proviso that next ones should give high priority to qualified Canadians and to female candidates.

This early crisis was averted but more were to come. But this is another story for some other day! ❖



IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU

Evelyn Palmer



Congratulations to **Water Piovesan** who won a CURAC Tribute Award for service to the SFURA. Walter is our SFURA vice president and co-editor with Maurice of the SFURA Newsletter “*Simon Says*” and the book *Remembering SFU*, and manages the layout and looks after the printing and business of all our publications. He is our Webmaster and is our Go-To Guy for our IT woes, and looks after our membership lists along with Annie. He continues service to SFU with the annual book sale, and last year was honoured with an IASSIST international award. He also looks after the layout of the CURAC newsletter.

Walter joins Marg Jones and Maurice Gibbons for the third successive year in winning a Tribute Award. He will accept the award at the annual meeting of CURAC May 22-24 at the University of Guelph. He and Jim Boyd, CURAC Treasurer will represent our board at the meeting.

Ted Cohn's most recent book has just been published, one he co-edited with Anil Hira and Norbert Gaillard: *The Failure of Financial Regulation*.

This book examines the long-term, previously underappreciated breakdowns in financial regulation that fed into the 2008 global financial crash. While most related literature focuses on short-term factors such as the housing bubble, low interest rates, the breakdown of credit rating services and the emergence of new financial instruments, the authors of this volume contend that the larger trends in finance which continue today are most relevant to understanding the crash. Their analysis focuses on regulatory capture, moral hazard and the reflexive challenges of regulatory intervention in order to demonstrate that financial regulation suffers from long-standing, unaddressed and fundamental weaknesses. See

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-05680-3#about>

Ted has given seminars for the SFURA series and the FIG series, and recently published the 7th edition of his textbook, *Global Political Economy*. He is the author of three more books and co-edited two more in addition to this most recent one.

Selma Wassermann has published five books since her retirement in 2000, with a sixth to be published in June:

Teaching for Thinking Today: Theory, Strategies and Activities for the K-8 Classroom was published in 2009 by Teachers College Press, NYC.

The Art of Interactive Teaching: Listening, Responding, Questioning, was published in 2017, by Routledge, NYC.

Teaching in the Age of Disinformation: Don't Confuse Me With the Data, My Mind is Made Up! was published in 2018 by Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, MD

This Teaching Life: How I Taught Myself to Teach, was published in 2004, by Teachers College Press, NYC.

Grandparenting at Long Distance, was published in 2007 by Detselig, Calgary

What's the Right Thing to Do? - Promoting Thoughtful and Socially Responsible Behavior in the Early Childhood Years is in press, to be published June, 2019, by Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, MD.

Selma has also produced two CD-Roms for classroom use:

Presumed Enemies, about the internment of Japanese Canadians/Americans during WWII; and *World History: A Comparative Study*, both for Grade 11 - 12 students. Also four apps for the iPad for students who have difficulty with reading, under the umbrella title: *My Word! Readers*.

Now that's a busy retirement. Selma notes: Once you are free from having to attend endless meetings, you have more time to be creative! And she loves writing.

See http://www.sfu.ca/retirees/Books_By_Retirees.html main_content_list_start=4&q=Selma+Wassermann

Our website has a section for books by retirees at http://www.sfu.ca/retirees/Books_By_Retirees.html

Go there to see them listed and to see how to submit your own.

Tony Arrott is pleased to report that he believes he has fulfilled his obligation to be a bridge to future generations with the notice that his article *Suppression of anisotropy and inversion symmetry effects by magnetic charge density points to better motors* was published in *AIP Advances*, an open access physics journal: <https://aip.scitation.org/>

doi/10.1063/1.5079829. Tony received the news the day of our Ides of March Reception and was delighted to tell his colleagues about it. Congratulations, Tony, on 69 years of research in Magnetism.

Tony writes this description:

"This publication explains how to improve substantially most of the motors, generators and transformers, the main users of electrical power. It is a work in progress for the next 30 years. The energy savings per year should be a good chunk of a trillion dollars. It is my hope that others will join in this endeavour. It is hoped that any proceeds from this will go towards providing clean drinking water to the world. This is a payback to Allis-Chalmers which makes transformers and provided the funds for Jack Goldman to offer me a fellowship in 1950. That is a long time to work on a problem, but in all those years I didn't find a better challenge."

