



UBC REPORTS

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Thanksgiving Peril Researchers Talk Turkey About Your Food Choices



PHOTO: TRISTAN POYSER

This Thanksgiving, UBC food experts explore the pros and cons of organic and conventionally farmed turkeys.

BY BASIL WAUGH

Anyone who has ever feasted a little too heartily at Thanksgiving knows some of the uncomfortable implications of the food choices we make.

But UBC researchers say the digestive perils of one too many drumsticks pale in comparison to the consequences of the food choices consumers make in the grocery aisle.

Prof. Art Bomke of UBC's Faculty of Land and Food Systems (FLFS) says the choices we make at the checkout relate to everything from global warming to avian flu and livestock welfare. "There are global implications to the decisions we make with our food dollars," he says.

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Household Items May Pose Danger During Pregnancy

BY HILARY THOMSON

What do popcorn bags, frying pans and mattresses have in common?

Chemicals contained in these and other common household items may affect maternal thyroid function and may lead to impaired fetal brain development, according to PhD candidate Glenys Webster, of UBC's School of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene.

Webster is leading an investigation into the effects of polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), chemicals that are used as flame-retardants, and perfluorinated compounds (PFCs), used as stain or water repellents. The chemicals are found at low levels in all Canadians. They leach out of many products, can last for a long time in both indoor and outdoor environments, and accumulate in both animals and humans via dust, foods and air.

Called the Chemical, Health and Pregnancy study (CHirP), Webster believes it is one of the first such studies in the world. She is collaborating with investigators from BC



PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Chemicals found in household items such as non-stick cookware and flame-retardant furnishings may affect fetal brain development.

Women's Hospital & Health Centre, Health Canada, and the University of Alberta.

Animal studies have shown that certain PBDEs interfere with the thyroid system, critical to

fetal development. A butterfly-shaped gland in the lower front part of the neck, the thyroid

controls metabolism and keeps basic functions such as body temperature, blood pressure and energy levels working properly.

It is known that thyroid disruption in early pregnancy can result in neurological damage in babies, but the mechanism — including any negative environmental factors — is not known. Although there are no known human health risks from common levels of PBDEs and PFCs, very few studies have been conducted in humans, says Webster, so at this point nothing is conclusive.

She suspects the chemicals may put additional stress on the thyroid system. Animal and laboratory studies have shown that certain PBDEs can mimic thyroid hormones and bind to a transport protein that sends the damaging "imposter" hormone from the mother to the fetus, possibly directly to the brain.

"Until recently, we didn't have the analytical methods we need to measure low levels of these chemicals and study effects on human health," says Webster, whose previous research focused on environmental toxicology and looking at how chemicals

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IN THE NEWS

Highlights of UBC Media Coverage in September 2006. COMPILED BY BASIL WAUGH



PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

UBC fisheries expert Daniel Pauly says overfishing is causing global fishers to target prey lower down the food chain.

UBC Prof. Exposes U.S. Congress 'Misinformation'

Research by UBC political scientist Paul Quirk has U.S. media outlets questioning the truthfulness of some U.S. Congress members.

Associated Press, Washington Post, Chicago Tribune, and the Des Moines Register all cited Quirk's new book *Deliberative Choices: Debating Public Policy in Congress*, which says U.S. Congress members tell the truth only about a quarter of the time when debating major legislation in the House and Senate.

Using debate transcripts, Quirk and a Temple University colleague found claims made in only 11 of 43 major debates between 1995-2000 were largely substantiated by facts. They characterized 16 claims as unsubstantiated, and another 16 as an artful mix of fact and fiction.

"Dumb or dishonest?" one editorial board wrote in response to Quirk's findings. "Either way, it's unsettling that Congress apparently runs the country on misinformation."

Sex is Good for Evolution: UBC Researcher

Most major Canadian dailies, including the *National Post*, *Vancouver Sun*, *Calgary Herald*

and the *Halifax Daily News*, reported that UBC Zoology Prof. Sarah Otto has determined scientifically what most people have discovered through trial and error – that by and large sex is good for us.

Previous evolutionary theories – typically based on the assumption of an infinite population – have failed to find a clear role for sexual reproduction in evolution.

In a research paper published in the journal *Nature*, Otto and a co-author from the University of Edinburgh explain that in real populations – which are never infinitely large – reproduction through sex breaks apart harmful mutations and creates new gene combinations, giving species better adaptability.

Jellyfish Sandwiches?

