



## My International Experience with Yohana Yembise

by Marvin Wideen

I would like to discuss my work as a supervisor of Yohana Yembise who came to SFU in 1994 as a result of an international grant supporting foreign students. I will first describe Yohana's work as a student at Simon Fraser and what she accomplished in her home country of Irian Jaya, Indonesia, that led to an Academic Alumni award at Simon Fraser in 2017. The grant that brought Yohana to Simon Fraser also requested that as one of her supervisors I visit her in her home community. The trip, which included my wife Loretta, proved informative, and brought back many memories of my previous experiences in International Programs at Simon Fraser.

I sat on Yohana's Supervisory committee in the Master of Arts program at SFU in the Faculty of Education. In her study she examined the Communicative Approach to Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), which was the most popular approach in Southeast Asian countries. This approach had been recommended by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Indonesia for the past decade in all secondary schools throughout the country. She reported that, overall, the results indicated that Indonesian EFL teachers' theoretical and practical knowledge was low. After achieving her Masters Degree in 1994 she returned to her home country and became involved in numerous projects.

Yohana received an Academic Alumni award at Simon Fraser in 2017. She had become



the first female Minister from

Indonesia's most eastern province, Papua. She was appointed as the Minister of Women Empowerment and Child Protection. She has worked on many projects in her country and others. Her list of achievements is extensive.

As part of the international grant I was invited to travel to Indonesia to observe Yohana in her educational environment and provide seminars for her colleagues in 1993. Yohana met us in Hong Kong, traveled with us to Singapore, Jakarta and to Jayapura where she now lives.

Many interesting experiences for Loretta and me occurred which made us feel at home. I will comment on some events that we experienced there.

First, we saw the city in which Yohana lived. She arranged a meeting with a school principal. The principal of the community even invited pupils back to school to show us how a classroom school worked.

Secondly, Yohana took us by plane over a dense forest between two

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## Simon Fraser University Retirees Association

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## President's Report

Frances Atkinson

Dear members,

As we start our 21st season, I would like to extend a warm welcome back on behalf of the SFURA Board and invite you to participate in our varied activities that allow you to enjoy social and intellectual interaction with colleagues and other retirees.



To bring you up to date on our first event, you should have already received an invitation to SFURA's Welcome Back Lunch at the Old Admiral Pub and Grill at 4125 Hastings Street in North Burnaby on Sept 26 at 11:30am. This informal lunch event offers an enjoyable and affordable opportunity for you to interact with your colleagues and friends. Details can be found on our [www.sfu.ca/retirees](http://www.sfu.ca/retirees) website and in email messages sent to all members.

As the year continues we will be providing regular updates about further events. In particular, watch your email for information about our annual Fall Dinner at the Italian Cultural Centre on the evening of November 6. This popular venue offers consistently excellent food at a convenient location.

Every year the board encourages members to organize a small group event at a venue of your choice. We can help you advertise your event. Small group events illustrate the diversity of our collective interests and provide additional opportunities for participation. Past events have included tours of the Ismaili Centre in Burnaby, Temple Shalom in Vancouver, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Vancouver Police Museum and an historical tour of Gastown and Chinatown. There are many possibilities and we would love to receive suggestions from you. You can email me at [frances@sfu.ca](mailto:frances@sfu.ca) or send email to our general address [retirees@sfu.ca](mailto:retirees@sfu.ca).

An important ongoing role for SFURA is to capture SFU's history and legacy while principal participants are still here. We are exploring more ways to accomplish this goal.

Finally, I would once again like to thank all volunteers, whether on the Board or not, who have helped out in any way with our various activities over the last year.

A very happy Fall season to you all. ❖



# Volunteer Opportunity—ONE TO ONE

This past school year, ONE TO ONE's extraordinary team of 380 volunteer tutors dedicated their time, enthusiasm, and joy of reading with children in their communities. They generously offered young students the opportunity to not only practice reading, but also to develop a connection with a caring and patient adult. In September 2019, we will continue the ONE TO ONE program in more than 120 elementary schools across Vancouver and the Lower Mainland and we would love to introduce even more volunteers to this rewarding experience. Through one-to-one volunteer tutoring we help children develop literacy skills to last a lifetime.

SFU Retirees Association has been essential in helping ONE TO ONE engage book lovers with our program. Thank you.

Share the joy of reading in your community by becoming a ONE TO ONE volunteer tutor.

ONE TO ONE matches emerging readers with volunteer tutors across Vancouver and the Lower Mainland. Volunteers are provided with training and ongoing support to read with children for two to three hours once a week during school hours. You will develop a connection with the students that will help them bloom into successful readers.

It's easy to get started on your volunteer journey. Fill out an application form online, complete a free criminal record check and then have a chat with ONE TO ONE on the phone to make sure you're a good fit. Initial training sessions for new volunteers will be held in September and October 2019.

Find out more and apply now at <http://www.one-to-one.ca>.

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mountains to Wamena where she brought us to the countryside to see a native village where people had lived in huts for centuries. Over 250 native villages exist there which are so self-sufficient there is no need for them to communicate with each other in a common language. The picture on the right shows Yohana on the far left, her cousin in front of her and me to the right between two men. The women in the area wear skirts and the men wore kotekas over their penises held by a string. For a cost of 1500 rupees, they displayed a 100-year-old dead man whose body had been preserved by smoke. A fascinating story.



The final item I will discuss is the seminar that I was required to do as part of the trip. On day one I offered some examples of approaches used in North America schools such as the debate over high stakes testing and a focus on learning to teach. Some argued that these issues did not apply to them. Others disagreed. A rich discussion followed.

On the second day of the workshop, I first set them up in groups to discuss issues in the papers they had just read. They reported back about their group discussions. The groups were asking lots of good questions about top down and bottom up models. I then made a presentation about constructivism and did some inquiry teaching as an example. The two days seem to have gone well.



As I reflect on my experiences I am even more convinced of the value of International Education as an approach to educational improvement for all. The late Ian Andrews who was the director of International Education in the Faculty of Education set up many projects in our faculty. In my work in some of those projects and others at SFU I, along with my wife, traveled to some seven countries around the world. I also appreciate the opportunities that I have enjoyed as a faculty member of SFU. ❖



### **Marilyn Bowman**

My ancestors were subjected to horrific persecutions: Swiss Anabaptists murdered by Lutherans on the grounds of religion, Celts of Scotland and England killed in bloody attacks by Vikings, Saxons, Romans, and Normans, central Europeans battered by Mongols and Avars. I bear no animus toward any of those ancient rampagers. My own life experience has been so extremely lucky in so many ways that I cannot harbour ancestral grievances. Forgetting ancestral sufferings is a useful cognitive operation that allows me to thrive in the present and look forward to the future. While world news brings fresh doses of outrage every day, my own personal experience is that I live here in a world full of wondrous services and facilities, and most of all, a world in which I can automatically trust the people around me. I live in a city and a country where all the basic necessities are available in abundance to most, I live in a community where most people are treated with respect, and grew up in a family that has given me a lifetime of love and support. It has taken me some time to recognize that this is all very precious, and that I have just taken it all for granted. I am now starting to think that these benefits are under threat.