And from **Marilyn Bowman**: A wonderful new pastime

I've been having great fun for the past few months learning Chinese using a free online program called duolingo. It is a Google product, instantly accessible. While learning any new language is a challenge, and learning a totally exotic script makes it even more so, the program is so cleverly designed that it pulls with possible rewards even as it daily nags with an email to keep me working.

The cleverness and fun is that it treats me like an 8-year old. When I get a certain number of exercises correct, it plays a trumpet sound to reward me. When I get an even longer run of correct work done it has a different horn fanfare, and over accumulated successes it gives me a gold star!! Fantastic.

The program is designed using artificial intelligence and can 'understand' the particular nature of a problem I am having with a particular grammatical construction. It then gives me more practice on just that until I get it right, circling around and around until I get it. It gradually builds vocabulary, character recognition as to sound and meaning, and practice with word order, which is rather different in Chinese.

Each day I approach my lesson with a mixture of excitement and anxiety, and now that I am getting well into the lessons it has added a new kind of reward for me: it tracks my performance in terms of consecutive correct responses with a little moving yellow graph line, giving me further reason to be careful as I type in my answers – no carelessness allowed! The material presented to me is both written and audible, and my responses may need to be typed in English or typed using Chinese characters selected from a larger array. It is exhilarating, annoying and basically deeply satisfying. I will never master this complex language but I am learning quite a bit and it keeps my brain alert and moving.

I believe the duolingo program offers nearly 40 languages in this online format. "Try it, you'll like it!"

Last year at the Ides of March Reception we awarded three Distinguished Elders who had reached the age of 90 with life memberships in the SFURA. In the Fall the board decided to lower the age of membership to those who were 85+ and those who would reach 85 during the membership year, and we added 31 more members. Sadly, **Peter Belton** passed away on April 1, making our new total 33.

Welcome to the 85+ club to the following:

Tony Arrott, Nini Baird, Ron Baker, Barrie Bartlett, Janet Blanchet, Roy Carlson, Albert Curzon, Ezzat Fattah, Maurice Gibbons, Herbert Grubel, Suso Gygax, Evelyn Harden, Jack Knetsch, Robert Koepke, Monique Layton, Neville Lincoln, Manfred Mackauer, Daniel Mcdonald, Monique Mcdonald, Harvey Nagel, Klaus Rieckhoff, Alan Rudrum, Bertram Schoner, Mae Sherwood, Philip Stigger, Kenneth Strand, Kenneth Stuart, Selma Wassermann, Hal Weinberg, Edward Weinstein, Marvin Wideen, Bill Yule, and Jerry Zaslove.

This is a report from the **Financial Interest Group**.

We are happy to share with you the results of our last seminar and how it reflects some of the changes we would like to see in FIG seminars.

First the seminar. On April 24 **Jim Boyd** and **Jay Burr** led the seminar focused on Travel Insurance. They made an excellent presentation to about 50 people who attended. Both spoke using power point. Jim Boyd's presentation focused on describing various aspects of companies providing insurance and issues involved in travel insurance. Jay Burr illustrated the differences in costs among companies providing travel insurance. He used his power point to illustrate the value of timing the purchase of travel insurance and the value of buying for a year as opposed to a single month or two. They also stressed the importance for participants to do a careful reading of insurance policies to get the best out of their insurance. A copy of these presentations is available on the SFURA website.

We will close by noting that this seminar represents what we are hoping to do with the *FIG seminars* in the future. As indicated in an earlier message, we had become a bit concerned when we realized that most of our recent seminars involved commercial presenters. We hope to see more retirees providing seminars in the future. So we welcome your suggestions on the issues you would like to have discussed.

