In the second of our newsletters celebrating SFU’s 40th anniversary we focus on diversity, one of the three values that encapsulate the aspirations of the institution; the others are discovery and dialogue. One aspect of diversity which is appreciated by prospective students is the wide range of graduate programs that we now offer.

To some extent this diversity is the result of general growth and maturity of the University. For example, the new doctoral programs in Women’s Studies, Earth Sciences and Business Administration represent the final stage in the development of programs with a wide range of research interests and a full suite of undergraduate and graduate options.

University-wide strategic planning is undertaken regularly in order to develop new programs that reflect emerging fields of study, and serve our diverse communities. A recent example is the development of our Surrey campus. This will not only offer a wide range of programs to the South Fraser communities, but is also the home to the new School of Interactive Arts and Technology whose graduate programs allow critical reflection on the interfaces of technology and society, as well as the opportunity to create new digital technologies. Another strategic success has been the recent establishment of the Faculty of Health Sciences, where distinctive graduate programs will reflect emerging issues in health research, such as population health, global health, and infectious diseases.

But growth and innovation cannot occur without innovative professors, who see the need for new programs of advanced study and create opportunities for students to learn and engage in research. Largely due to their efforts, the last five years have seen more new programs developed at SFU than in the previous decade. This is exemplified by the new programs established by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at our Vancouver campus. New master’s programs in Public Policy, Urban Studies, and International Leadership join other FASS programs, such as Liberal Studies, Gerontology and Publishing, to create a network of advanced programs that are relevant to the Vancouver community and promote critical thinking and research about a range of contemporary issues.

Diversity also includes our students, and in this issue we have focused on the diverse paths taken by our alumni after they completed their studies. Graduate programs provide students with research skills and advanced knowledge, as well as the confidence to apply those skills after they graduate. Except for some very specialized cases, graduate programs are not intended to train solely for a job market. In fact, if the experiences of the alumni featured here are anything to go by, it is almost impossible to predict where a graduate degree might lead you!

I hope you enjoy finding out about some of our new programs and “old” alumni. I would like to finish with a reminder that we can provide opportunities for greater diversity of students at SFU by finding ways to help those who do not have access to the financial resources needed to participate in graduate programs. This particularly applies to students from poorer countries, but there are also Canadian students for whom graduate school means an impossible financial commitment. If you have benefited from your graduate studies and would like to assist others, please consider contacting SFU’s Advancement Office – the details are provided on the last page of the newsletter.

Jonathan Driver
Dean of Graduate Studies
Simon Fraser University
New Graduate Programs at SFU
Trude Heift
Associate Dean of Graduate Studies

This issue features five recently established graduate programs in Interactive Arts and Technology, (MA, MSc, PhD), Population and Public Health (MSc), Public Policy (MA), Women’s Studies (PhD), and Business Administration (PhD). Each program contributes to the wide range of research areas and options that are available to current and prospective graduate students at SFU. After a brief program description, the work of a graduate student in each of the five programs will be highlighted to provide examples of the diverse research projects that are being pursued in these newly created graduate programs.

Interactive Arts and Technology
by Rob Woodbury

The graduate program in the School of Interactive Arts and Technology studies design with a combination of humanistic, artistic and technological perspectives. We bring needed intellectual diversity to the study of an age-old issue.

Design is the process of making proposals for change.

Design is integral to our lives. We use it to solve problems, initiate change and improve our world. From the cities we inhabit to the everyday items we use, good design anticipates our work, our leisure and the world around us. It makes technology usable, our homes livable and our work more effective. Good design is a powerful means to improve the social, health, economic and aesthetic well-being of all Canadians.

Every technology is designed. Every cultural artifact is designed. In contemporary society almost all human actions are affected by design decisions. Advanced economies depend on good design: badly designed products, policies, productions, systems and services seldom thrive in the global marketplace. Contemporary products are complex and their design processes inherently multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral. The business of design, its supporting technologies and the knowledge required of designers are all increasing in their complexity. Research in design studies how people and organizations achieve design goals, creates new systems for supporting design, addresses crucial new design issues such as sustainability and explores new design ideas prior to commercial realization.

Our program supports graduate students in becoming scholars of change, scholars of design, in our complex world. We expect our students to become expert in their area, broadly knowledgeable in technology and society and skilled in appropriate research methods. Our students come from a variety of disciplines, for example, art, architecture, design, communication, engineering, computer science, English, sociology, mathematics, education and psychology.

Our faculty have similar diversity. Our common focus is on understanding and creating new possibilities for people in a highly technological world. We achieve this focus through a set of seven central courses: Through a foundation course in computational art and design students gain an understanding of the idea of the algorithm and its interplay with current social and professional issues. Our research methods course aims to build a common vocabulary and set of constructs so that people working in diverse methodological traditions can converse and collaborate. Our five core courses represent our “signature” in distilling major issues and research ideas that are central to our community. Students take other courses in our program or in other SFU units.

The program benefits greatly from being at SFU. Our students take courses from and are co-supervised by faculty in several SFU departments and schools. The intellectual diversity and openness of SFU continues to be one of our major strengths.