If I were to take an entirely subjective view of my ancestors' suffering I would be justified in feeling fresh outrage every time the topic became revived in my thinking, but that degree of subjective thinking seems too far removed from the objective realities of my own life. I have been watching as different individuals and groups are increasingly arguing that their subjective experience is more essential and more to be respected, than any objective reality. One problem with this is that subjective feelings and beliefs change over time in a way that objective reality does not. Further problems arise when we tax the objective world with giving us special care arising from our subjectively-generated feelings and identities. Recent examples from the news are interesting. A man ran in the women's section of a major international competition and won because of his superior male physical qualities; he raced in the women's section because he "feels like a woman", and his claim to win was upheld. Victim statements describing disturbed feelings are used as pre-sentence information to judges, contrary to the whole point of justice systems created to ensure justice for the whole community, not just to satisfy the feelings of specific individuals. An American Indian group rejected a man with objective biological First Nations ancestry as "not Indian" because he did not grow up on a reservation. Parents refuse to have their children vaccinated because it conflicts with their subjective convictions, and a political leader issues grand orders because he believes he is "the Chosen One". These situations, selected from dozens in the news, provide examples of a glorification of subjective feelings over objective reality that is drifting into our culture in such a gradual way that we are beginning to accept such feeling-based claims as legitimate in justifying special privileges in the objective world.

This drift toward giving – not just legitimacy, but even primacy, to individual subjective feelings is a very perilous change in our culture. Since the beginnings of the scientific revolution in 16th century Europe, where scholars developed orderly methods to test to see if their theories were in error, human cultures have benefited from this search for objective truths. Today fewer people than ever in history are starving, more are literate, more women and children survive childbirth, and humans are living longer. These benefits have arisen because faulty subjective notions about how the world is, such as deeply powerful beliefs that disease is caused by devils or by an evil eye, or that a man's death is caused by his evil wife's bad karma, have been found wanting through objectively examining evidence for theories that contradict these strong subjective beliefs. My life has been objectively saved four times by the miracles of modern evidence-based medicine, independently of my subjective theories about any of it.

I worry that we are drifting back into medieval thinking as our culture increasingly gives credence to, and even privileges, personal belief systems detached from objective evidence. When subjective beliefs and feelings provide special status and treatment to individuals and groups, there can be no end to the injustices that will arise. I expect no compensation from Vikings, Saxons, Romans, Normans, Avars, or Mongols who battled their way across the European landscapes of my ancestors. Instead I am grateful for the waves of new ideas and new ways of thinking and engaging with the objective world that arose from even those violent cultural sweeps. I feel lucky to be alive now and try not to take anything for granted, because drifting cultural shifts toward subjectivity can reverse crucially good things. Even if I start to believe and assert that I am a short African male in need of services specialized for my group, I hope the objective world concludes I am not and does not humour me. But takes me briskly to a good doctor.❖



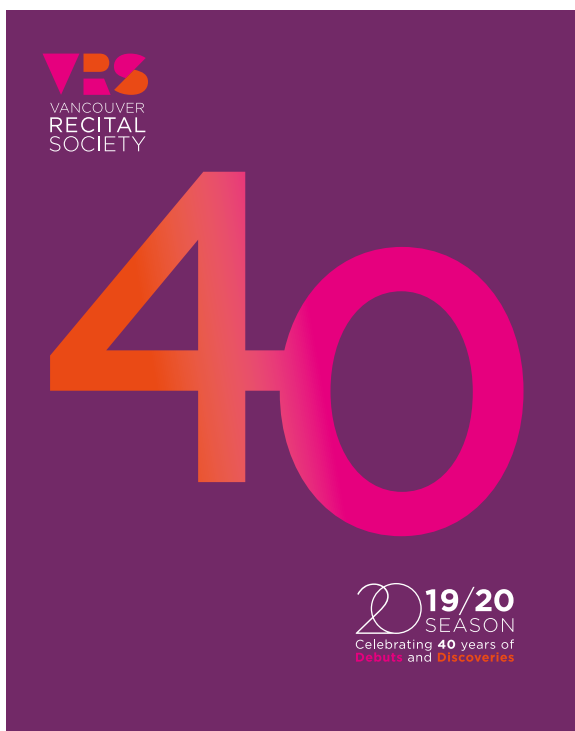
## Vancouver Recital Society

Tom O'Shea



This year the Vancouver Recital Society celebrates its 40th year. In 1980, Leila Getz, a South African expatriate, organized a series of five recitals in the Arts Club Theatre on Granville Island. This annual series expanded to the Vancouver Playhouse in 1985 and later to the Chan Centre when it opened in 1997. The VRS is one of only a few in North America to survive solely on recital performances, and has now achieved a reputation such that a performance for the VRS can open many doors for artists who have yet to develop an established career.

Memorable Canadian debuts with the VRS have included pianist Sir Andras Schiff (Arts Club) in 1981, violinist Joshua Bell (Playhouse) in 1987, soprano Cecilia Bartoli (Orpheum) in 1992, violinist Maxim Vengerov (Playhouse) in 1993, and pianist Lang Lang (Playhouse) in 1999. In recognition of her stellar career, in 2005 SFU awarded Leila an honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts.



We have subscribed for many years to the VRS's "Next Generation" series at the Playhouse. A unique feature of this year's program is that each concert consists of sibling performers--combinations of two pianos, piano and cello, cello and viola, and two violins (with piano). Occasionally, we also attend VRS evenings at the Orpheum, and the highlight for this year will be the combination of Sheku Kanneh-Mason on cello and his sister Isata on piano. Sheku made his Canadian debut with the VRS in 2017. In 2018, he played for the wedding of Harry and Meghan (if that carries weight with any of our members), and his debut recording reached number one on the classical chart. They play at the Orpheum on December 8 at 3 pm.

This year the VRS has moved almost all of its recitals to the Playhouse, a welcome move in my opinion. The Playhouse is a warm, compact environment where each audience member is close to the performer. It's convenient to get to as it's only a short walk from the Stadium Skytrain station. And performances all take place on Sunday afternoon at 3 pm, a consideration for those of use who no longer feel comfortable travelling after dark.

Finally, for people interested in the background to the music and the performers, each program in the Classic Afternoon and the Peak Performance series is preceded by a pre-concert talk at 2:15. And in the Next Generation series the performers appear after the concert in conversation on stage with Leila Getz. What better way to combine the cultural and academic parts of our lives? Complete information is available at [vanrecital.com](http://vanrecital.com). ❖



Available at SFU  
Campus Bookstore



### *The Quintland Sisters* / Shelley Wood (New York: William Morrow, 2019) / review by David Stouck

Born in Ontario in 1940, I grew up hearing a lot about the Dionne Quintuplets; they were as famous in our province's tourism as Algonquin Park or Niagara Falls. Two months premature when they were born on May 28, 1934 in northern Ontario, the five identical girls drew immediate attention from around the world as the only quintuplets to have ever survived. Photographs of five happy little girls dressed alike were steady features in newspapers and magazines, in newsreels and in movie-length films that also featured the country doctor who delivered them and supervised their care. But by the time they were eight the Dionne Quints had all but disappeared from public view. Subsequently at least nine books and two feature film documentaries have taken up the story of the five sisters and their frequently sad histories. Shelley Wood has done something different: *The Quintland Sisters*, for several months on best seller lists in Canada and the U.S., is a historical novel which gives the reader an account of what life might have been like for the girls when they were young, but more importantly it provides an intimate vantage point from which to examine all the competing interests—personal, financial, religious, and political—that surrounded the quintuplets in their early years.