Phil Mah, Tom O'Shea, Marvin Wideen. (*The FIG group*)

And now for the **AWWWW!** factor:

Two grandchildren of Board Members were born during the first week of April. **Frances Atkinson**, her daughter **Arainn** and son in law **Jaran** welcomed **Jack Francis McKenzie** on April 2, 2019 and **Jim Boyd**, his wife **Sharon**, son **Joel** and daughter in law **Amanda** welcomed **Lyla Mae Boyd** on April 5, 2019. **Lyla** joins her twin siblings sister **Audrey** and brother **Walter** who are 18 months old. Jim recommends the free photo-sharing app called [.lifecake.com](http://lifecake.com) for those of you with family members far away. ❖



IN MEMORIAM



Peter Belton was a member of the Department of Biological Sciences, one of the group who came to SFU from Belleville ON to form the Master of Pest Management Program. He was an expert on mosquitos and gave seminars to the SFURA on the topic. Last November Peter and Ron Baker were honoured at their residence at Harmony Court as members of the Royal Air Force where they attended the Remembrance Day Ceremony in their old RAF uniforms.

His obituary on our website is at: https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriain/2019/PeterBelton_obit.pdf



Doreen Boal was Associate Director of Admissions at SFU for many years until her retirement in 1990. She then moved to the Sunshine Coast where she had an active life in gardening, weaving, travel and community service. Her obituary is at: https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriain/2019/Doreen_Boal_OBIT.pdf



James Dean was an expert in macroeconomics and trade policy, and taught at SFU from 1969 until his retirement. He was generous with his time for the SFURA giving us seminars and many newsletter articles. He had an adventurous life as an international traveller and speaker, a civil rights activist, and a musician. He is remembered in this newsletter (page 20), and in his obituary on our website at: https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriain/2019/James_W_DEAN.pdf



Keith Dixon retired from SFU in 1991 and later moved to New Forest, Hampshire then to Devon, England. He died in February, 2019 in Devon. He taught sociology, philosophy of education and social sciences. His obituary, written by his daughter **Helen Dixon**, is on our website at: https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriain/2019/Keith_Dixon_obit.pdf

Dee Housden passed away on February 7, 2019. Her obituary is at: http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriain/2019/Dorothy_Housden.pdf

We have also been informed of the deaths of **Charles Hamilton** (in 2018), **Mary Stearns**, **Robert Andrews** and **John Wahlgren** (all in 2019). We have posted them on our website at: https://www.sfu.ca/retirees/in-memoriain/a_g.html but we do not have obituaries for them.

We ask any of you who have further information about any deceased SFU retirees to submit obituaries and tributes to the SFURA Webmaster on the link provided on our website at: https://www.sfu.ca/retirees/in-memoriain/a_g.html We post names of all deceased SFU retirees whom we are aware of, not only those who were SFURA members. ❖

REMEMBERING
SFU ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 50TH BIRTHDAY

Available at SFU
Campus Bookstore

Remembering George Stuart

By Ken Strand

I am pleased to share my memories of George Stuart.



I can recall very clearly my first conversation with George. It was just after the Joint Faculty Meetings in 1968. The faculty had voted non-confidence in the University President who, in turn, had been fired by the Board of Governors. I had chaired these faculty meetings and was the faculty nominee for the position of Acting President. I and a committee were waiting to meet with the Board when a disagreement arose within our group. We were getting it sorted out when George came into the room and said in a heavy voice “The Chancellor will see you now”. My response was “Tell the Chancellor we will meet with him when we are ready and it may be a few minutes.” This was not the response George had expected to carry back to Gordon Shrum and I have always regarded this experience as George’s initiation to the academic world. He adapted quickly.

I was not Acting President long before I realized that my academic training had not prepared me for administrative decision making in the university. As an academic I could choose my topics and how and when to deal with them. In university administration, the problems were caused by others or simply developed. In either case they had to be dealt with promptly.

At first, I dreaded the days that started with these words from George ...“we have a problem.” As time went by I learned to appreciate that he had not said that I had a problem but rather that that we had a problem. More importantly, George’s “problem” came with an analysis of alternative “solutions” and a recommendation as to the most appropriate solution. George and I would talk over the “problem” and possible “solutions” and reach a decision. This approach taught me a lot about decision making and was a major contribution to decision making at Simon Fraser University. I attempted to make it standard practise at SFU and, in particular, I always used it when making recommendations to the Board of Governors.