Daniel Pauly, a UBC professor and one of the world's leading fisheries conservation researchers, comments in an article in the *L.A. Times* and the *Edmonton Journal* on the state of global fish stocks.

Pauly's research shows that annual global fish catches have been declining since the late 1980s, and the number of big fish, such as tuna, swordfish and cod, has dropped 90 per cent over the last 50 years. He says

fishing boats now have to pursue smaller prey, often lower on the food chain.

"We are eating bait and moving on to jellyfish and plankton," says Pauly.

UBC United Way Looks to Grow

The UBC United Way Committee has set an aggressive target this year, seeking to improve campus-wide participation with at least 100 new donors and increasing UBC's United Way dollars by seven per cent over last year.

The United Way Committee and all its volunteers welcome Andrew Parr, Director of UBC Food Services, as the 2006 United Way Campaign Chair. Andrew, along with dozens of other dedicated volunteers, will be putting in many extra hours this fall as they help UBC reach its campaign goal.

"We want to continue to grow UBC's campaign this year through increasing campus-wide participation and awareness," says Parr. "We are planning to do this through growing our already successful special events and presentations in some very supportive environments. Even though this campaign is already one of the largest in the Lower Mainland, our potential for exponential growth is really exciting."

As an organization committed to the community, the United Way embodies the values of community involvement and social responsibility that Trek 2010 promotes, says Eilis Courtney, Senior Coordinator for UBC United Way.

For more information about this year's campaign, contact Kate Petrusa, Campaign Coordinator at 604 822-8929 or united.way@ubc.ca or visit www.unitedway.ubc.ca.

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TURKEYS *continued from page 1*

To those looking to prepare a people- and planet-friendly feast this Thanksgiving, Bomke and FLFS graduate students Liska Richer and Yona Sipos offer two key questions, plus some philosophical advice.

“There are two simple questions everyone should be asking of their food: where does it come from, and how was it grown?” says Richer. “After that, it is a matter of choosing the products that reflect your personal values, which hopefully are connected to the communities you live in.”

Organic Vs. Conventionally Farmed Turkeys

While many consider turkey dinner the ultimate comfort food, Bomke says there is much about conventional turkey farming to make people uncomfortable.

A major concern about these farms is the use of antibiotics in feed, which Bomke says has significant implications for the health of poultry flocks and surrounding farmlands.

“The intention is to keep the birds healthy, but with systematic antibiotic use there is concern that — like in humans — pathogens will mutate and become resistant to medications,” says Bomke. “The spread of avian diseases is, of course, the big fear.”

The build-up of turkey antibiotics in manure is another major concern with this practice, says Bomke, who recently initiated a research project on the issue. “What happens when this manure is used to grow other crops?” How long do antibiotics last? These questions need to be asked.”

Sipos says the desire for non-medicated food is a chief reason people gravitate towards organic fare. “There are some questions about what organic means, but mainly people who chose organics are motivated by the desire to avoid things

like pesticides, antibiotics, and hormones.”

Another reason, she says, is the “ethical” question of access to the outdoors. Organic turkeys are much more likely to be free range — given access to outdoor pastures — than their conventional counterparts, which typically live indoors.

Bomke says shopping organically does come with a tradeoff, however. “The cost to the consumer tends to be higher, mainly because organic farms lack the scale and efficiencies of conventional farms. So there is a price to shopping this way — although it will vary from grocery store to farmers’ market.”

The Food Miles Factor

In most major Canadian cities, Richer says, shoppers will find traditional Thanksgiving fixings from both local and international sources. “In Vancouver, you can find Fraser Valley vegetables from less than 150 km away, side-by-side with goods from Idaho, California, Mexico — places that are 1,000, 2,500 km away.”

Her advice in this situation is simple: “Go local.” She says locally grown food is fresher than imports, better for the local economy, and — with less distance to travel — has the major environmental advantage of reduced fuel use and thus fewer global warming-causing carbon-emissions.

Richer says most North Americans would be shocked to learn that the average products’ food miles — the total distance from farm to plate — is now between 2,500 and 4,000 kilometres, according to the World Watch Institute, a 25 percent increase from 1980.

Reversing this trend requires a “top-down, bottom-up

approach,” says Sipos. “On one hand, governments and local producers must do a better job to communicate the benefits of buying locally. But people also need to make it a priority to know where their food is from, which means reading signs and labels, and if they are not clear, asking clerks.”

Back Yard Successes

Sipos names the growing 100-Mile Diet movement, where participants live on food and drink from within 100 miles of their home, as evidence that Canadians are thinking more about eating locally. The diet’s co-creator, Vancouverite James MacKinnon, recently came to UBC to share his experiences with Sipos and her fellow FLFS students.