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***It is the story of what she observes for five years working at the Dionne farmhouse and at the building with its one-way-view windows that allowed the curious and adoring public to see the quintuplets in their playground.***

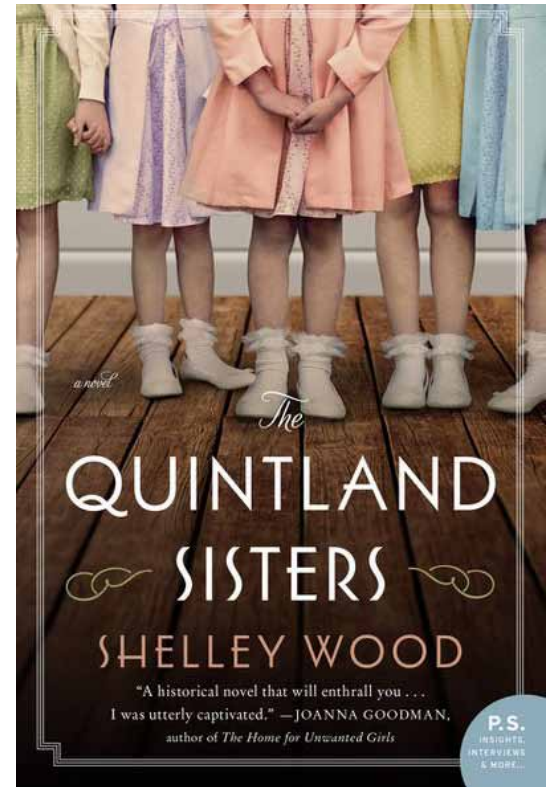
Wood tells the story from the point of view of Emma Trimpany, an aspiring midwife who is only seventeen years old when she assists at the harrowing birth of the five babies. It is the story of what she observes for five years working at the Dionne farmhouse and at the building with its one-way-view windows that allowed the curious and adoring public to see the quintuplets in their playground. From the outset there are tensions between Dr. Dafoe who delivered the babies and their father, Oliva Dionne. The Dionnes were French-Canadian and Catholic and suspicious of English-Canadian motives. There is also the educational and economic gap between the English speaking doctor and the French-Canadian father who was eking out a living on his hardscrabble farm between Callander and Corbeil (in the vicinity of North Bay). The latter's first move was to sign up his babies for exhibition at the Chicago World's Fair. The doctor persuaded the Ontario government to intervene and halt this arrangement in the interest of the babies' fragility. Thus battle lines were drawn between family and government at the outset.

But narrator Emma soon becomes aware that the Ontario government had more than the babies' welfare at heart. The public interest in the Quintuplets was huge; newspapers vied for photographs, and companies with products related to small children (corn syrup for example) paid high fees for the Dionne endorsement of their products. In 1938 the public playground was opened and thousands made the trip to see the children: politicians of all stripes, eminent businessmen such as W.K. Kellogg, inventor of corn flakes, film stars like Bette Davis and Mae West. Amelia Earhart visited Callander shortly before her last flight. The brother of the Emperor of Japan en route to the coronation of King George VI, insisted on breaking his journey at Quintland. King George and Queen Elizabeth also met the Quints, but for security reasons it took place in Toronto at the premier's private suite in Queen's Park. In his book *The Dionne Years* Pierre Berton wrote that nobody except president Roosevelt enjoyed a higher visibility than the Dionne Quintuplets.

An important part of Wood's story, provided in end notes and further suggestions for the reader, is her account of the wealth that the Quints brought to Ontario during the height of the Great Depression--it has been estimated at half a billion dollars. In addition to admission fees to view the girls, every imaginable souvenir was for sale at Quintland, including pebbles from a nearby lake sold as fertility charms. But the Quintuplets themselves saw very little of this money: most of it remained with the Ontario government, or was mismanaged by the girls' father.

The Dionne sisters did not lead the happy, successful lives that their childhood photographs seemed to promise. According to two non-fiction books, published in the late 1990s with the sisters' participation, Oliva Dionne is said to have sexually abused his daughters. Over time they became reclusive; their marriages did not last. Emma Trimpany, Wood's fictional narrator, ends her story with a sinister narrative that harshly condemns Oliva Dionne, the Ontario government, the church, and all forms of patriarchal order.

I closed this book wondering how the story could be told again in yet a different light, and it struck me that in all the tellings there is one thing that eludes the tellers and that is the ability to differentiate the unique personalities of the girls. They are always presented and viewed as identical, but they were not. In the end, while living in close proximity in Montreal, they lived different lives and have died in different ways—one at age 20 of epilepsy, another in her thirties of a blood clot, but two are still living today at age 85. They had different educations and experiences. They look alike until you look more closely. The very first book about the Dionnes was a study done of their infancy published by University of Toronto Press in 1937. It highlighted the differences among the babies. The professor was dismissed. I wonder now if that was because his work was undermining the popular and profitable myth that the Dionne Quintuples were all one and the same. ❖



## GOD'S AWESOME PLAN FOR AGING

*Submitted By Jim Boyd*

Most seniors never get enough exercise. In His wisdom God decreed that seniors become forgetful so they would have to search for their glasses, keys and other things, thus doing more walking. And God looked down and saw that it was good.

Then God saw there was another need. In His wisdom He made seniors lose co-ordination so they would drop things, requiring them to bend, reach, and stretch. And God looked down and saw that it was good.

Then God considered the function of bladders and decided seniors would have additional calls of nature, requiring more trips to the bathroom, thus providing more exercise. God looked down and saw that it was good.

So if you find as you age, you are getting up and down more, remember it's God's will. It is all in your best interest even though you mutter under your breath.

Nine Important Facts to Remember as We Grow Older:

#9 Death is the number 1 killer in the world.

#8 Life is sexually transmitted.

#7 Good health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

#6 Men have 2 motivations: hunger and hanky panky, and they can't tell them apart. If you see a gleam in his eyes, make him a sandwich.

#5 Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach a person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks, months, maybe years.

#4 Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in the hospital, dying of nothing.

#3 All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

#2 In the 1960s, people took LSD to make the world weird. Now the world is weird, and people take Prozac to make it normal.

#1 Life is like a jar of jalapeño peppers. What you do today may be a burning issue tomorrow.

Please share this wisdom with others while I head to the bathroom.



# Germany's Social Market Economy for China and Canada?

*By Herbert Grubel, Emeritus Professor of Economics  
Simon Fraser University*

Two German economists recently told me that they had been asked by high-ranking Chinese economic policy makers to let them know what policies had been used to create Germany's rapid economic recovery after the devastation of the Second World War, its solid economic growth thereafter and its protection from the worst effects of the global recessions of 2001 and 2008.

These two economists sent to China a collection of essays published in the immediate postwar years, which explain the Social Market Economy Model that was used by Germany's Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and his Minister of Economics Ludwig Erhard to determine the country's postwar economic policies.

The Social Market Economy Model (SMEM) was developed by economists at the University of Freiburg in Germany at a time when memories of the Depression and the alleged success of communist Russia led to widespread support for socialism and economic planning in Germany and many other countries in Europe.

The SMEM suggests that in order to maximize the income of the people and their social well-being, politicians should rely on the forces of the free market to produce goods and services and use government programs to provide benefits to the needy. Germany's pursuit of these policies contributed much to its outstanding economic performance since the end of the Second World War, which stands in evidence of what SMEM can deliver.

China operates an economy in which markets play a very limited role, government planners decide the allocation of resources in strategic industries and what amounts are going to the support for the needy. This system in recent years has very successfully raised national income and employment. However, it is now confronted with slowing economic growth and planning mistakes that have led to substantial excess capacity in some industries such as steel and housing.