Population & Public Health
by Charmaine Dean

The MSc in population and public health sets SFU as a distinctive Canadian player in health training. Its aim goes beyond the clinical perspective, and specifically targets preparing established professionals and recent graduates for positions of leadership in health research and in the health professions. This program focuses on health research and health program evaluation methodologies, health data analysis, the generation and dissemination of new knowledge, and the ap-
plication of this knowledge in formulating new health policies. As such, this program meets a rapidly growing need in the health-care system across Canada, and provides graduates in an area of rapidly increasing demand.

The syllabus covers health sciences from the level of systems, communities, populations, and individual and clinical perspectives. Case studies are a fundamental aspect, and frame policy costs and benefits as trade-offs in different strategies for societal investment in health. There are two streams - a thesis stream based on research, and a stream based on course work and a practicum or project. Those taking the practicum / project stream investigate and apply evolving knowledge in their future roles as practitioners in health care and delivery and in health promotion and disease prevention. Those taking the thesis stream take fewer courses, but have experience through their theses in generating new knowledge through original research. Both streams build on a foundation of courses in the scientific methodology for population health research, epidemiology, determinants of health, health education, and disease control and prevention. The thesis and practicum streams serve distinct needs for students with differing career goals. The practicum is a team-mentored investigative project in a health practice setting, which gives the student an opportunity to consolidate what they have learned in the classroom, hands-on in a public health setting. The thesis involves more intense research study under the supervision of a faculty member and generally contributes to new knowledge, reviews or critiques the state of knowledge in a field, creates a new tool, or represents some other appropriate independent contribution.

The Data Warehouse of the Faculty of Health Sciences, which is currently under development, will be extremely useful to students in the population and public health program, and indeed to researchers in this area in the province. Various data sources are envisioned for the warehouse: vital statistics, arthritis, health authority, cardiac registry – to increase capacity for health research broadly at Simon Fraser University and in the province. This will link with developing research expertise in the Faculty of Health Sciences and SFU in spatial statistics and geographic information systems, health communications, computing science, security, interfaces, data mining, public health/social epidemiology and virology/immunology.

Gurjeet Sivia, MSc student

For the past 13 years, I have been employed as a population health researcher in BC, the last 11 years with Fraser Health Authority. In this capacity, I was responsible for disease surveillance, assessment of population health needs, and identification of health gaps and health inequalities to support service and program planning at Fraser Health Authority. In terms of research interests, areas that I would like to pursue include exploring neighbourhood or area level factors, such as ethnicity and other social attributes which define the uniqueness of groups and neighbourhoods; and which, in turn, influence the health status of the individuals belonging to these population groups. In other words, how does the interaction of localized conditions or circumstances increase or decrease one’s disadvantage or disease risk? I am also interested in examining how health inequalities can be reduced through public policy. For example, can health policy based on the population health approach reduce health inequalities? Current evidence suggests that health inequalities are outcomes or consequences of inequalities that exist in social determinants. If this indeed is the case, then is it assumable that health inequalities can be reversed by improving or investing in social and economic measures and how can this be quantified?

The Master’s of Public Policy (MPP) is an innovative two-year, interdisciplinary graduate program that helps its students develop the theoretical and applied tools necessary to analyze public policy problems. Students learn how to: scrutinize a wide range of public policy problems; collect, interpret and analyze relevant data; and evaluate, cost and plan alternate courses of action. The first and second terms of the program provide core training in politics, economics, policy analysis and research methods. Throughout the program students are encouraged to directly link their interests with the policy community through course-based research projects, the co-operative work term, or their master’s research project - the Capstone project. The core teaching faculty of Dominique Gross, Jon Kesselman, Doug McArthur, Nancy Olewiler, John Richards, and Kennedy Stewart are complemented by a number of visiting scholars and faculty from other SFU departments/schools who may teach in the MPP program. Areas of expertise include labour markets, environmental and natural resource policy, social policy, trade policy, democratic reform, immigration and other international topics, Canadian and international political economy, aboriginal policy issues, public finance, and foreign policy.

The diversity of our faculty’s expertise is echoed in our students. Now in its third year of operation, the MPP program has drawn students with a variety of backgrounds from across Canada, and different countries. This diversity translates into a rich learning environment drawing together disciplinary expertise with policy analysis approaches. The students’ work culminates in their Capstone project. Highlighting some of students’ Capstone research illustrates the diversity of our students and their research. Henrique Santos (economics BA from SFU) is examining the factors that may help explain why Canadians of Portuguese descent have relatively low levels of high school graduation. Jon Silva (international relations BA from Toronto) con-
siders the role of Philippine diaspora communities in Canada in sending funds back to their home country to aid in development goals. Sheetal Patel (BA in Psychology from Manitoba) is analyzing addiction policy through the NAIOMI drug trials underway in Vancouver. Mark Campbell (BA from Oxford and MA in philosophy from UBC) considers the role of gender in educational outcomes of aboriginal students in B.C. Karen Gorecki (BA in environment & biology from Victoria) evaluates incentives for energy conservation in residential home heating. Trish MacIver (BA in global studies, Wilfred Laurier) is using exit polls from the Vancouver municipal elections to examine trust in government. These projects typify the sort of broad ranging, policy relevant research MPP students are doing. Their goal is not only to provide an outstanding academic project, but to share their results with policy makers in the community so that their work may help inform real policy decisions.