SFU had a lot of problems in 1968. Some of them were caused by the Tri-mester system and some were the result of deliberate actions by students or faculty members. But one area where we never had any problems was in George’s domain. George hired excellent people. He knew how to delegate and how to keep things running smoothly. He was in charge of running the parts of the university that everyone takes for granted—security, parking, building maintenance, snow removal, and even food. George was good at his job. In fact, he was “UNBELIEVEABLE”!

As my term as President was drawing to a close in 1974, I decided not to seek another term but to attempt to salvage my academic career after a six year absence. Accordingly, after my term expired, I no longer saw George daily but only occasionally—usually at Whistler. As you all know, George and Barbara were excellent hosts. Elna and I spent many happy evenings with them at Whistler: however, I must say that George’s skiing was not a joy to behold, but rather, watching it was a heart stopping experience. In the evening, George and I would reminisce about our days together at SFU. George had fond memories of those challenging times and he played an essential role in solving the many problems that the University faced. He taught me how to make decisions and he always told me what I needed to hear—not what I wanted to hear.

Much of whatever success I had as President of Simon Fraser University I owe to George. ❖

Obituary of James W. Dean

By Herbert Grubel, Emeritus Professor of Economics



*Simon Fraser University Emeritus Professor of Economics
September 4, 1941 - February 10, 2019*

James Dean had a wonderful way with people. He loved to approach them with an outstretched hand, a broad smile, his head cocked slightly to the right, locked eyes to create the feeling that no-one else in the world existed and after a profuse greeting, started fun and informative conversations.

Jim's way with people undoubtedly owed much to the genes he inherited from his mother, Jean Blair Woodburn, who lovingly raised him and two siblings and his father, J. Homer Dean, who for many decades was a highly regarded United Church pastor in Toronto but served in the Royal Canadian Airforce in Germany during the 1950s when James was in his formative teens.

However, good genes are not enough to explain James, the man. Good nurture also came into play as his parents set high standards of Christian

morality through their own behaviour and discussions around the dinner table and who, by taking Jim to see much of Europe, created in him a deep respect for the diversity of humanity and cultures.

Jim's moral standards and the commitments they produced are best symbolized by the fact that at age 24 he participated in the bloody 1965 Selma Alabama march in support of the civil rights movement and voter registration, exposing himself to considerable personal risks. They also explain his insatiable drive to travel, to make friends around the world and better understand what makes them go.

James started his higher education at Carleton University and Brown University with the goal of using his talent for and training in mathematics to become a physicist but, as he was fond of telling, through exposure to the ideas of Economics Professor Scott Gordon at that university, he was persuaded to study for a PhD in Economics, which he obtained from Harvard University in 1973.

James joined the economics faculty at the newly created Simon Fraser University in 1969. From this base he produced an impressive scholarly record of over 80 papers published in refereed journals and conference volumes, five monographs and many opinion pieces in Canadian newspapers. He supervised 50 MA and PhD theses. His temporary association with 27 different institutions around the world as lecturer, researcher and policy adviser allowed him to share his knowledge with many and brought him insights that informed and made relevant his lectures, research and publications.

James not only had a wonderful way with people, he also had a wonderful way with words. His prose flowed effortlessly, conveying insights and often novel ideas about current economic and social problems that his professional colleagues found interesting but were also readily understood by the general public.

The ideological views permeating his writings are soft left on the political spectrum consistent with those of Canada's Liberal Party. He favored increased redistribution of income, stronger social programs and strengthened international institutions and cooperation. He had great faith in the desire and ability of civil servants and their political masters to act on the lofty policy goals he advocated.

We often sent drafts of our papers for comments to each other. The resultant discussions benefited both of us and though we often disagreed on fundamental issues, we always respected the other's right to his opinions.

Jim had not only a great talent in dealing with people and words, he also had a great talent and love for music, playing jazz on his saxophone and clarinet with many different other musicians in many places in the world. His love for music brought him a set of friends that was almost entirely different from his circle of professional colleagues. It enriched his life enormously.

Last, but not least, Jim deeply loved and cared for his family: his children Jamie, Stacey (Ryan), Timothy (Kate), and their mother Annabel; sister Loral (David) and brother Tom (Ann); nephews Seumas and Cosmo (Dana); nieces Jackie, Sofya (Colin), Ginger and Yvonne (Matt); grandchildren Hazel and Oscar.