These economic problems are the likely reason for the interest of the Chinese leadership in the German model. However, it is unlikely that the government will adopt it. Moving to a full market economy is certain to be resisted by powerful leaders whose personal income, power and prestige depend on the current system and whose views are shaped by long exposure to the communist ideology, which demonizes private ownership of capital required for the operation of free markets.

On the other hand, Canada's politicians might benefit from the study the SMEM as the country in recent years has drifted increasingly away from the use of this system.

Some examples. First, the government prevents the operation of a free market for dairy products to bring economic benefits to dairy farmers when it should provide these benefits out of tax revenue and let the market operate freely. Second, the operation of a free market for medical services is prohibited in order to ensure that all patients can afford medical care when it would be better if the market were free and financially strapped patients received support out of tax money. Third, municipal politicians allow the construction of multiple housing units only if builders allocate funds for public art and for units to be sold at below-market prices to the needy, when the art and needy should be financed out of tax revenue.

The drift away from SMEM has recently reached a catastrophic level with the passage of Bill C-69 in 2019. It requires investors in the private sector to obtain a "social license" by compensating all "stakeholders" whose interests are damaged by the investment. Bureaucrats permit investors to proceed only when in their judgement all stakeholders have been identified and compensated properly.

It is clear that the benefits going to stakeholders under Bill C-69 are paid by Canadians, but not through legislation financed through the budget that is scrutinized by the public and opposition politicians, but through the increased cost of investments that is passed to consumers through higher prices. In some cases, the bill will prevent the investment altogether, which leaves the country and lower Canada's economic growth.

Politicians love Bill C-69 and the other violations of the SMEM model since they allow them to buy the votes of the recipients of benefits without having to raise vote-losing taxes. Therefore, Canadian, like Chinese politicians will not heed the advice contained in the SMEM and use free markets to maximize output and social programs financed out of taxes to look after the needy. Too bad. ❖

## Sheila Delany



### In Defense of Witches

First off, as a medievalist I want to exculpate the Middle Ages. Most people associate witches with that period, alongside other mistaken assumptions: that there were no elementary schools, no one bathed, women lacked legal rights, single women could not work or own a business, there were no women doctors, people lived in the same house or village for decades and generations, etc. Not that I would want to have lived then: too much religion and heavy-handed legal authority, including torture—some of these more brutal than common now, but others present in our own penal practises, such as forced sleeplessness (think Guantanamo and other prisons)-- especially popular in 16th-century England and guaranteed to produce a confession in 40 hours.

For witch-prosecution, torture was extensively used (except in England). Although often thought to be a religious phenomenon, the witch craze was primarily secular, employing a huge bureaucracy of lawyers, judges, professional witch-finders, interrogators, torturers, executioners, etc. Most trials occurred in local secular—not ecclesiastical—courts, the crime being not spiritual (diabolism) but social: maleficium (ill-doing magic) such as spreading disease and marital discord, ruining crops, causing natural disaster. The movement was geographically wide-spread, regionally varied, and multicausal, its time mainly the so-called Renaissance, that “rebirth” we associate with scientific method, rationalism and names like Francis Bacon or Galileo. Witchcraft-- rather, its theory and organized persecution-- is the dark underbelly of the Renaissance, much as the work of Diderot and Sade is the dark underbelly of the Enlightenment of a later century, the classicizing 18th. I’m not equating Diderot and Sade (brilliant, subversive authors) with those who organized witch-hunts, still less with “witches”: only noting that widely accepted cultural norms are rarely the whole story. (We could think of ancient Greek “democracy” here too, built atop slavery, child marriage, and the severe repression of women.) (Not to mention American “democracy”, similarly based.) Taken overall, from about 1450 to about 1750, from Scandinavia down through eastern Europe including Russia, to the Mediterranean and extending to new world colonies, the European witch-craze comprised men and women, Protestants and Catholics, urban and rural populations. It lasted longest, into the late 18th century, in Switzerland and Poland.

The Walt Disney image gives the witch stooped posture, wrinkled face, grey hair, missing teeth, living alone with a pet cat: in other words, old. What would she have done to warrant suspicion from authorities or neighbors? I think some were herbalists, versed by experience and oral tradition in the properties of plants, minerals and animal parts, able to make medicines. Some of these would be curative for skin diseases, depression, impotence or infertility, etc. Others not so much: poisons might be wanted occasionally, while abortifacients would likely be in demand and perhaps preferable to abandonment (at the local convent or monastery, a crossroads, or in the forest) or to infanticide (“accidentally” overlaying the baby in bed, drowning, a fall, etc.). All this went on in classical times too, and still does; people have never been kind to unwanted children, whether from poverty, ill health, inconvenience, reputation or anything else.

Why would early modern popular medical practise warrant the association with devil-worship, riding brooms at night or the evil eye? The medical profession itself—mainly though not entirely male—was becoming more exclusive, as were other professions and guilds. Monopolization was typical; bakers, brewers, weavers and other trades began in the 15th century to exclude women, youth and foreigners. Limiting guild membership enabled control of wages, prices and work conditions in prosperous societies created by the influx of precious metals and goods from colonial expansion into the New World, Africa and the “Orient”. Too, money could be involved where inheritance or property ownership was at issue; personal resentment or retaliation could also spur a witchcraft denunciation.

Political motives for accusing someone resembled pogroms of earlier centuries. Then, a ruler could cancel debt to a Jewish lender by killing, jailing or exiling the creditor for supposedly poisoning a well or kidnapping a Christian child. Now he might dispose of rivals with a witchcraft trial; Scotland, Denmark, Bavaria and Hungary show major instances. Or a successful heretical movement with its own hierarchy and subversive social programme might become a target. Most “witches” were no real threat, but the point was to create fear and demonstrate social control at a time when rebellions were widespread and centralization of state power was on the agenda. Communism served this function for decades in North America. Some would say Islam does so now in some quarters. Have we changed?

Further reading: Brian Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*. New York: Longman, 1987.

Sylvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch. Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2004.♦

# Strangely, it is true!

By Albert Curzon

I very much enjoyed being a professor of physics at Simon Fraser University and when I retired I joined the university's Retirees Association and often attend their meetings. The events I am about to describe occurred in 2018 when there was a Retirees Association dinner at the Italian Cultural Centre in Vancouver. My wife and I, because of our antiquity, are reluctant to drive in the dark so in the afternoon of Tuesday the 6th of November 2018 we went to Renfrew Skytrain Station to discover how long it would take to walk from there to the Cultural Centre. Of course, we had no street map with us and had not explored Google Maps before our excursion and were therefore forced to resort to a very ancient method of seeking information. We entered the nearby Sleep Country Store at 2905 Renfrew Street and asked another human being, an assistant, "Please could you tell us how to get from here to the Italian Cultural Centre?" He was a really friendly young man and told us exactly where we had to go. We followed his instructions and were delighted to learn that the Centre was a mere ten-minute walk from the Skytrain Station. The following evening we walked in dry weather from home to the Holdom Skytrain Station, took the train to Renfrew Station and arrived at about 6 p.m. at the Italian Cultural Centre for the dinner of the Retirees' Association. It was a special anniversary dinner. On arrival we received a book, *20th Anniversary 1998-2018 Simon Fraser University Retirees Association*. It was free and contained text and colour photographs about the first 20 years of the Association. The entire dinner was excellent. Our return journey was again rain-free, a rare thing in Vancouver in November, and the book arrived safely home. The creators of the tome, many of whom I know, had done an excellent job and I was delighted to discover that it even contained a photograph of me laughing at something Klaus Rieckhoff, a founding member of the Physics Department, was telling me. "This book is a treasure" I thought and I must see that it is treated as such.