Women’s Studies

by Mary Lynn Stewart

In 2003, the Full Program Proposal for a Doctor of Philosophy in Women’s Studies was approved. Discussion of a joint PhD program with the Universities of British Columbia and Victoria had begun in 1992, seven years after the initiation of a MA program in WS. Although we wished the other programs well, we decided to focus on adding a major program to the minor and joint majors at the undergraduate level, which we did in the mid 1990s. In the late 1990s, we resumed discussion of a joint PhD program with the University of British Columbia, but ultimately, both parties decided to proceed alone, with the understanding that doctoral candidates could take courses from either institution.

The degree requirements for the PhD are three graduate courses, comprehensive examinations in three fields, and the completion and defense of a PhD dissertation. Unless the doctoral candidate has taken parallel courses elsewhere, we recommend that they take the graduate WS course in methodology and the graduate WS course in feminist theory, each of which is offered once an academic year. Often students arrange graduate reading courses in WS or take graduate courses in cognate disciplines such as Sociology or History for their third course. Under no circumstances are doctoral candidates allowed to take masters-level courses “added on” to senior undergraduate courses. The three comprehensive fields are not coterminous with the three graduate courses. Students and appropriate supervisors must prepare reading lists of forty-five important works per field. Because WS is an interdisciplinary field, we allow projects like films, to be submitted for comprehensives. Most comprehensives will take the form of a written and oral examination. We are presently preparing basic reading lists for several possible comprehensive fields.

Even before the PhD program was approved, we had four applicants who were prepared to start the program in advance of formal approval. We accepted one of these applicants, who decided, in these circumstances, to go elsewhere. The next year, 2004, there were thirteen applicants, of which we accepted five, and all came. In 2005, twelve people applied, we accepted six, and once again, all came. Acceptance is based on the students’ record but also upon our ability to supervise their proposed dissertations. Everyone has to have a faculty supervisor to be admitted. We have had many inquiries from international students, most of which we have had to discourage, because we do not have faculty expertise, such as linguistic skills, in their areas of research.

Our first two classes of doctoral students are diverse and interesting bunch. They include students from China, Iran, Pakistan, and Germany, as well as students with backgrounds in Liberal Studies, Philosophy, Literature, and Sciences. Their dissertation topics range from a critical study of the reality show “The Swan” and its blogs to hormonal prescription practices and use in British Columbia.

Sonja Boon, PhD student

In 2004, I was awarded a Doctoral Canada Graduate Scholarship from SSHRC to study the role and identity of the eighteenth-century Parisian salon woman. In particular, I am interested in understanding how such women, positioned in socially conservative roles (and operating ostensibly within the domestic sphere), could define autonomous voices and create both publicly visible and politically powerful roles for themselves, while at the same time appearing to be severely restricted by legal and social conventions and the seemingly rigid rules of propriety that governed elite sociability during this period.

My interest in the French eighteenth century comes from an extremely varied professional and educational background that includes two degrees and two post-graduate diplomas in Music from periods of study in Canada, the USA, England, and The Netherlands, and an MA (Liberal Studies) from SFU. As an historical flutist by profession, my musical roots are in the eighteenth century and I continue to work with a number of orchestras and chamber ensembles that specialize in the repertoire of this period.
Business Administration

by Chris Veld

T he PhD in Business at SFU started in September 2004. It distinguishes itself from other PhD programs in Business in that the PhD program at SFU offers students the possibility to create a tailor-made study program. This study program consists of three core PhD courses and is supplemented by courses within both the Faculty of Business Administration and other faculties within the university. These courses include a major in the student’s field of specialization and a minor in research methods. The specialization major generally comprises one of the areas of specialization in the faculty, which include accounting, finance, international business, management information systems, management and organization studies, marketing, policy analysis, and technology and operations management. Another non-standard feature of the program is the close relationship between the student and the supervisor(s) from the very start of the program. A supervisor helps students design their study program and also guides their research with the goal to get them started on their research at an early stage. The third semester of studies is primarily intended for a so-called “Summer project” which aims to lead to a first publishable paper by the student.

Students are funded through a combination of scholarships and research and teaching assistantships. The program also offers a teaching development component involving a certificate program for graduate students in university learning and teaching. By acquiring both research and teaching skills, students will be equipped with the necessary tools to become university professors. Other career possibilities such as researchers, consultants, and analysts within the business community also come within reach. Even though the program only started recently, it expects to graduate their first students in December 2005. This is possible because some students transferred from other faculties and/or universities into the program. Currently, there are 13 graduate students in the program and an increase to 20 students is expected for September 2007.

Martin Bliemel, PhD student

I am investigating the correlation between the growth rates of New Technology Based Firms (NTBFs) and their social network relationships. Several ambiguous theories exist of how firm performance and growth is related to network diversity, density, size and other more complex structural measurements. Most recently, embeddedness theory has provided new insights into trade related industries with inconclusive results when attempted to be applied to NTBFs. Embeddedness is the degree to which economic exchange through individual ties is affected by the social network context around the tie, counter to neo-classical economic theory. This study is based on preliminary results from a prior survey of BC Biotech and New Media firms by ISRN, and will be extended to a larger series of interviews and surveys this coming summer.

SFU ALUMNI

Trude Heift

Associate Dean of Graduate Studies

The following alumni present a small sample of the diverse paths taken by graduate students after they completed their studies at SFU. In addition to a brief biography, we asked them to respond to the following four questions:

1) Why did you select SFU for your graduate studies?
2) How did SFU contribute to the career path(s) you have chosen?
3) Briefly describe your most memorable experience at SFU.
4) Is there anything else you would like to comment on?