Bomke and Richer also applaud the UBC Food System Project as an example of an institutional commitment to sustainable food decisions. Now in its sixth year, the initiative brings together UBC students, faculty, and staff to brainstorm ways of increasing the sustainability of UBC’s food system, from production to waste management.

Richer says that during the project, UBC Food Services has introduced free-range eggs, local UBC Farm organic salad greens and herbs, and most recently fair trade coffee; the Alma Mater Society has introduced an ethical purchasing policy and purchases UBC farm products whenever possible; and UBC Waste Management has implemented a Get Caught Composting Campaign, where volunteers stake out campus compost bins and reward people caught composting regularly.

Another major opportunity to spread the word about eating locally and organically is the UBC Sustainability Fair on Oct. 18, says Richer. Hosted by faculty, staff, students, and other organizations, she says the event will help to raise awareness and participation in campus sustainability initiatives. **R**



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Researchers Sniff Out Causes of Wine Aroma Defects

Is there wine on the table this Thanksgiving? Winemakers agonize over their vintages, patiently tending them along the path to perfection. Now they are enlisting the help of science to bolster their craft.

BY BUD MORTENSON

Chemistry researchers at UBC Okanagan – in the heart of B.C.’s wine country – have embarked on North America’s first large-scale examination of how contaminants such as unwanted yeasts and forest fire smoke can affect the aroma of wines.

Each year about 98 per cent of British Columbia’s 17,000 tonnes of wine grapes are grown in the sunny, vineyard-rich Okanagan Valley. With more than 60 wineries taking advantage of such abundance, the region is an ideal place to study issues that affect grape and wine production.

“Certainly the 2003 season with the Okanagan Mountain

Park fire provided ample opportunity for additional ‘seasoning’ of the grapes,” says Nigel Eggers, Associate Professor of Chemistry with the Irving K. Barber School of Arts and Sciences. “Forest fires are known to produce phenols and guaiacols from the burning of lignins in trees, and these chemicals can impart a smokey, burnt smell to nearby fruit.”

Eggers and post-doctoral research fellow Sierra Rayne have synthesized versions of the compounds known to occur in smoke. Along with some innovative lab and field-based ‘burning’ experiments on fir, pine, and other native Okanagan trees and grasses, they are using new instruments



UBC Okanagan researchers Sierra Rayne, left, and Nigel Eggers sampled from oak barrels at 10 Okanagan Valley wineries this summer as part of their research into yeast and smoke-induced wine aromas.

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PHOTO: BUD MORTENSON

Nursing for Dummies

BY HILARY THOMSON

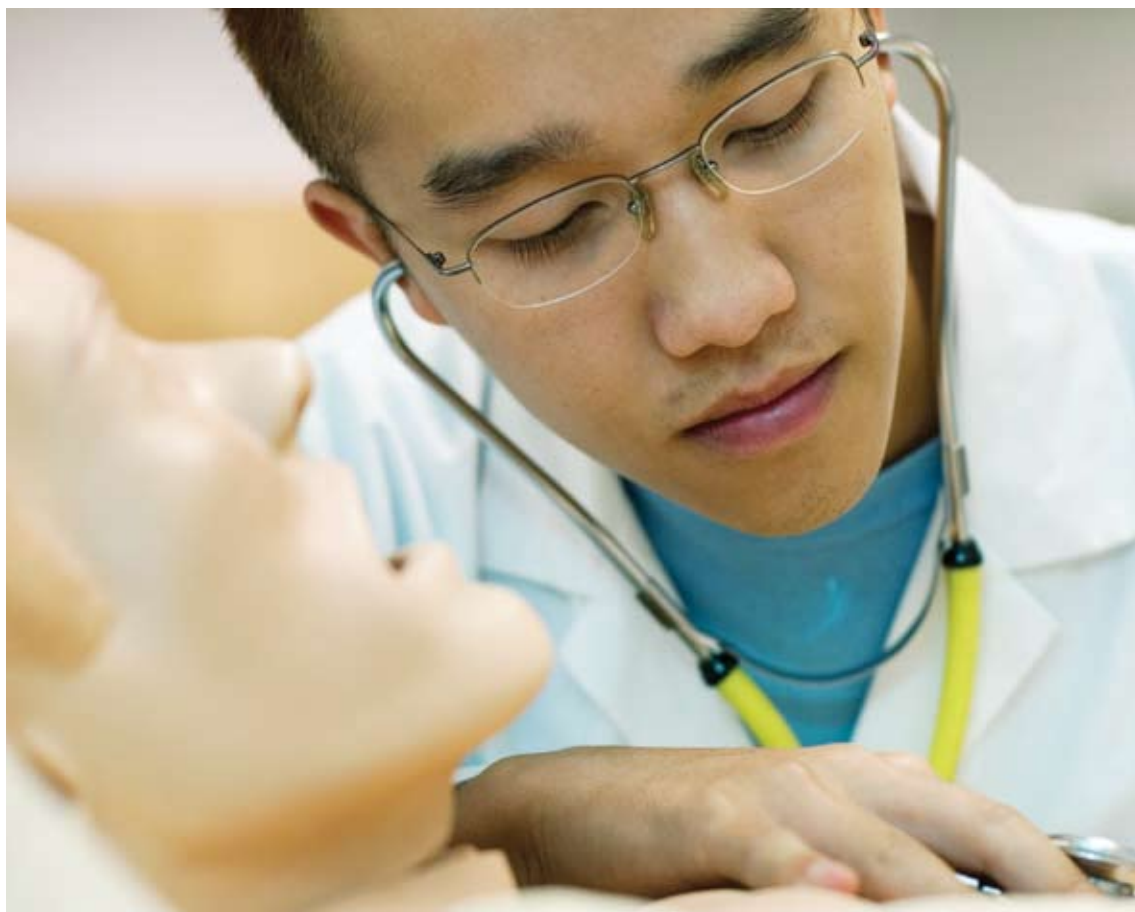
A high-class dummy has moved into the School of Nursing and he's proving to be Mr. Popularity.