James will be missed, and his memory will be cherished by his family and the many friends he has made in his life's work around the world as a teacher, economist and musician. ❖

Parveen Bawa : Looking After Yourself



SKIN AND AGEING

The saying “beauty’s only skin deep” makes a mockery of a very important and dynamic organ of the human body. A quick blush from a psychological embarrassment, an instant pallor from intestinal pain or profuse sweat from fear provides a moment-to-moment display of the physiological and psychological state of a healthy human’s skin. These few examples show how deeply this “thin” skin is connected to the body and brain. Skin, a full one-sixth of the body weight, is not just a wrapping that separates the interior of the body from the external environment; it is a complete organ with a large variety of cells including neurons, blood vessels, and both lymph and structural proteins. Though rarely fatal, diseases of the skin can be both physically and psychologically distressing.

Over all, the skin is a protective barrier that prevents internal tissues from exposure to trauma, ultraviolet radiation, temperature extremes, toxins, and bacteria. At the same time it provides a barrier against the dehydration of internal organs. Sensory cells inform the brain about touch, pressure, pain, itch and temperature, while the brain controls sweat glands and blood flow in the skin. The signals that the sensory cells send lead to sensory perception, immunological surveillance, thermoregulation, and control of insensible fluid loss.

STRUCTURE

To keep it simple, we will look at the fairly obvious regions of the skin that covers our trunk, limbs and face, and is frequently exposed to the sun, wind, and environmental toxins. Skin in these regions is composed of three layers, the epidermis at the top, connected tightly to the dermis, which rests on a third fatty layer, the hypodermis.

The *epidermis* is colonized by keratin producing cells (90%), pigment-containing melanocytes, and cells dealing with the immune system. It is thickest in the palms of the hands and soles of the feet (1.5 mm thick). This keratin provides a waterproof barrier while melanocytes create our skin colour. The dead cells on top of the epidermis are sluffed off every month; they are replaced by younger cells from deeper layers. The epidermis has no blood supply of its own; it is nourished by diffused oxygen from the surrounding air and from the dermis below.

The *dermis* is the thickest layer of the skin; and it contains a variety of cells and important proteins called collagen and elastin. Collagen provides skin its firmness and strength while elastin provides elasticity. There are a variety of sensory cells in the dermis/hypodermis for sensing touch, pressure, itch, pain, and temperature; in addition, there is a two-way autonomic management of the blood vessels to control blood flow in the skin. The *hypodermis* attaches the two top layers of the skin to inner tissues of the body. It also contains fibroblasts (cells that produce collagen), fat cells, connective tissue, nerves, blood vessels, and macrophages which are part of the immune system. The fat provides protection from mechanical forces; it is an insulator, and it secretes leptin to inform the body to stop eating.