Allan Luke
PhD Education, 1976

Allan Luke began his studies at SFU in 1973. His first degree is from the University of California, Santa Barbara (1972), he later completed his PDP (1976), Masters of Arts (1980) and PhD (1986). Trained in early childhood/primary education, he has taught at every level of the educational system. For a decade, he taught primary and secondary school in Surrey, White Rock, Armstrong and Burnaby. He was a TA in the English Department and lecturer in the Faculty of Education at SFU - along the way he also taught adult literacy and language classes in Coquitlam and taught English literature to nurses at BCIT. Luke took his first academic position as an Assistant Professor at James Cook University of North Queensland, in Australia in 1984; there he taught literacy and sociology in the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program. In 1995 he was appointed Professor and Dean of Education at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia’s top rated graduate school of education. He served as Deputy Director General of Education, leading reform of Queensland state schools, from 1999-2000, subsequently as Chief Educational Advisor to the Queensland Minister from 2001-2003. In 2003, he took the position as Foundation Dean, Centre for Research in Pedagogy and Practice, National Institute of Education, Singapore. There he has built the largest funded educational research centre in the Asia Pacific, with 130 staff and 49 million dollars in funding.

In so doing, Luke has crossed over - from research and scholarship into government and into public intellectual work, all in the
Luke is considered a leader in the field he developed with his supervisor Suzanne deCastell at SFU, literacy education. In his published work, his public advocacy and government policy work - he has brought a unique blend of sociological theory, practical teachers' knowledge, and linguistic discourse method. He has published 14 books and over 150 articles and chapters. His work has appeared in the top educational journals, including: Harvard Educational Review, Educational Theory, Teachers College Record, Canadian Journal of Education, American Journal of Education and elsewhere. His work also has had impact outside of education, with major publications in cultural and social theory in journals like: Race and Ethnic Studies, Social Epistemology, Culture and Politics, Body and Society. Work from his SFU doctoral thesis on the teaching of early reading was awarded the 1988 Educational Press Association of America Award for Scholarly Excellence. In 2000, he was inducted into the International Reading Association Hall of Fame for lifetime contributions to literacy education; in 2001 he received an honorary doctorate from the Crown Prince of Thailand for contributions to Thai education; he was awarded the 2002 Annual Gold Medal from the Australian College of Education; in 2003, he was recognised as Australia’s leading educator with the IBM/Bulletin Innovation Award. He has been an advisor to federal and state ministries in Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Thailand and many countries in Asia and the South Pacific. His current research is on globalisation and the emergence of new ‘Asian’ ways of teaching and learning. In 2006, he will be returning to Australia and taking a position as Professor of Education at Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia.

1) I came to SFU in 1973 because one of my best undergraduate philosophy Professors, Jon Wheatley, had taken a position here. I heard at the time that many of the brightest critical intellectuals of that particular generation were teaching or studying at SFU in the areas of literature, social sciences and communications studies. I wasn’t disappointed: Bottomore, Delany, Wilden, Adam - it was a very exciting place filled with interdisciplinary graduate students who later had major impact on their fields. I returned to SFU for graduate studies in Education in 1980 after teaching primary and secondary schools for many years. Again - I came to SFU because of the quality and reputation of the Faculty of Education at the time and because the scale of the operation opened doors. What I found was an exciting, polemical, questioning environment - with unlimited room to grow, experiment and ‘take risks’ in my work. At the same time, BC in the 70s was a culturally very different place - prior to migration, the Lower Mainland was very conservative. It wasn’t uncommon to run into racist comments or have difficulty being served in some stores. So being young, ‘radical’ and Asian at the time was a pretty risky combination. SFU gave me and many others a place to do the critical work we needed to do.

2) In the 70s and 80s, SFU was a place where we were encouraged to innovate intellectually, and where the size of the graduate programs was such that we’d get a lot of attention, tailored programs and opportunities to lecture and teach. In the 70s we could range across the campus, taking courses in sociology, literature, and especially, yes especially, communications studies - all of which were pushing the boundaries of their fields. In the 80s, I was among the first ‘cohort’ of PhDs in education - it was so new we had to enrol ‘by special arrangements’. We had a total apprenticeship that included convening conferences, teaching and lecturing, working with teachers in indigenous communities, editing books, publishing our work, travelling to international conferences, engaging with international scholars. It was a very special experience. The small group of us, maybe 8-12 in all - included one colleague who is a ranking Blair government advisor - all went on to make some kind of mark on the field. These were heady days - and, simply, we had attention, training, and opportunities that we wouldn’t have received in the larger, more high profile Canadian ‘ivy league’. Plus - some of us tried to retain that SFU radical spirit, to our supervisors’ glee and consternation.

3) There were so many of them: the privilege of asking the distinguished linguist Dell Hymes a difficult question on sociolinguistic theory; of being the smart alicc grad student told to sit down and shut up until I learned my p’s and q’s by Tony Wilden of Communications Studies; of teaching the first ‘Knowledge Network’ telecourses with Suzanne deCastell in one of the most disastrous displays of live television in Canadian history. Actually - SFU sticks with you because of its space and place. My most vivid memory is of sitting on the grass in the Quadrangle during my 1976 PDP summer school class reading Paolo Freire’s work for the first time under the tutelage of Jonathan Kozol. Changed my life.