He is SimMan™, a life-sized computerized patient simulator that breathes, talks, and has a pulse and blood pressure. School of Nursing Asst. Prof. Bernie Garrett spearheaded efforts to purchase two of the \$50,000 simulators, now dubbed Gordon and Harry.

"Our goal is to improve the student experience so they are better prepared for practice," says Garrett, who joined the School of Nursing in 2003 and has a research background in educational technology. "The mannequin also allows for consistency in the instruction and a standardized learning experience."

There is growing interest in using high-fidelity teaching mannequins, says Garrett, who believes the School of Nursing is at the forefront among Canadian schools for interactive learning technologies.

The mannequin is almost creepy in its lifelike qualities: it can moan, wheeze and simulate vomiting; has interchangeable



Third-year Nursing student, Kelvin Bei, checks vital signs on a computerized patient simulator.

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

male and female genitalia for catheterization training; an airway system that can mimic complications such as tongue swelling or spasm of the larynx; and pliable skin for injection practice. It can describe its symptoms through pre-programmed vocalizations or instructors can record their own script.

An entire multi-faceted clinical scenario can be programmed into the simulator, and it is

lifelike enough to respond to physical cues. For example, the mannequin can stop breathing or exhibit a weak pulse – with vital signs displayed on an adjacent computer monitor. When students resuscitate the patient, the mannequin starts breathing normally, pulse gets stronger and improvements are displayed on the monitor.

The simulator can also be programmed to reproduce emergency conditions – such

as anaphylactic shock or a punctured lung – that students may not have encountered working with real patients. Videotaping students' work and being able to precisely reproduce teaching scenarios allows instructors and students to better analyze and improve skill levels. In addition, teaching sessions can be filmed and streamed to the Internet for further review, and instructors can employ problem-based learning strategies using

patient simulation.

"This is a powerful learning tool because it is so dynamic and interactive," says Garrett. "What students learn from the mannequin stays with them – it's an immersive experience."

Previously, students have practiced using immobile, rigid mannequins and instructors would describe patients' responses to their actions or what the students should hear through their stethoscopes or feel when taking a pulse.

"You can watch patients suffering from pneumonia, arrhythmia or cardiac arrest on TV, or listen to your professor lecture in class, but the opportunity to practice my skills on a "patient" exhibiting those symptoms is valuable and rare," says third-year Nursing student Jenny Szeto.

Despite his popularity, SimMan™ will not replace actual clinical experience, says Garrett.

"Even though simulations boost skills and confidence, students have to work with real patients to experience the unpredictability of dealing with a person, their reaction to care, the input of family members or unforeseen crises," he says.

Garrett will be evaluating the simulators this year with both undergraduate and graduate students. ■



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PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Jo-Anne Dillabough handed out disposable cameras and asked students to document their neighborhood — an inner-city housing project.