My wife had a Romanian mother. In the past we have visited relatives in Romania and one of them whom we visited there ended up as a medical doctor in America. He phoned on Saturday the 3rd of November to say that he, his wife and two children would stay at a Burnaby hotel beginning on the 21st and would like to visit us before they went on to Whistler. We were delighted but the announcement meant that we had to try to make our chaotic house resemble the interior of *Downton Abbey*. This involved an enormous tidying up of the place. All sorts of books, medicines and newspapers which had adorned our tables and chairs were removed and stored in places inaccessible to visitors. Some were even thrown out. On the 20th of November, one day before the visitors arrived I wanted to look at my treasure. I looked everywhere. I could not find it. I was distraught and concluded that, in the vast tidying procedure, I must have thrown it out with items assigned to garbage. I consulted the web about the 20th anniversary event and was reminded that there were some spare copies of the book available on a request basis. I sent an e-mail and was informed that a copy would be sent to my SFU mail box. I was delighted. The book was also available in pdf format on the web. Of course, there had recently been an upgrade of the SFU mail system and I could no longer read such files. I e-mailed my twin brother and asked him to get a copy from the web. He did so and stored it on a memory stick which I can use on another computer which can still cope with pdf files. Despite this good fortune I still longed for the physical reality of the actual book. On Friday the 24th I went to SFU and discovered that my mail box was empty. Perhaps the Association had run out of spare copies before they could send me one. I felt too sad to follow up with an e-mail query to the Association. After the SFU visit my wife and I went to the credit union to pay a bill. The staff are excellent and we told the teller how much we appreciated going to that particular establishment. She wondered how long we had been members and looked up our start date. It was May 1981.

I regret that many important events in my life have gone unrecorded. For example I believe I had my first lesson on how to play the classical guitar in England on December the 2nd but I have no idea of the year and now have no means of finding out. This being so I have started a records book where I note down important events such as 29 December 2019 when I may receive the Nobel prize for writing short stories! When I got back home from the credit union I decided to record the above date of May 1981. When I tried to put the record book back in the bookcase it did not slip easily into place. There was an object getting in the way. I explored further and there it was: *20th Anniversary 1998-2018 Simon Fraser University Retirees Association* - my treasure. How could anyone ever believe a story about a conversation which occurs at a credit union and leads to the finding of a book thought to have been lost because of the tidying of a house just prior to the arrival of a person born in Romania and living in America? Strangely, it is true! ❖

# How As A Konrad Adenauer Award Recipient I Had To Give A Stool Sample To Open A Bank Account In Hannover, Germany!

By Ezzat A. Fattah

Hardly anyone would dispute the fact that some true life stories are stranger than fiction! The longer one lives and the more places one visits the more of these stories one has to tell. This is the strange story of how as a Konrad Adenauer Research Award winner in 1993 I had to give a stool sample to be able to open an account at the Hannover *Sparkasse* (Savings Bank).



Konrad  
Adenauer  
Stiftung

Following the German Chancellor's visit to Canada in 1989 an exchange program between the two countries was set up. The Konrad Adenauer Award was created "to honor the entire academic record of an internationally renowned Canadian researcher". In addition, the award rules stipulate that winners will be invited to conduct a research project of their own choice in Germany in close collaboration with a specialist colleague. Every year a Canadian researcher would get a prize allowing him/her to spend a research year in Germany and a German scholar would spend a year in Canada. In 1992 I was nominated by Simon Fraser University for this nation-wide competition

and was chosen as the award winner. Once the results of the competition were released I received an invitation from the director of the Criminological Research Institute of Lower Saxony (*Kriminologischen Forschungsinstitut Niedersachsen* (KFN), Prof Christian Pfeiffer, to spend at least part of my research year in Germany at the Hannover Institute. I gladly accepted the invitation and when the time arrived I headed to Hannover where accommodations were provided to me at the beautiful Leibnitz House at Holzmarkt 5 just across the street from the famous cathedral.

The next step was rather obvious. I had to open a bank account to be able to have access to the German money provided by the Award. The closest bank to my residence was the *Sparkasse* (Savings Bank) to which I headed. Sitting at the reception counter was a nice German lady who asked me what I was there for. I explained that I am a visiting scholar from Canada who has won an award (fellowship) and would like to open an account to have the money deposited in it and to withdraw from it throughout the year. It did not take long for me to realize that Germany in this respect was very different from what I was used to at home where it takes about ten minutes to open a new bank account in any of major banks' branches. I was politely made to understand that as a foreigner (with a non-western name as mine) I have to follow certain procedures, one of which is to undergo certain medical exams. Despite my obvious perplexion, the young lady never explained to me the rationale for having someone who simply wants to open a bank account be required to undergo a medical exam!

Thinking that it was just a formality I left the bank realizing that I better not argue or object. So I took the required forms and decided that the best and surest thing is to abide by the rules and go to the medical centre she



Foto: Martin Schmidt ([www.schmaidt.de](http://www.schmaidt.de))



Foto: Marcus Prell

assigned. When I went to the centre a couple of days later I was subjected to this thorough medical exam including X raying my chest, and once it was completed and I thought this was over I was given a glass container and was asked to send a stool sample by mail to the lab!! It was too late in the process now to object or to retreat so once I was back in my apartment I just complied and sent the sample as I was told.

I really do not remeber how many days passed before I was advised by the medical centre and the lab that everything was O.K. But as soon as I got the positive result I took it triumphantly to the lady at the *Hannover Sparkasse* thinking that the bank account will now be opened and I will finally be able to have access to the prize money that will sustain me while in Germany. The lady took a quick look at the document I handed her showing the results of the medical exam and the STOOL test and then looked me in the eye and said: "This is fine but you have to wait because the result of the police investigation is not here yet"! To say that I was flabbergasted would be an understatement. But it must have been obvious to the lady that I was totally out of breath and out of words! Not wanting to antagonize the authority that seemed to have all the power I just uttered some words about "please let me know when you get the police report".

As may be expected I decided to share my experience with my colleague and host prof. Christian Pfeiffer who years later became the minister of justice of the German state of Lower Saxony. He wasted no time before contacting the German media which, like the media in other countries, are more than eager and happy to get unusual stories and negative news. All of sudden my telephone number given to them by Prof. Pfeiffer began ringing with requests for interviews. I could not handle all of them so I answered a couple of reporters questions and surely enough the story appeared in the newspaper the next day. Like banks in any other country, the *Sparkasse* was keen to counter the negative publicity of having to subject a Canadian academic researcher to such a demeaning experience so they asked me if I was willing to meet with the manager and vice manager of the Hannover branch where this unpleasant experience took place. I did not have any reason to decline so they showed up at my apartment and as an expression of regret they handed me a pen/stylo set inscribed with the branch's logo, a set that I never used but do have to this day as a reminder of this unforgettable experience. ✦



## IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU

Evelyn Palmer



**T**he SFURA Scholarship Endowment Fund has grown considerably since it was founded as a contribution to SFU's 50th Anniversary. We now endow three scholarships per year of \$1000 each. Read the 2018 report on our website at: [http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/Various\\_PDFs/2018\\_Scholarship\\_report\\_to\\_%20Members.pdf](http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/Various_PDFs/2018_Scholarship_report_to_%20Members.pdf)

Many SFURA members continue to publish books and articles long into their formal retirement years. We publish details and images on our website, which is searchable by Title, Author and Keywords. See [http://www.sfu.ca/retirees/Books\\_By\\_Retirees.html](http://www.sfu.ca/retirees/Books_By_Retirees.html)

Authors are invited to submit details for the webpage. Email your submission to [walter@sfu.ca](mailto:walter@sfu.ca) and please let me know as well, [evelyn@sfu.ca](mailto:evelyn@sfu.ca).