4) I’ve worked now in research and teaching, university governance and leadership in several countries for several decades since leaving SFU. There is what is being taken as an inexorable move towards the corporatisation of universities - their transformation into performance-indicator driven, revenue-raising, intellectual property and foreign fee generating ‘business units’ run by a corporate ethos. Many of us have been immersed in such changes across Commonwealth countries, led initially by the ‘Thatcherisation’ of higher education. While we don’t want to romanticise the university (which historically always has been tied up with the agendas of nations and empire, capital and business,
from Oxford to Carnegie Melon), my version of the 'good old days' isn’t the same as classicists, who wish to protect canonical and traditional knowledge. I have a vision of the SFU I studied at in the 1970s - not a ‘hotted’ by any stretch of the imagination - but an interdisciplinary, intellectually ‘open’ university, where you could literally walk the corridors of the Academic Quadrangle and go from Prof to Prof, doctoral proposal or paper in hand seeking views on your work - no matter how ‘off the wall’ it might have seemed. Perhaps this too is a post-hoc romantic version - but in my own work, I try to give students and young scholars that same space - a virtual SFU where they can stretch the limits of their fields without risk.

Allan Luke also received an honorary degree from SFU during the October 2005 convocation ceremonies. The following is his convocation address which we reprinted for this newsletter.

**SFU Fall 2005**

**Convocation Address**

by Allan Luke

Chancellor Louie, President Stevenson, Dean Shaker, Academic Colleagues, graduands and friends. Working in Asia for the past years I have learned several things. First, a homage to place: I would like to begin by acknowledging and thanking the traditional and indigenous holders of this land, this beautiful, historically and spiritually significant place of Burnaby Mountain. Second, I have learned something that each of you graduands will come to know: that your teachers are teachers for life, that they will stay with you for better and worst, through thick and thin, through blood and water. I therefore must begin by thanking my teachers at SFU, many of whom are seated on the podium: Professor Suzanne deCastell, Professor Paul Delany, Professor Kieran Egan, Professor Anthony Wilden, Professor Richard Coe, and Professor Kelleen Toohey. They taught me that to profess a field meant more than just learning and knowing facts and theories — that it meant embodying, living and being your field. I thank Professor Carmen Luke, my life partner, coauthor, collaborator and family. Together we built our family, our lives and our ideas here in the shadow of the Academic Quadrangle.

I came to SFU in 1973 at a very different time — to a very different place and a very different Canada. It was a society caught up in social and cultural change, one in the shadow of a nearby war, one where identities and ideas were in dynamic flux and contest. I and many others came to Simon Fraser because we heard that this was a different kind of university, where new ideas, where transformative work, were valued and cultivated. I, like many others came, with nothing less than the intention and ideas of changing the world. I recall being told that ‘we were all young radicals and that sooner or later I too would become conservative, ‘sell out’ to what we then called ‘the system’. I’ll leave it to others to decide if that has indeed been the case. But what I took from SFU were two principles: first, an abiding commitment to social justice and equity, a dedication to the underdog, wherever or whomever he or she might be. Second, an understanding that education, that teaching and professing was about asking troubling questions — troubling questions of our students, of our elders, of our institutions and cultures, and, indeed, of ourselves.

These principles have served me well working in education systems and govern- ments across the Asia Pacific. For — colleagues — we live in profoundly troubled times, perhaps more troubled and troubling than the 1970s. Let me illustrate some of the dilemmas at hand.

In the late 1990s, I worked closely with teachers colleges in Northern Thailand — helping to develop educational systems, training and infrastructure in an area called the ‘golden quadrangle’. Just outside of Chiang Rai is the point on the Mekong River where 4 nations meet, where you can stand on the Mekong in Thailand, look across the river to Laos, up river to Burma, and know that the waters that flow touch China several kilometers up river. Rivers — Simon Fraser would be the first to remind us — always have tremendous spiritual, cultural and economic significance. In Chinese folklore, they have tremendous Chi, they are the media for spiritual, cultural and psychic energy which flows from mountains to sea. For millennia, they have been proto-sites of globalization: where cultures and languages met and mixed and blended, long before steamships, jets and internets.

As I walked along these sites, the Thai educators I was working with described their problems: they spoke of Thailand’s indigenous hill tribes, whose communities were ravaged by drugs, war and educational marginality; the children of migrant guest workers who couldn’t ‘fit in’ to Thai culture and language; and of the emergent generation of young Thai who seemed more committed to MTV, partying and shopping malls than care of their elders, and life in the mosque or temple. Do these problems sound familiar?

Whether in the postindustrial west or sites like these, the fabric of social institutions and cultural traditions are fraying, stretched by the impacts of new flows of capital, new technologies, new identities, new forms of consumption and knowledge. But while the problems may seem similar, universal — the responses required will have to be profoundly local, fitted to each community and their resources and traditions. There are no ‘pat’ answers, neither those offered by aid and world bank style organizations — it is not a simple matter of extending educational or institutional ‘fixes’ from New York or London or Vancouver to Thailand or, for that matter, to Prince Rupert.