“Ginas,” “Thugs” and “Gangstas”: Two-Year Study of Vancouver, Toronto Youth Subcultures

BY LORRAINE CHAN

Everyone at this inner-city Toronto high school knows them as the “Gangstas” for their taste in baggy trousers, rap music, chains and tattoos – distinct from “Ginos,” who prefer tight clothes, dance music and hair gel.

Over on Vancouver’s Eastside, a similar but different scene plays out at a high school where one of the main groups is sometimes called the “Hardcore Asians.” Despite their name, the members nonetheless allow some non-Asians to join their ranks and have a reputation for defending kids against racist bullying.

“These kids are creating these identities and groups as a way to survive,” says Assoc. Prof. Jo-Anne Dillabough in the Faculty of Education.

She observes that subcultures are present in all economic classes, but the conflict and tensions are more substantially felt among youth living in lower-income neighborhoods.

“Some girls feel pressure to take on an identity of toughness to accrue power because they feel they don’t have any. In some cases, if a young person takes on a ‘gangsta’ persona, it may be for reasons concerning the need for

race and class protection.”

A sociologist, Dillabough studies the impact of globalization on youth subcultures. Her recently published paper, “Ginas,” “Thugs,” and “Gangstas”: Young People’s Struggles to Become Somebody in Working-Class Urban Canada, details the 2001-03 ethnographic findings of her research with Grade 9 and 10 students in Vancouver and Toronto.

Dillabough has won further funding from Canada’s Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council to expand her study to include inner-city schools in Melbourne, Australia and Hackney, London’s poorest borough.

“The more educators can respect and understand why these youth subcultures and social rituals exist, the more they’re likely to make school relevant and meaningful to young people’s lives.”

Dillabough says when she interviewed the Toronto students, few were certain they would see high school graduation. “That’s worrisome because a few generations ago, in an industrial labour market, these young people would have very likely found labouring jobs

or would have had more secure employment options.”

She says there’s an urgent need for post-industrial societies like Canada to provide viable education and support to young people who are buffeted by the forces of a globalized economy that favours the middle class, particularly knowledge-based workers.

By gaining an inside view of these subcultures, Dillabough says teachers and policy makers can tackle the streaming that occurs now where certain students or even entire schools get labelled low- or non-achieving. As well, she says it’s vital to address the forms of peer conflict students face in urban inner-city schools around flash points of race, class, sexuality, gender and global change.

“One way to reduce tensions among youth subcultures is by providing students a means to incorporate their lived experiences in our strategies to engage them,” she says. “Even more importantly, provincial and federal governments need to respond in concrete ways to the rising poverty among young people.”

As part of the study, Dillabough invites students to express themselves and

to develop critical analysis through visual projects that include: media and film analysis; photography; self-portraits; and future employment images and time-lines.

“This provides a forum for young people to address topics like citizenship, immigration, security, identity and belonging,” explains Dillabough, “and to stop blaming themselves as failures when we’re really looking at systemic failure.”


In one assignment, she handed out disposable cameras so students could document their neighborhood – a Toronto housing project.

“Some young people said they couldn’t see themselves living anywhere else because at least they wouldn’t feel out of place like they might in a middle-class neighbourhood. Others talked about the shame they felt about living in public projects, or the fact that police would never answer an emergency call.”

She says 20 years of cuts to educational and social programs in Ontario – with similar belt tightening in B.C. over the past 10 years – have taken their toll. There are fewer dollars going toward family support, social assistance and programs such as subsidized housing. Many school and community programs to support youth have disappeared, while their families are finding it


more difficult to rise above cycles of poverty and social despair.

“One in five families live below the poverty line in large Canadian cities,” she says. “Immigrant and asylum-seeking youth are often the ones who face the most difficult economic challenges.”

As well, Dillabough says there’s a strong move worldwide to focus on education standards through literacy tests and school assessments. “With so many cuts to the support structure of schools, many marginalized, low-income students can’t compete equally with their middle class peers.” 

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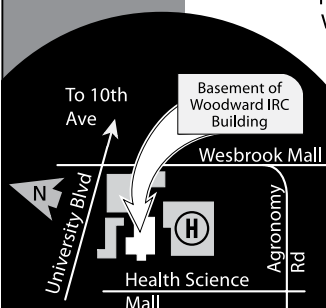
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Retirees Risk Falling into Poverty



Economist Kevin Milligan looks at how aging people make financial decisions upon their transition from work to retirement.

BY NICK MELLING

Economic theories frequently refer to the "rational man," or homo economicus.