**Selma Wasserman** has had her latest book published: *What's The Right Thing to Do*. The subject deals with promoting thoughtful and socially responsible behaviour in the early childhood years. This is her sixth book since her retirement. The cover has a photo of her adorable great granddaughter. [http://www.sfu.ca/content/sfu/retirees/Books\\_By\\_Retirees/Whats\\_the\\_Right\\_Thing\\_to\\_Do.html](http://www.sfu.ca/content/sfu/retirees/Books_By_Retirees/Whats_the_Right_Thing_to_Do.html)

**Sheila Delany's** book of poems, *Crowded Mirror*, has been published by Durga Press (Austin TX). The printer sent copies to her, and she invites our readers to order from her: 616 East 43rd Avenue, Vancouver V5W1T6. Send her a cheque for \$15.00 and your address and she will mail it to you. [http://www.sfu.ca/retirees/Books\\_By\\_Retirees/Crowded\\_Mirror.html](http://www.sfu.ca/retirees/Books_By_Retirees/Crowded_Mirror.html)

**Ezzat Fattah** has published *Restorative Justice*, concerning society's steady march toward a civilized justice system. [http://www.sfu.ca/content/sfu/retirees/Books\\_By\\_Retirees/Restorative\\_Justice.html](http://www.sfu.ca/content/sfu/retirees/Books_By_Retirees/Restorative_Justice.html).

**Ida Curtis** has recently earned an honour for her non-fiction writing. She is the recipient of an APEX 2019 Excellence in Publication Award, in the category Writing – Series Writing, for “A Special Place,” a three-part memoir describing her family’s annual two-week holiday at the same cottage on the Connecticut Shore over a fourteen-year period in the ‘80s and ‘90s. The APEX awards are sponsored by Communications Concepts of Alexandria, Virginia. The series can be read on Ida’s website, [idacurtis.org](http://idacurtis.org), under the “Writings” tab.

Ida's book, *Song of Isabel*, 2018, is available at the Burnaby Library. [http://www.sfu.ca/retirees/Books\\_By\\_Retirees/Song\\_of\\_Isabel.html](http://www.sfu.ca/retirees/Books_By_Retirees/Song_of_Isabel.html). Another will be published in 2020, *The Nun's Betrothal*. [http://www.sfu.ca/content/sfu/retirees/Books\\_By\\_Retirees/The\\_Nuns\\_Betrothal.html](http://www.sfu.ca/content/sfu/retirees/Books_By_Retirees/The_Nuns_Betrothal.html)

And **Robert Hackett** writes:

I am no longer on SFU's faculty payroll, but that doesn't mean I've left the world of academia. For the month of September, I'll be taking up a visiting Erskine fellowship at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand - a city that has been through more than its fair share of trauma in the past decade -- two earthquakes and a racist mass shooting. I'll be accompanied by my spouse Angelika, thanks to the generosity and hospitality of the Erskine Programme and the department of Media and Communication. That means I'm spending much of August doing lecture preps for September - just like the old days, i.e. two years ago. I look forward to being a resident 'wise guy' for four weeks.

One thing I have given up though, is writing refereed academic journal articles. Instead, I'm doing short essays for non-specialist readers, on timely topics, mainly around climate crisis and the media -- in the past year, for *Common Ground*, [nationalobserver.com](http://nationalobserver.com), and my 'Greening the News' blog at [rabble.ca](http://rabble.ca). That includes fulfilling a lifelong ambition to interview the indefatigable Noam Chomsky in Tucson, where at the age of 90, he continues teaching and writing.

Our always-busy retiree **Yolana Broderick** has made this contribution:

After celebrating our 29th wedding anniversary by making soup at the May Tricities Soup Sisters event for Joy's Place, a women's shelter, we decided to go sailing for a few days. With coordinates 285 magnetic from Gibsons Marina on a May Monday, we sailed to Jedediah Island for the purpose of wandering through and exploring Jedediah Marine Provincial Park as well as exploring Lasqueti Island. The day was a warm, sunny and lots of wind. We arrived late afternoon at the north shore in the little notch opposite the south end of Paul Island which from my understanding is known locally as Deep Bay.

In this area, you need to stern tie. Although we can see the locations of the stern ties, getting one's sail boat set up with the stern tie can be a challenge. The time of the day, whether it is high tide or low tide, the location of the tie, where you want to locate your sail boat and where the wind is coming from are things which I find challenging when helping my husband George to drop the anchor and do the stern tie. Once that hurdle is sorted, the sail boat is set for the night.

The following morning we took our dinghy across to Long Bay, one of the nice little bays in the island to explore Jedediah Marine National Park. We found the old homestead, found a trail into a big meadow and found a second house, then on to another valley with an old barn and found the valley of wild sheep. As we continued we saw a cottage on the edge of a cliff which overlooks a shallow and long narrow bay where people can swim. Farther out we saw an area where kayakers can camp. On one side of the cliff on a rock, a plaque dedicating the place to Daniel George Culver, a Canadian mountaineer who was one of two who climbed K2, the highest mountains in the world but passed away on his way down K2 in 1993. In his will, Daniel Culver donated a large sum of his money which allowed Jedediah Marine Provincial Park to be given to the Province of British Columbia and for the people of British Columbia to enjoy the park. What an amazing story. Jedediah Marine Provincial Park is truly an amazing place, so tranquil and peaceful..

Jedediah Marine Provincial Park is truly an amazing place, so tranquil and peaceful..

Here is a contribution to this column by **Dave Huntley**:

**Tony Arrott**, at age 91.5, can still stand on my step ladder and pick my yellow plums. On the other hand he got lost coming here by bus, and I had to drive to Ridgeview to rescue him.

So I asked Tony if he had been accepted into the Super Senior Study, and if I could print Dave's letter. He responded:

Dear Evelyn

Here is an account of a SuperSenior getting lost:

I am pushing my cart from the bus stop **(A)** to Dave Huntley's **(E)** to pick plums. Dave lives on Ridge Drive beyond the turn to the north. When I got off the bus, I thought that Ridge was much closer to Hastings than it was. At **(B)** I look up Pandora Street and see that it turns north. Big mistake, because when I got to the turn I knew something was not right and asked where Ridge was. The responder knew where Ridgeview Drive was. So I climbed the stairs to the start of the trail where a sign indicated that it led to the ridge. That trail was a challenge. When I got to **D**, I met a most helpful hiker with a cell who got me back to **C**, which I then knew, was on Ridgeview Drive. The hiker then called Dave who explained that he lives on Ridge Drive. Dave came to my rescue and I picked two 4-liter pails of great yellow plums, standing on near the top of his six-foot step ladder. To be in the SuperSenior program, they are not fussy about reasoning power.. ❖



# IN MEMORIAM



We ask any of you who have further information about any deceased SFU retirees to submit obituaries to the SFURA Webmaster on the link provided on our website at: [https://www.sfu.ca/retirees/in-memoriam/a\\_g.html](https://www.sfu.ca/retirees/in-memoriam/a_g.html) We post names of all deceased SFU retirees whom we are aware of, not only those who were SFURA members. We welcome tributes to your former colleagues. We will place them with their obituaries on the website.