Graduands and colleagues — these times of cultural crossings, of rapid economic and
cultural change, of globalised economies and cultures that morph and shift at an unprecedented pace, will require the very best of you. They’ll require that spirit of Simon Fraser University that I too found here – ‘radical’ thought in its most constructive and productive sense and force: the capacity to ask troublesome and unsettling questions, to invent complex and difficult local answers, and an abiding commitment to the need for equity and justice. I wish you all the very best with your work and your lives.

Jan Conn  
MSc Biological Sciences, 1981

Dr. Jan Conn is a Research Scientist at the Wadsworth Center, New York State Department of Health, and an Associate Professor at SUNY-Albany in Albany, New York. She completed her BSc at Concordia University, Montreal (1977) and her MSc at Simon Fraser University (1981) where she undertook research on chemical ecology of mountain pine beetles, serious pests of lodgepole and ponderosa pine in western North America. In 1982 she received a Canada Council travel grant to cycle through Japan (she traveled 4,000 km) to write poetry. In 1987 she completed her doctoral studies at the University of Toronto on population genetics of neotropical black flies that transmit a nematode parasite, *Onchocerca volvulus*, causing a disease known as river blindness. She did postdoctoral research in Caracas at the Universidad Central de Venezuela from 1988-90 where she began to work on anopheline mosquito population genetics and malaria. Subsequently she was awarded a NSERC postdoctoral fellowship that she took to the University of Florida, Gainesville. She received tenure at the University of Vermont in 2002 and moved to the Wadsworth Center in 2003.

She currently teaches medical entomology and has taught interdisciplinary courses for honours students, as well as creative writing classes. She has been funded by the National Institutes of Health (USA) to conduct population genetics research on malaria vectors in Brazil since 1996. She has published five books of poetry; forthcoming (spring 2006) from Brick Books is her sixth, *Jaguar Rain*, focused on the remarkable British-borne naturalist and botanical illustrator Margaret Mee, who travelled extensively throughout Amazonian Brazil from the 1950s until her death in 1988. In 2003, she won 2nd prize in the CBC literary awards for poetry with a sequence titled *Amazonia*. She supervises graduate students in Albany, Brazil and Colombia, and has taught internationally in a vector biology course in Mexico (2003) and will teach in Liverpool in 2006. Her web pages are www.janconn.com and www.wadsworth.org/resnres/bios/conn.htm

3) The denizens of SFU will be very aware of the long steep ride to reach the campus; for historical reasons I lived near the University of British Columbia across town. Most days I cycled to and from. This put me in amazing shape to bike 4,000 km through Japan to write poetry for two months in 1982; and this trip helped me decide to stay in biology. Even though my deep desire to travel internationally led me in a different research direction (toward medically important insects that transmit human pathogens) at the University of Toronto where I completed my doctoral studies, the foundation for all my subsequent biological research was laid at SFU.

Mike Heithaus  
PhD Biological Sciences, 2001

Dr. Mike Heithaus is an Assistant Professor of Biology in Florida International University’s Marine Biology Program. He received his BA from Oberlin College (Ohio) in 1995 where he conducted research on the population genetics of stream fishes and was a member of the varsity swimming team. He received his PhD in behavioral ecology from Simon Fraser University in 2001, and has since worked at Mote Marine Laboratory’s Center for Shark Research and at the National Geographic Society. Dr. Heithaus’ research focuses on predator-prey interactions and the role of behavioral interactions in structuring marine communities. He is especially interested in the role of large predators, like sharks, in structuring marine communities through behavioral changes they induce in their
Dr. Heithaus has used National Geographic’s Crittercam in his studies of tiger sharks and sea turtles and has helped scientists all over the world employ this technology in their studies of species as diverse as seals, whales, and lions. Dr. Heithaus is an active member of the Ecological Society of America, Animal Behavior Society, American Elasmobranch Society, and Society for Marine Mammalogy. He currently teaches a variety of courses including Marine Biology, Behavioral Ecology, Ecology and The Biology of Marine Mammals, supervises graduate students, and continues his research in Shark Bay, Australia and Florida as well as his theoretical work on predator-prey interactions. He recently finished editing a book with two colleagues on the biology of sharks, skates and rays.

1) The opportunity to work with Dr. Larry Dill and the vigorous intellectual environment created by the graduate students in the Behavioural Ecology Research Group were the primary reasons that I selected Simon Fraser for graduate school. After looking at numerous schools and potential advisors, none measured up to SFU!

2) By the time I got to SFU I knew that I wanted to continue as an academic, but everybody that I interacted with, especially Larry and my labmates, helped me tremendously. I don’t think I would be in the position I am today without their support and all the help they gave me over the years.

3) To be honest, there isn’t one most memorable experience at SFU that sticks out. I have many fond memories from discussing biology over pitchers at the pub to intramural soccer games in the rain. I also had the opportunity to conduct my research in an amazing location in Australia which has provided me with many outstanding experiences including standing in the water holding onto a 12’ long tiger shark (I don’t really care to repeat that one, but it was certainly memorable).

4) What really made Simon Fraser special for me was interacting with an incredible group of people. I was lucky to have extremely good friends and colleagues while I was there and I continue to work with many of the friends I had at SFU to this day. I was able to absorb a lot extremely quickly and progress rapidly only through the help of Larry and fellow graduate students and I’ll always be thankful for my experience. SFU is also special for me because that is where I met my wife – a fellow SFU grad. That alone was worth the price of admission...