But what happens when this rational man or woman gets old, retires and begins to draw a pension? As his or her income, health and lifestyle change, how will he or she adjust saving and spending habits?

And, for that matter, is this man or woman even so rational to begin with?

These are the questions that Asst. Prof. Kevin Milligan is aiming to answer. Armed with a grant of \$58,309 from the Social Sciences and Humanities

The research will also probe how health-related shocks, such as an immobilizing illness or the death of a spouse, will influence the way people manage their wealth and assets.

The project may help to shed light on two competing theories about how people make economic decisions: the so-called "Lifecycle Model," which takes the view that people are essentially rational and forward-looking, and the "Behavioural Model," which argues that people are more heavily influenced by immediate concerns.

Milligan's data for both projects will be drawn from a

inconvenience, but are not fatal or seriously debilitating.

The second part of the project will analyze the general patterns of income and consumption among people who are about to retire or have recently done so.

Milligan says, people in this category run the risk of falling into poverty once they stop working. This is particularly true for those who retire before the age of 65 and are not yet eligible to receive their government pensions.

But even establishing the rate of poverty in these circumstances is not a clear-cut process, given that there are at least two ways of measuring it. The

It's kind of weird to say I want to spend three years studying ages 62, 63, and 64, but that's exactly what I want to do.

Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), Milligan looks to find out what factors guide the economic decisions of aging people in Canada and the United States, especially during the transition to retirement from work.

"It's kind of weird to say I want to spend three years studying ages 62, 63, and 64, but that's exactly what I want to do," says Milligan, who has been a member of the Economics Department since 2001.

Milligan says he hopes his research will provide economists and governments valuable information about this pivotal stage of life. The elderly are one of the most economically vulnerable groups in society, he says, largely because most of their economic decisions lie behind them.

Milligan will examine how people prepare – or don't prepare – for retirement, in terms of their income and consumption patterns.

Statistics Canada survey and a U.S. Health and Retirement Study from the University of Michigan.

His first task will be to study the link between health and fiscal decision-making. As Milligan notes, this is a topic that has been examined before and his research will be guided by previous observations.

"For example, one of the benchmark findings is that people will very rarely sell their house unless there's a severe health shock to the family," he says.

"We'll look at these different possible hypotheses as to why," he says. "Is it financial need, is it physical need, is it emotional need?"

A severe shock, according to Milligan, generally means either the death of one spouse or a sudden need for full-time care. But there is also the matter of less pronounced traumas – injuries and illnesses that may cause discomfort and

usual method for determining poverty is to look at income and to designate a certain revenue threshold as the poverty line.

However, some economists have made the argument that what matters most for assessing quality of life at the end of the day is not income but consumption, since spending will not always be proportional to people's incomes.

Interestingly, this seems to be exactly what is going on with 60-65 year-olds in Canada, according to Milligan's previous research.

Though there is a spike in income-based poverty among this demographic group, the consumption-based poverty rate stays largely constant.

Such a trend, suggests Milligan, would on the surface seem to support the forward-thinking "Lifecycle Model" of human economic behaviour: people plan ahead, save money and are thus able to maintain their lifestyles even when their

continued on page 7

HOUSEHOLD *continued from page 1*

move through the environment. "There is considerable new interest among scientists to start looking at human health effects, and governments, including Canada's, are now making decisions about regulating these chemicals."

Researchers will enroll 150 pregnant women for the study, which was launched last month and will extend to September 2008. Participants will be asked, during in-home surveys, about exposures to PBDEs found in mattresses, furniture foam, plastic casing of electronic equipment such as TVs and computers, and other household goods. The women will also be asked about exposure to PFCs via products ranging from microwavable popcorn bags to non-stick cookware coatings and self-cleaning ovens.

Levels of PBDEs and PFCs will be measured in the air, dust and dryer lint in homes. Also, maternal blood samples will be collected in mid-pregnancy

and a sample of umbilical cord blood will be collected at delivery. Levels of both groups of chemicals won't be analyzed until all 150 subjects have been recruited.

In humans, accumulation rates and toxicity relative to exposure levels are not well understood. It is known that PFCs are some of the most persistent compounds known, and the half-life of PBDEs in human tissues ranges from approximately 15 days to six years. However, fast-degrading PBDEs don't actually "clear" the body after two weeks. They transform into slower degrading chemicals and persist. A puzzling factor is that age doesn't necessarily affect PBDE accumulation.