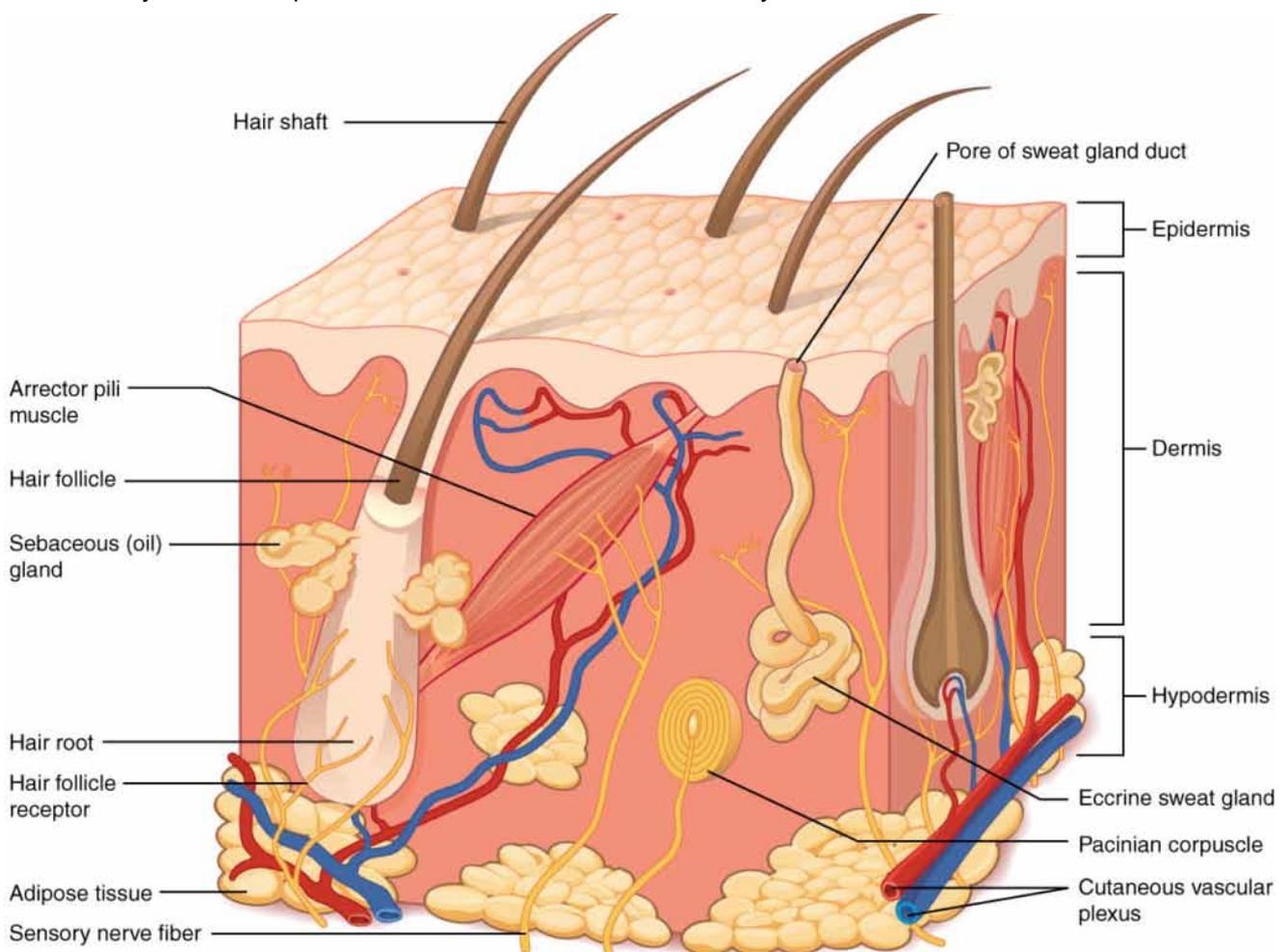
Your skin participates in the production of the body’s **vitamin D**. Exposure of the skin to ultraviolet B triggers synthesis of Vitamin D3 which is further processed in the liver. The final usable type of vitamin D is formed in the kidneys. Since aging skin has a limited capacity to initiate vitamin D production, vitamin D deficiency is more common in older people, especially those living in northern climates. Further, if we block UVB with sun screens, we definitely need to take Vitamin D supplements.

Sweat glands in the dermis and hypodermis are surrounded by fat cells and specialized muscle cells. Secretion of sweat by glands and contraction of muscle cells are controlled by different regions of the brain, and hormones. Sweating on the face, chest, and back is generally due to heat stimuli, while sweating of the palms and soles is due to emotional stress. Hot spicy food also makes you sweat. Sweating is a natural process whereby your body seeks to regulate its temperature and get rid of toxins and elements such as sodium and urea. Recent work shows that when there is an injury, sweat glands are major contributors of new cells that replace the cells that were lost at the site of injury. In young people, it has been demonstrated that sweat glands contribute more cells to wound closure than in aged adults. Even when new cells were formed in an aged skin, the cells aren’t as cohesive. Fewer cells participating, spaced further apart, means a delay in wound closure and a thinner repaired epidermis in aged versus young skin.

Sabacious glands are small oil-producing glands which are usually attached to hair follicles and release a waxy substance, sebum, into the follicular duct and thence to the surface of the skin. Once this oily substance makes its way to the surface of your skin, it keeps your skin waterproof. It's a barrier in two ways: it keeps too much water from getting into your body, and it prevents you from losing too much water through your skin. Sebum also protects skin from bacterial and fungal infections. On the other hand, when too much sebum builds up in any region of the skin, it is colonised by the bacteria that can result in acne; it also contributes to body odour. Sebum production is under the control of sex hormones (androgens).