**Geoffrey Barnes** September 13, 1946 - July 19, 2019

Geoffrey worked at the SFU Burnaby Library for many years, and loved walking, jazz, baseball and cats. Before his SFU career he attended law schools in California and Vancouver, and was a VISTA volunteer in Rapid City, South Dakota. Geoff worked tirelessly for many years on behalf of members of CUPE 3338 as President and as Chief Grievance Steward.

His obituary is at: <http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2019/BarnesGeoff.pdf>

**Jean Jordan** April, 22, 1930 - March 17, 2019

Her obituary is at: [https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2019/Jean\\_JORDAN\\_obit.pdf](https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2019/Jean_JORDAN_obit.pdf)

**Ingrid Nystrom** February 2, 1927 - August 9, 2019

Ingrid Nystrom was the DA in the Department of Archaeology from the mid-70s through the 80s when it more than doubled in size and became home for many hundreds of students. She not only advised students but kept the faculty and Chair out of trouble by correcting their mistakes. This period was the time when most of the research effort was directed at PhD archaeology and Ingrid kept track of this by actually visiting and participating in the "digs". Much of the success of the department can be attributed to Ingrid's interaction with faculty, students, and university administration. There is an annual Archaeology Award for undergraduate students in her name. (Submitted by Roy Carlson)

See: <https://www.sfu.ca/archaeology/undergraduate/awards.html>

**Roland Olund** May 29, 1932 - June 29, 2019

Roland was Assistant to successive Academic Vice Presidents from 1970 -1995. He developed procedures for assessing and administering capital and operating budgets; developing procedures for the evaluation and renewal of appointments, promotion, and leave; developing, implementing and interpreting policies relevant to employment and pay matters. Before and during his retirement years, he and his wife Margaret Lindquist enjoyed golfing. His obituary is at: [http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2019/RolandOlund\\_Obit.pdf](http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2019/RolandOlund_Obit.pdf)

**Klaus Rieckhoff** February 8, 1928 - May 19, 2019

Klaus was a charter member of the SFU Faculty in the Department of Physics. He was the longest serving member of SFU Senate up to the time of his retirement in 1993. He served on the Board of Governors for 11 years, was Acting Dean of Science, and served on many SFU committees. He was a participant in our first Oral History DVD. See: <https://www.sfu.ca/retirees/history/dvd.html>.

Klaus received an Honorary Doctorate from SFU on October 2, 1998. Rieckhoff Hall, the Senate Chamber in 3171 Strand Hall was named for him. For his obituary see: [https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2019/Klaus\\_E\\_Rieckhoff\\_obit.pdf](https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2019/Klaus_E_Rieckhoff_obit.pdf)

**Michael Stephens** April 26, 1927 – April 10, 2019

Michael Stephens came to SFU in 1975 where he joined the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

Read the fascinating story of his life in a conversation with Richard A Lockhart: [https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2019/Conversation\\_with\\_Michael.pdf](https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/retirees/memoriam/2019/Conversation_with_Michael.pdf)





# Parveen Bawa : Looking After Yourself



## *FRAILITY DOES NOT IMPLY HOSPICE CARE*

The image of an old person is that of a frail individual who is shrunk, slow, weak, confused and needs help-- the most obvious sign being “shrunk” due to loss of muscle. The condition has been recognized for centuries and was described by Shakespeare in *As You Like It*, “the sixth age shifts into the lean and slipper’d pantaloon, with spectacles on nose and pouch on side, his youthful hose well sav’d, a world too wide, for his shrunk shank...”. The sight of a frail old man was one of the factors that drove Gautam Buddha to renounce his kingdom and family in the 6th century BCE. Young Gautama presumed old age as the time of suffering. The anxiety of getting old and becoming frail hits basically all age groups; one fears decline in health, appearance and loss of independence. In previous generations, older people were considered wise and a source of information; a grandparent had power and was head of the family; now ageing is considered a source of shame and embarrassment. Technology, industry, medical research and health care are all directed towards younger adults, there is a bias against older adults. However, more and more countries around the globe (e.g. Scandinavian countries, Australia, Japan, UK) are trying to understand frailty and design successful interventions for it. This initiative has become part of their health care system.

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***At more advanced age there is failure of homeostasis; for example, there is difficulty in maintaining blood pressure, heart rate, sweating, body temperature and cellular function.***

***As we age, most systems in the body become less efficient and the ability of our body to repair itself decreases”***

Health is defined as the capacity to cope with stressors and maintain one’s sense of wellbeing -physical, mental, sensory and social. One exception of sensory deficit that is common in younger and older populations is vision, but in younger individuals it can be well compensated with good lenses; it is not considered part of frailty in young individuals. In a healthy adult, “homeostasis” means capacity to maintain stable body functions in the presence of external and internal disruptions. At more advanced age there is failure of homeostasis; for example, there is difficulty in maintaining blood pressure, heart rate, sweating, body temperature and cellular function. As we age, most systems in the body become less efficient and the ability of our body to repair itself decreases. There is loss of reserve, margin of safety is small; we easily become prone to infections, depressions and pain. Frailty, with no overt disease, is associated with reduced functional capacity of multiple systems in the body including decreased resistance to stressors, decrease in strength, endurance, reduced physiological functions while becoming psychologically and socially vulnerable; essentially, one is not functional with full vigor. Frailty is a multidimensional concept; it is very hard to define and diagnose because of a range of heterogeneous factors that contribute to it. There is no clear disease to characterize it, and there is a huge diversity of symptoms within the population over 65 years of age. As population ages towards 80s or 90s, heterogeneity of various symptoms makes it even more difficult to recognize. Cells of different organs in different individuals may be deteriorating at dissimilar rates. Hence the definition of frailty and results of interventions are very inconsistent from reports from around the world. We all know that frailty does not appear overnight. It creeps up slowly from 40s onwards when we are ignoring our physical, mental and social wellbeing, and then it really accelerates after 65. While our reserves are still relatively high in our 40s and 50s, we adapt to the decline occurring in our systems, or we accept the small declines as long as we can carry on easily with our daily lives. Suddenly, one day we wake up unable to get out of bed! This is when frailty hits us in the face. Good news is –frailty is a treatable condition and may be partially reversible! If not diagnosed, accepted and treated, it is a prediction of dependency, hospitalization and death.

The most common symptom of frailty is sarcopenia or muscle loss which can occur between the ages of 30 & 50;

the loss is accelerated to approximately 2%/year after the age of 50. Sarcopenia leads to loss of strength, physical slowness, low energy, decreased endurance, low physical activity and could ultimately lead to loss in weight. Inside larger muscle fibres there is not just a decrease in protein, there is an increase in fat and connective tissue. Fat and scar tissue accumulate outside the muscle fibres as well. Hence the reduction in strength is greater than it appears from the “obvious” reduction in muscle volume. Weak muscles, in turn affect bones, tendons and ligaments. Structural integrity of the skeleton maintains optimal posture and gait. Decrease in bone density in later years can lead to falls, fractures, stooped posture which affects balance. Weak muscles also lead to changes in the structure and properties of tendons and ligaments. The increased rigidity and less elasticity make tendons and ligaments weak and prone to injury.