In North America, PBDE levels in humans are approximately 10-100 times higher than levels found in Europe or Japan, according to a review of PBDE levels in humans conducted in 2004. Health Canada data showed PBDE levels in

Vancouver mothers' breast milk increased approximately 15-fold from 1992-2002, but are still lower than levels found in certain areas of the US. Canada has this year prohibited the importation of certain chemicals that turn into PFCs.

Should expectant mothers be alarmed?

"We're not expecting to see dramatic changes here – the effects, if any, will be subtle but may still be important, and show a trend that should be monitored," says Webster. "I think it's important to start looking at connections so we can take precautionary measures, if needed. Even if effects are subtle, because virtually everyone is exposed to these chemicals, any small effects may still represent a public health concern."

For more information about the study, visit www.cher.ubc.ca/chirp.

BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre is an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority. **R**

WINE *continued from page 3*

to better understand the sources, distribution, and levels of these smoke-related compounds in local grapes and wines.

Eggers has received nearly \$200,000 in funding from the British Columbia Wine Institute, the Investment Agriculture Foundation of British Columbia, and the Western Diversification Program to conduct extensive field sampling at small, medium, and large wineries and vineyards in the Okanagan.

"These grants have allowed us to stay busy working with viticulturalists, winemakers, and research scientists at Agriculture Canada's Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre in Summerland, B.C., sampling from wine cellars and vineyards up and down the Okanagan," says Eggers.

A major part of their research is exploring the impact of Brettanomyces (Brett) -- an undesirable yeast that can produce aroma defects in wines. Brett often exists in wine barrels, but can also find its way into wine from the raw grapes. Rayne

notes that by causing aroma defects in wine, the yeast has become a bane to winemakers in many parts of the world.

"We're collecting nearly 100 samples a month from individual oak barrels at 10 wineries and analyzing them for 4-ethylphenol and 4-ethylguaiacol, the two compounds with horsey, leathery and smokey, barnyard-like odours the Brett yeast is known to produce in high concentrations," Rayne explains.

While collecting samples, Eggers and Rayne are also monitoring parameters such as dissolved oxygen, temperature, humidity, and sulfur dioxide (a preservative to prevent unwanted bacterial and yeast growth during barrel aging and in the bottle) -- in the hopes of better understanding the underlying production factors that can allow Brettanomyces growth in one barrel, while another barrel right next door can go untouched.

This work is the first comprehensive North American

survey for Brett defects in wines, and will indicate whether the rigorous hygiene practiced in Okanagan wineries is holding off infection from this yeast. Rayne notes that experience in other winemaking regions has shown that once Brett takes hold, it is very difficult to control or get rid of.

"This is research that may help improve grape and wine production not only in the Okanagan but around the world," Eggers says. The research will continue for two years and cover progress of the 2005 and 2006 vintages, as well as the analysis of 2003 and 2004 vintages that have already spent years in a barrel.

"Together, the two projects are helping to establish a world-class wine chemistry research centre at UBC Okanagan," says Eggers. "By working closely with industry and government, we are striving to maintain and improve the quality of our local wines." **R**

RETIREES *continued from page 6*

incomes diminish.

However, this is far from definite and Milligan hopes his research will provide some answers.

"If we find out that the initial findings hold up, that income might bounce around a whole lot, but consumption stays really constant over this transition period, that gives us some more evidence in favour of the Lifecycle Model," he says.

As for the rigorous work of number crunching and analysis, Milligan will have the help of two colleagues, Professors Michael Baker of the University of Toronto and Courtney Coile of Wellesley College, Massachusetts.

He says he's not undertaking this project solely out of academic interest. At a time when the Baby Boomer generation is nearing retirement,

studies of poverty among the elderly may be critical in shaping government actions toward seniors.

"On the public policy side of things, I think it's pretty obvious that for designing pension policy, whether public or private, having a good idea of the economic risks that are faced by households as they make the transition is pretty important," he says.

"If everyone is doing okay, then maybe we don't need to spend the extra billion dollars on seniors, but if there are some real pockets of poverty out there, then maybe we should know that."

Milligan has been investigating the economic conditions of seniors since the late 1990s, when he researched RRSPs and retirement savings plans for his PhD thesis (University of Toronto, 2001).

He has had at least one

opportunity to make practical use of his expertise since then.

"My mother is in her 60s, and it certainly gives her a great advantage to have someone who's thought a lot about these kinds of things, to give her advice," he says.

Milligan likes the idea that his work might lead to improved conditions for retirees. But as far as his current research goes, he's not even sure yet what he could tell them.

"I don't know where this is going to go," says Milligan. "What makes me most excited about the project is that I don't know what we're going to find, and so I'm intrigued by what it's going to look like." **R**

Nick Melling recently received his Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of British Columbia. He plans to begin law school in 2007.