1) I selected SFU for my graduate school because I admired the SFU English Department instructors, many of whom were active participants in the local literary scene. I also wanted an opportunity to work at a teaching assistant.

2) SFU’s political edge, for which it has been famous since the Sixties, is still there, and it kept my writing and thinking sharp.

3) I originally came to SFU in 1990 intending to be an English major, but somewhere along the line became a black community activist, of sorts. I recall coming to a point where I didn’t see how studying English could contribute to this activism, and I was considering giving up doing an English degree. Then I saw a course being offered by Roy Miki in the English Department specifically on writers of colour, and I remember saying to my girlfriend that I would take this one course and if it was any good, then I would stay in English -- if not, I’d switch paths and do something else. I took the course and was blown away, reading there for the first time literature that made whole various parts of my life. The experience of taking that course has influenced everything I’ve done since, as a writer and teacher.

4) While TA’ing for George Bowering...
during his last year teaching at SFU, just before he was to retire, I remember laughing when he got up on the first day in front of his 100-level class, fumbling a bit with the microphone. He said to the class sort of meekly, “Sorry, I’m kind of nervous. This is the first time I’ve ever taught this course, ” it being, of course, his third decade of teaching it.

Laurie Melton
PhD Chemistry, 1971

I came to SFU from New Zealand in 1966 in the 1st intake of graduate students. I am now Professor of Food Chemistry and Director of the Food Science Programmes [BSc, BSc[Hons], MSc, PhD in Food Science] at the University of Auckland. I am the inaugural Director and Professor and I started all these degrees plus an MSc in Wine Science and 2 diplomas. Formerly I was Professor of Food Science at the University of Otago [Dunedin, NZ].

SFU was incredibly exciting and stimulating in the early days. It was a wonderful place to be. We worked very long hours in the research lab, but we had a lot of fun together on days off, skiing, hiking and climbing.

Being a pioneer was just so great! The experience I gained at SFU was invaluable in teaching me that I too could initiate new developments and this was something I really enjoyed doing.

Sumeeta Chandavarkar
MA Political Science, 1996

Sumeeta Chandavarkar grew up in India, Malaysia, Zimbabwe, Hong Kong and Canada. She was educated at the University of Toronto (BA Political Science) and at Simon Fraser University (MA Political Science). She also studied at the Beijing Language and Culture University. Before joining Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC), Sumeeta worked in a pharmaceutical joint venture in Beijing.

Sumeeta began her career with FAC working at headquarters in the China and Mongolia Division. She subsequently worked in the Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament Division on small arms and light weapons.

assignment as Deputy Director, General Relations at the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei in July 2003.

1) I chose Simon Fraser University for the academic opportunity it offered me, which was quite simply to work on a masters level thesis, a rarity in political science. Having spent four years at University of Toronto, where I was one of 60,000 students and consequently accustomed to being anonymous, I was first taken aback by the “we are family” feel at SFU. But, it was this new environment that shaped my career. I was lucky to meet Prof. Peggy Meyer on my first day at SFU and even more fortunate that she agreed to assume responsibility as my thesis advisor. Throughout my two years at SFU, she entertained many of my absurd thesis topics and musings, allowed me to select my favourite one and finally to exhaust my academic aspirations.

2) My career choice owes a great deal to an e-mail Peggy sent me on the Canada-China Scholars Exchange Programme, which I subsequently received to pursue language studies in Beijing. My experience in Beijing was critical to the selection of the Foreign Service as my career of choice.

3) Not only did SFU give me that defining moment in my career, Hamilton Hall gave me my closest friends. Tim, Clare and Steve are three persons who have shaped my personal life and given me some of the best memories to date. Clare, Steve and I lost Tim to an early death in 1996. We were devastated by the loss. None of us could have survived the remaining tough few months at SFU without each other. It’s been nine years since graduation, but the
friends I made in Burnaby remain the closest I have. My favourite memories are of enjoying a few gin/tónics while dancing to Billie Holiday and discussing arcane academic topics related to China.

4) In Taipei, I recently had the honour of hosting a group of Canadian writers, most of whom hail from SFU. It was a treat to talk about my SFU days, but even more rewarding to know that those ties remain as strong as ever and continue to grow throughout my professional career.

Gordon Campbell
MBA, 1978

Gordon Campbell has been involved in public life since being elected to Vancouver City Council in 1984 and he was Mayor of Vancouver for three terms from 1986 to 1993. In 2001, he was elected as B.C.’s 34th Premier and his re-election in 2005 made him the fifth Premier in B.C. history and the first in 22 years to be re-elected to two consecutive terms.

Born and raised in B.C., Gordon Campbell received in his BA in English from Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, but returned to B.C. and pursued his MBA at SFU through the Executive MBA program.

In the early 1970s, he and his wife Nancy taught under the auspices of CUSO in Yola, Nigeria. His commitment to education has continued, including taking a leadership role in bringing Canada’s premiers together in support of a national effort to advance literacy.

A reformer who believes strongly in the power of ideas to transform and improve our public institutions, Gordon Campbell and his government have helped unleash B.C.’s economic resurgence. He has also led significant and innovative reforms to the operation of government to improve the delivery of services to the public and make it more open and accountable to British Columbians. In addition to his focus on B.C.’s economy and provincial priorities, Gordon Campbell has also recently led the development of a national commitment to close the social and economic gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians within the next decade.