AGEING

All cells of the body age. Working cells produce waste. Over time, cells make more waste than they can possibly get rid of, which decreases their ability to function and slowly death occurs. Free radicals are destructive molecules produced as part of the millions of chemical reactions in our bodies. Our bodies make them in response to environmental toxins such as excessive amounts of unprotected sunlight and cigarette smoke. Free radicals oxidize our cells just like rusting metal. They alter or destroy DNA. Normally, the body has a great defense system against free radicals but with ageing, as our immune system is compromised, free radicals are free to destroy cells.



Skin ages in both men and women affecting both structure and physiological function. The external appearance such as age spots, wrinkles, puffiness cause psychological distress in most people. Sebum production declines with age, particularly after menopause in females; it can decrease by almost 60% affecting the barrier function of the skin. Its production can increase or decrease with certain medications. Changes in amino acid composition leads to decreased water-binding capacity leading to dry skin. There is reduction in water and lipid content by as much as 65%.

There is also a decrease in skin thickness, particularly on the face, neck, upper part of the chest, and outer sides of hands and forearms. Melanocytes which give colour to our skin decrease at a very high rate (up to 20%) resulting in uneven pigmentation. A big change with ageing is the weakening of the layer that connects epidermis to dermis. This results in increased vulnerability of shear forces. There is less nutrition and oxygen passed from dermis and epidermis. Loosening of epidermis from dermis might produce wrinkles. Dermis thins, there is decrease in collagen and elastin,

elastin becomes less elastic due to calcification; skin becomes leathery. One important function of skin is protection against mechanical insults. Mechanical properties of the skin are determined by the structure and thickness of the three layers: epidermis, dermis, and hypodermis. Even though over all body fat increases with age, sub cutaneous fat decreases changing its thermoregulatory function.

The reduced density of blood vessels and the amount of blood pumped through the remaining capillaries causes a lack of nutrition and the build up of waste in the tissue. Response to injury is decreased due to decreased inflammatory response, re-epithelization, and decreased sweating. There is a deterioration of the lymphatic system; the circulation of white blood cells decrease and that increases the risk of infection.

Ageing causes decreased neurosensory perception; the sense of touch is impaired. Though perception of pain in deeper tissues increases with ageing, we ache all the time, but perception of pain in the skin decreases leading to the risk of more bruises, burns, and other injuries. There is an over delay in the response of the autonomic nervous system, and that affects postural changes and responses to cold temperature.

DISEASES

Most older adults have at least one skin disorder, which includes eczema, allergic dermatitis, autoimmune diseases affecting the skin, and cancer. **Itch (pruritus):** There is no one who has escaped the sensation of itch, the response to which can be a simple rub or it can be torturous leading to insomnia, anxiety and loss of quality of life (worth reading the article by Atul Gawande <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2008/06/30/the-itch>). Like pain, it is a sensory and emotional experience. Itch receptors (itch sensing neurons) are scattered all over the skin. In some ways, itch shares the same mechanisms, and activation of brain areas as does pain but they are not completely the same. **We can control both pain and itch from our brains**, that is, we can train ourselves to suppress pain and itch messages going up in the spinal cord. When itch sensors are stimulated, they cause us to scratch or rub the affected skin area. Frequent scratching can cause injury, infection and pain. Itch also causes severe anxiety; for many diseases such as eczema, psoriasis, post-burn itch, end stage kidney problems, it has been documented that itch causes stress and anxiety; in turn stress and anxiety aggravate itch. In order to take care of chronic itch, one needs to deal with specific anxiety related brain areas; you need to visit your doctor. Another problem with itch, which is different from pain, is that excess scratching can produce a feeling of pleasure, it activates reward centres in the brain. This pleasure producing action can cause injury to the skin. Wrinkles though not a disease, can cause psychological stress for some individuals. There are several clinical methods used to decrease wrinkles. One needs to remember that after laser or surgical treatment, skin needs to repair—a facility skin loses with ageing. Hence, the treatment may not be very satisfactory if we cannot generate new repair cells. Bruising: As skin ages, the protective layer of fat and collagen decreases which decreases the protection of blood vessels in the skin. The tissues supporting blood vessels decreases, the tiny blood vessels become more fragile and prone to bleed. Dark purple bruises can be seen frequently in the hands, forearms, and legs; these are more prevalent in older women. This is a concern for people taking blood thinners but under normal conditions avoid bumps, and cover your legs and arms. Skin Cancer: Melanoma rates in older adults have increased, however, survival rates from melanoma have also increased. Avoid exposure to sun, check your skin frequently for any new growths and changes in any existing moles. Any abnormal skin irregularity should be checked by your physician.