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UNIVERSITY TOWN

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UTown Welcomes Jan Fialkowski

The University Neighbourhoods Association (UNA) has recently appointed its first Executive Director, Jan Fialkowski. Jan is certainly up to the task, and brings an accomplished record in building and managing campus and community relations. Her extensive experience in both municipal governance and working with university communities means Jan comes with a perspective from both sides of the relationship.

Before taking up her new role with the UNA, Jan was the director of residence and housing at Simon Fraser University for six years. During this time, Jan helped SFU implement its new \$43-million student residences, increasing the student accommodation by almost 50 per cent in only two years. Although SFU has a much smaller student-housing program than UBC, this change significantly improved the social vitality of the campus and provided much needed affordable housing on campus.

Jan has also acted as the associate director of residence and food service at Trent University in Peterborough, Ont., and has been involved in municipal governance in Ontario.



Jan Fialkowski, the UNA's new Executive Director.

Co-Development Pushes Work-Study Ratio to 68 Per Cent

UBC's co-development program is helping UBC exceed its work-study targets and the first project in Wesbrook Place has already received a positive response from UBC faculty and staff.

"Our minimum work-study target according to the UBC Official Community Plan is 50 per cent," said Dennis Pavlich, UBC Vice-President of External and Legal Affairs. "Reaching 68 per cent marks a huge success for our housing program and is indicative of the quality and livability of the community we are creating in University Town."

With three co-development projects now complete, all eyes are turning to the first project in Wesbrook Place called Keenleyside. Named after Hugh Llewellyn Keenleyside, a UBC academic and one of British Columbia's most eminent public servants, the project is a 72 unit, 4-storey condominium located in the heart of Wesbrook Place neighbourhood.

"This is our fourth co-development project in University Town," said Matthew Carter, Project Manager for UBC Properties Trust. "With each one interest has grown exponentially. Clearly the model is working and people are satisfied with the results."

Keenleyside is expected to be complete by Spring 2008. UBC Properties Trust's fifth co-development project will be unveiled sometime in 2007.

For further information on codevelopment opportunities visit www.codevelopment.ca

TREK Programs Ease Commuting Woes

The TREK Program Centre is improving campus transportation options by providing free carpool matching, secure lock-up facilities for cyclists, and transit discount programs, including the Employer Pass Program for staff and faculty and the student U-Pass program. A new car share program modeled after the Cooperative Auto Network is also being developed and will soon be available to departments across campus.

Also, TransLink's Community Shuttle program (route C20) started service at UBC in September 2006. C20 covers destinations and residences on the west side of campus including Totem Park, the Botanical

Gardens, Nitobe Gardens, the Museum of Anthropology, and the Chan Centre. C20 also serves residents on the east side of campus, including Hampton Place and Acadia/Fairview. All transfers, passes (including U-Pass), and cash fares are accepted and are consistent with the regional fare structure. For more information on the Community Shuttle program and other TREK initiatives visit www.trek.ubc.ca.

Chan Centre Launches Exciting Fall Program

Once again UBC's Chan Centre is bursting with high quality programming, including a world-class line-up of jazz, world, folk and classical music performances, plus lectures, theatre and more. The Chan Shun Concert Hall highlights include jazz trumpeter Chris Botti; world music stunners Juan de Marcos and the Afro-Cuban All Stars; blue-grass greats the Del McCoury Band; and many others.

For more information on the Chan Centre schedule visit www.chancentre.com



The New Campus Plan

UBC is ramping up for a major consultation on the future of UBC Vancouver's academic infrastructure. The campus-wide discussion will focus on UBC's architecture, built form, public realm, and, critically, how planning on campus is implemented.

"Our goal," said Joe Stott, Director of Campus and Community Planning, "is to consult with students, staff and faculty as broadly as possible to determine UBC's physical plan for the next 20 years. This includes addressing how we incorporate the values of Trek 2010, recent residential development, and the planning needs of a leading university."



Bird's eye view of the original 1914 Sharp & Thompson plan for UBC.

Consultations will roll out in four distinct phases starting with an opportunity for the community to define UBC's planning challenges.

This will be followed by a series of community charettes, and will end with the development of three community visions and a draft plan.

Public events will kick off this fall with a speaker series and a series of blogs to stimulate discussion and inspire the campus community to participate in shaping the future of the Point Grey campus. The exercise is expected to take 18 months to complete.

For further information visit www.campusplan.ubc.ca