1) I chose SFU for two reasons. Having returned to B.C. I wanted to stay here to continue my education. But I also chose SFU because of the Executive MBA program, which allowed me the flexibility to continue working and study at night.

2) Did SFU play a direct role in the path my life has taken since? Not necessarily. But, like all university graduates, what SFU did do was give me the fundamental skills to be able to pursue my goals and dreams in a highly competitive world.

3) I think my most lasting memories are of the great people I met and the connections I made there. In addition to the skills I acquired, many of the relationships that started while I was studying at SFU had a significant impact on my life and career path. On a lighter note, one of the things I remember the most about my time at SFU is travelling up that hill every night.

2005 Awards Recipients

External Awards Recipients

Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship
Hamilton, Eleanor (BISC); Harrison, Lucy (BISC); Watti, Philip Wobomba (BUS).

CIHR Autism Research Scholarship
Yager, Jodi (PSYC).

Canada Graduate Scholarship Masters (SSHRC)
Bergbusch, Jonah (MPP); Kolke, Timothy (PHIL); McPhee, Christine (PUBL).

NSERC Industrial Postgraduate Scholarship
Wieckowski, Katherine (REM).

NSERC Postgraduate Scholarship Doctoral
Hamson, Dwayne (PSYC); McCollum, Brent (CHEM); Sayre, Eric (STAT).

NSERC Postgraduate Scholarship Masters
Jannat, Khandaker (BISC); Thaine, Javier (CMPT).

King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals International Scholarship
Al-Betar, Abdul Rahman (CHEM).

IODE War Memorial Scholarship for Doctoral Studies
van Anders, Sari (PSYC).

Miscellaneous Private Awards Recipients

Garfield Weston Foundation/B.C. Packers Ltd. Graduate Fellowship in Marine Sciences
Katinic, Peter (BISC).
Territorial acknowledgments:

The following article is a reprint of an opinion piece published in University Affairs in October 2005.

Maybe our Doctoral Students are Starting too Late
by Jon Driver

The “Survey of Earned Doctorates” (SED) by Tomasz Gluszynski and Valerie Peters, released by Statistics Canada in July, summarizes data from about 2,000 respondents who completed a PhD in 2003-04 and answered questions about their length of time in the program, their finances and future plans. The report can be mined for all kinds of information, but I focus here on the age of doctoral students when they finish.

With almost 70 percent of all Canadian doctorates awarded by only 10 universities (year 2000 data), it is reassuring for a dean of a smaller graduate school to see that our institutional data match the national picture closely. But following my relief that any of us are doing as well as we should.

We have heard a lot recently about the length of time it takes graduate students to complete their programs. The SED showed the national average for a PhD was 70 months, with considerable disciplinary differences; chemistry averaged five years, for example, and the humanities, seven.

A study by the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies and an article in University Affairs (February 2003) drew attention to the combined problems of attrition rates and length of time to completion (see the Web sites of CAGS and University Affairs). Such problems are not unique to Canada, as a recent study in the U.K. shows.

But time-to-completion is only part of the story. We should also be concerned about the age at which doctoral students complete. The SED report shows the national average age at completion is 36 years. The average is obviously affected by people in some professional fields returning to advanced studies in mid-career. Overall, 20 percent of those surveyed said they’d be returning to the same job after finishing their PhD – but this figure was higher in fields where people tend to graduate at older ages, and lower in fields (such as physical sciences) where graduates are younger.

But even so, there must be many PhD graduands who apply for their first permanent positions in academia or R&D in their mid to late 30s.

Most faculty members at Canadian universities and colleges are over 40 years of age, with just 16 percent in their 30s (in contrast, 31 percent of academic staff in Britain are under 35). The age when they’re hired must be related partly to their age when they complete their PhD and partly to delays caused by pre-tenure-track employment, such as postdocs and sessionals. Whatever the disciplinary differences in times-to-completion, the age when they complete is probably correlated with age when they begin the degree.

The SED data suggest we may be consigning some of the brightest Canadians to 15 or 20 years of combined postsecondary education and low-paying jobs before their first secure positions. Universities should be considering how to streamline the process. Remedies for lengthy completion times are summarized in the CAGS report cited above, and many universities are actively moving to implement them. But if on average a social scientist finishes a PhD at age 38 after taking six years to complete it, then there is a lot of lost time that cannot be saved simply by reducing the completion time to four years!

Health Insurance for Graduate Students

The Simon Fraser Student Society Graduate Benefits Plan was introduced September 1, 2005 and provides Graduate students with Dental and Extended Health Coverage. For information on the Benefit Plan please visit www.sfss.ca/benefitplan.html or contact The Graduate Benefit Plan Office at MBC 2201, Phone: 604-268-6994 Fax: 604-268-7195 Email: benefitplan@sfss.ca

Graduate Student Support

SFU graduate students are supported by generous donors who contribute to endowment funds in many programs. If you would like to make a contribution to help students in a particular field, or if you would like further information about any aspect of making a donation, please contact Wanda Dekleva at (604) 291-3093 or at wdekleva@sfu.ca. Many options are available for giving, including one-time donations, regular contributions, or planned giving. Many different payment options can also be arranged. Between now and 2008 the Burnaby Mountain Endowment Fund will match any gifts to scholarship endowments of $50,000+, creating a wonderful opportunity for student support.

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