FOR GOOD HEALTH MAINTAIN HEALTHY SKIN

Keeping skin healthy is good for general health, it is not just vanity. Diet and water are the key elements in a natural skin care; essential fatty acids like omega-3s and omega-6s are the building blocks of healthy cell membranes. These fats help produce the skin's natural oil barrier, critical in keeping skin hydrated, plumper, and younger looking. Use gentle soaps: Cetaphil, Vanicream, Dove or other glycerine containing soaps. Moisturizers containing niacinamide with panthenol and vitamin E has been shown to rehydrate the skin and improve the barrier function. After you dry the skin, apply moisturizers immediately to lock in the moisture. Use of humidifiers helps against dry skin and itch. Avoid sun and dry environment. Estrogen therapy has been shown to decrease collagen degradation and increase collagen synthesis. It improves skin hydration, making it less dry; it works on melanocytes, hair follicles, sebaceous glands, and over all thickness of the skin. It also stimulates DNA repair. However, estrogen therapy has been documented to produce increased risk of cardiovascular disorders and cancer. Topical estrogen therapies are now being explored for different organs, yet one still has to be careful in using estrogen. Stem cell therapies for the skin are also being explored, but we are not there yet. Instead of waiting for results of this research--drink water, clean your skin, avoid strong sun and apply moisturizers. ❖



Editorial

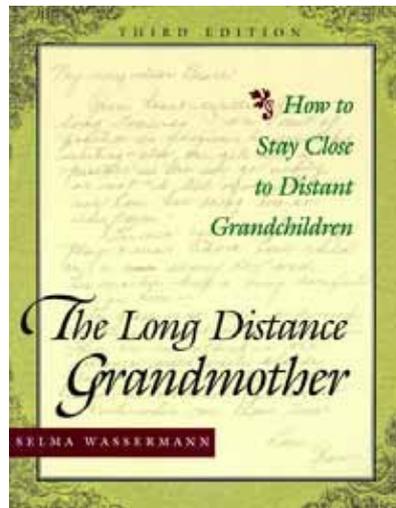
Maurice Gibbons, Editor

Selma Wasserman, a colleague of mine from The Faculty of Education, has written many books, including *Long Distance Grand Mother: How to Stay Close to Distant Grand Children*, a book that was reprinted five times. In addition, she has made a significant contribution to education; although she would say--and rightly so--that her book about grand mothering is also about education.

One morning NBC called Selma and the caller asked about that book on grand-mothering. Selma thought it was a joke, but after a brief conversation, the caller asked if she would come to New York and be on the morning show to discuss that book. Selma gathered her scattered wits and agreed. The company flew her to New York where she resided in the Essex House, and spent a restless night before the show.

The morning of the interview, she was in NBC on the elevator to the broadcast studio when an executive from the show asked her where she was going. When she told her she was to be on the Today Show and that she was nervous. The executive said that she had no reason to be nervous; "You'll be with Katie Couric and there will only be about 60 million people watching." Selma commented, "That did not exactly put me at ease. But the show went well and I was pleased because they seemed pleased."

Selma's experience is a good example of the kind of stories about retired faculty and graduated students--think of slim Marina Elliott in



the narrow passages of that cave of bones in South Africa--that we would like to publish in this newsletter. If you have a story to tell, or know someone who does, please contact me at the address below. If the story is about you, we will arrange a reporter to interview you and write the story, if you wish.

We, at the newsletter, feel that we are the memory of the university, and if we do not get the stories down, they will be lost, and lost forever.

maugibbons@telus.net



Below: Selma Wassermann, CEO of Wrinkled Pants Software