Intervention for sarcopenia includes exercise and amino acid supplementation. After 60, resistance exercise (weights) and balance exercises with nutritional supplements, including protein, have shown positive results in reversing sarcopenia. Walking improves aerobic capacity. Vitamin D and calcium are needed for bone loss and vitamin B12 for the nervous system. Exercise and nutrition which increases muscle mass in turn improves the structure and strength of tendons thus decreasing incidence of injury. It is important to note that taking high protein without exercise has been shown not to have much benefit. Furthermore, it has been suggested that acidosis can occur with a high protein-based diet, especially with animal based protein; acidosis is said to aggravate sarcopenia. Alkalinizing effect of vegetables neutralizes the acidosis produced by protein.



Inflammation in the elderly is a very serious condition affecting all cells of the body including the nervous system. Under normal healthy conditions, inflammation is body’s protective response to harmful stimuli such as bacteria, viruses, irritants and damaged cells; one can feel it by sensing heat, pain and swelling at the site of inflammation. The acute inflammation is good; it fights an acute disease/injury over a short period of time. On the other hand, chronic low-grade systemic inflammation is a common manifestation of ageing. Even in the absence of any chronic disease there are two to four-fold elevations in circulating levels of pro-inflammatory factors in the elderly when compared to the young. Many mechanisms contribute to age-related inflammation. In a previous article on Skin we talked about ageing of cells; free radicals were defined as metabolic by-products in cells that wind up oxidizing our cells just like rusting metal. They alter or destroy DNA. In a healthy young adult, 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. As people age, the prevalence of conditions associated with inflammation increase, such as obesity, physical inactivity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, osteoarthritis, and Alzheimer’s disease, making it difficult to figure out if these conditions are a cause or consequence of the excessive inflammation in the elderly. To fight ageing and frailty one has to prevent or reduce this chronic low-level inflammation. Stress releases cortisol which is inflammatory; reducing stress at any age is beneficial. Insulin is an inflammatory hormone. Eat foods with low glycemic index, that is, foods that require less insulin for metabolism. Exercise is a strong anti-inflammatory activity--exercise does the same work for muscle cells that insulin does. Both, insulin and exercise allow entry of glucose into muscle fibres by slightly different mechanisms, but the end result is the same. Omega 3 is anti-inflammatory; vitamins C and E are antioxidants and hence reduce chronic inflammation. Blue berries, green leafy vegetables, walnuts, ground flax seeds, salmon, ginger and turmeric in your diet fight inflammation.

Analogous to physical frailty, the risk of developing Social Frailty starts early, maybe in 50s or even earlier, it gets worse during later decades of life. It is defined as insufficient participation in social networking with a lack of contacts

and support. Some of the circumstances that lead to social frailty are loss of one's spouse, close friends, image related to work, and status related to talent and assets. Social deficits contribute to overall frailty whereas social participation and self-management abilities make one feel empowered to make important decisions, they play an important role in enhancing cognitive ability. Active ageing has become a catch phrase for healthy ageing. However, active ageing should not always mean economically productive ageing, that is not the only way to contribute to the society. At an age when one becomes very frail, just being socially engaged in leisure is good for everyone; staying cognitively engaged and sharp, with decreased dependence is an indirect contribution to the society. Older adults who are too frail to be volunteering or being physically engaged, should just do something that you can--read, play cards—use Information and Communication Technologies for life long learning. Watching TV or movies does not have to be a passive phenomenon, learn more about what you have just watched from the internet. Ask for social support or help out a neighbour/friend without providing un-asked for advice.

Frailty added to other disease(s): When an older adult has a disease, frailty could be a consequence; for example, depression or hypothyroidism can make a person frail. Under such conditions, treat the disease and add interventions for general frailty. It is common for older adults to have multiple morbidities and therefore, be on multiple medications. Any intervention can have side effects. It is important that we check what we are taking, and if there are interactions of various medications, supplements and foods. Most of the information is available on the internet, it is an individual's responsibility to check this information, take it to our physicians to change or remove certain medications. One has to assess relative harms and benefits that one gets from too little or excessive amounts of intervention.

In conclusion: Adapting to new situations in life is considered a positive quality. Young people dread old age, but most older adults adapt to each new decade. Even though many individuals might have financial and health concerns, most old people are positive about old age with a sense of liberation and independence. Still, frailty ultimately hits every old person. Even though it is not a disease, it does need intervention. Fight it—eat well, exercise and socialize. If and when you arrive at a stage where frailty is not reversible, don't despair, make peace with frailty. If you are able to, get dressed, go for a walk even if is inside a mall, or just around your building. Have regular hearing and vision testing, weakening of one or both could be affecting your independence and social life. Make sure your environment at home is safe. Avoid objects, including small rugs, where you can trip and fall,

avoid reaching high shelves if your stability is not good. Have a very positive attitude, your health depends primarily on you with added support from your health care team and family when needed. Considering the increase in older population, Denmark recently established the Ministry of Elderly Care to work along with the Ministry of Health. Their main message to the older adults is -you take care of your health and we will take care of your illness. Even if you think there is nothing wrong with you, take preventative measures now. Sarcopenia and inflammation are serious issues in older adults, try to minimize both. Stay socially engaged; if you do not have friends around, go outside and read. There are a large number of places that need volunteers-- <https://www.salutetoseniorservice.ca/> ❖

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***Active ageing has become a catch phrase for healthy ageing. However, active ageing should not always mean economically productive ageing, that is not the only way to contribute to the society”***



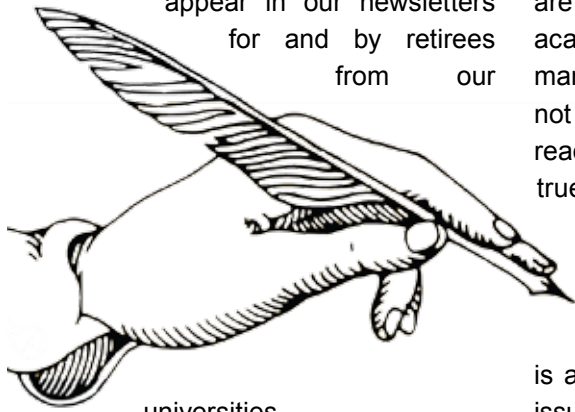


## Editorial

### The SFU Retirees National Writing Prize

In the coming year, 2020, we will be granting a prize--\$250.00--and citation for the best article printed in a newsletter for retirees in a Canadian university.

This award is intended to increase the quality of writing in the articles that appear in our newsletters for and by retirees from our



universities.

Articles will be due on January 15th 2021, and should be sent to the Retirees Association at [retirees@sfu.ca](mailto:retirees@sfu.ca)

Please do not send us articles reprinted from other journals.

#### Entries:

Each entry should list the number of words, the page number, author's name and university on each page as a header or footer.

Each entry should be double-spaced, with 1" margins.

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 retiree 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 and so are any of the issues of ageing: 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 1000 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 wondering how long or short a piece would be acceptable, note that this article consists of 450 words.

Start your engines!

#### Checklist for Authors:

1. Write a great piece of no more than 1000 words.
2. Make sure that it is as original, creative and skilled as you can make it.
3. Name the kind of piece you are attempting to write: fiction, nonfiction, creative nonfiction, poetic fiction, or some other kind of form.
4. Write your name and address, email, telephone number and title of your story.

Send in your entries to: [retirees@sfu.ca](mailto:retirees@sfu.ca)