

YORKU

DECEMBER 2005



Tops in Class

York's
Undergrad
Stars



PLUS: Dealing with Disaster ■ Hot Dogs ■ Digital Stories

BY PUSHING BEYOND TRADITIONAL BOUNDARIES,
GALILEO REDEFINED THE WAY WE SEE THE WORLD.

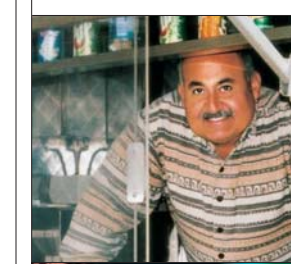


RESEARCH AT YORK IS DOING THE SAME THING.

York University is a leading research innovator in Canada. By working across disciplines and in collaboration with partners outside the university, researchers at York are able to develop innovative ideas and work with policy makers and practitioners to create meaningful change and a more globally competitive Canada.

Examples of York's current collaborations include the Innovation Synergy Centre in Markham (ISCM), which helps Canadian companies realize their full growth potential and become globally competitive. Similarly, YORKbiotech, a regional innovation network and not-for-profit community development corporation, uses the power of convergence in order to help its partners deliver innovative, real-world solutions to real-world challenges. A third initiative, The Consortium on New Media, Culture and Entertainment R&D in Toronto (CONCERT) will, in time, drive the creative potential of the region by facilitating innovative collaborations between the arts, technology and business.

Taken together, these three initiatives are indicative of the unique and relevant way in which York Research is helping to shape Canada's competitiveness and global influence. To learn more about how York's approach to research is redefining university research in Canada and fueling Canada's growth, visit www.research.yorku.ca.



- 4 Editor@YorkU** Scrutinizing the top students. BY BERTON WOODWARD
- 7 Leading Edge** How York saves energy. BY LORNA R. MARSDEN
- 6 Universe** Here's the Beef...What They're Reading...Sky Watcher...Don't Argue About It...Musical Tastes...Web of Isolation...A DOVE for Violence...On a Roll
- 12 Tops in Class** Our annual list of seven top undergrad achievers in mid-degree contains a surprise – there's one extra. BY MARTHA TANCOCK
- 18 Digital Storyteller** Caitlin Fisher is finding high-tech ways to bring "strange and unique linkages" into a narrative. BY DAVID FULLER
- 20 The Rights Stuff** Fiona Crean brings global experience and a passion for social justice to her new role as York's ombudsperson and director of the Centre for Human Rights. BY MICHAEL TODD
- 22 Murder Mystery** Award-winning filmmaker Eylem Kaftan searches for the truth about a family honour killing in Kurdish Turkey. BY MARTHA TANCOCK
- 24 A Tale of Two Disasters** York grads come to the rescue after the Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina. BY MARTHA TANCOCK
- 26 Off the Map** You can tell a lot about a person from the way they keep their office. This time: urban geographer Steven Flusty. BY MICHAEL TODD
- 28 York People** Hockey captain Serene Porter...Author-entrepreneur Leonard Brody
- 30 Back Talk** Smoke and boxes: learning about my husband's late father. BY PRISCILA UPPAL

DECEMBER 2005

Scrutinizing the top students. BY BERTON WOODWARD

Well Marked

If you're a fan of the early days of "Saturday Night Live", still going strong on DVD, you know Roseanne Roseannadanna, Gilda Radner's loud-mouthed character who liked to say, "It's always something." That high-pitched voice is starting to enter my head again, as we offer you our third annual look at some of the best students at York. Somehow, showing off these high achievers always breeds some kind of pointed response.

The first time out, in 2003, a faculty member noted that only two of the seven students were women. "How far did you guys look?" she asked. In fact, we have absolutely no control over the outcome. We scrupulously follow rankings compiled by the Registrar's Office on the basis of accumulated grade point averages at the end of second year, the halfway mark on most undergrad journeys. Happily, the women returned in force last year – five out of seven.

We've also been probed about our GPA parameters (54-66 credits by June 1), about uneven workloads within Faculties (can't do anything about that), even about our stylish approach to covers. Mainly, though, we've received considerable kudos for showing off highly intelligent students at their elegant best.

The fact is, the competition to get into our annual list will only get tougher. This year, ratings of York's incoming students from Ontario high schools were the best ever. Not only did more of them list York as their first choice – the University is now second only to U of T, up from fourth in 1999 – but their marks



were higher. Fully 85.4 per cent had an average of 75 per cent or better (up from 81.5 per cent last year) and 54.2 per cent had over 80 per cent (53.1 per cent last year). That means more than half of these new students were on their high-school honour roll.

So now we come to this year. Again, women dominate – five out of, er, eight. Yes, eight, though we're still polling only seven Faculties. You can turn to page 14 to see the latest twist. And let us know your thoughts. It's always something.

THIS MAGAZINE IS DESIGNED to be read by students as much as by any other group, on or off campus. But we're bimonthly, and there is plenty of more immediate information about York that students also want to see. Faculty and staff have long received the daily online newsletter *YFile*. This term, our Publications unit launched *Ylife*, a new weekly newsletter for students, offering campus news, sports, what's on and media reports. It has covered everything from fall convocation to "Kenny vs. Spenny", the offbeat TV reality show co-starring York grad Spencer Rice. If you haven't seen *Ylife* yet, go to www.yorku.ca/ylife. You can also subscribe. ■

Send letters, submissions, comments and ideas to editor@yorku.ca.

YORKU

THE MAGAZINE OF YORK UNIVERSITY

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 2

EDITOR Berton Woodward
bertonw@yorku.ca

MANAGING EDITOR Michael Todd
mtodd@yorku.ca

ART DIRECTOR James Nixon
jamien@yorku.ca

STAFF WRITERS David Fuller
dfuller@yorku.ca

Martha Tancock
mtancock@yorku.ca

ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR Cindy Wilce
cindyw@yorku.ca

COPY EDITOR Marie Kopf
mkopf@yorku.ca

DESIGN ASSISTANT Cameron Browning

CONTRIBUTORS

Spyros Bourboulis, Sophie Kinachtchouk, Lindsay Lozon, Susan King, Jeff Kirk, Rsquared, Priscila Uppal

YorkU is published bi-monthly, five times during the academic year, by the Marketing & Communications Division of York University. All issues circulate on York's campuses. The October, February and Summer editions are also sent to alumni, for a total circulation in those issues of 175,000 each.

CHIEF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
Richard Fisher

PUBLICATIONS DIRECTOR
Berton Woodward

ADVERTISING
Tel: 416-736-5058
E-mail: editor@yorku.ca

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40069546
Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

Marketing & Communications Division
West Office Building, York University
4700 Keele Street
Toronto, Ontario M3J 1P3
Tel: 416-736-5979
Fax: 416-736-5681

Ideas and opinions expressed in the articles do not necessarily reflect the ideas or opinions of the University or the editors.

ISSN 1708-4512

PRINTED IN CANADA



PHOTOGRAPHY BY HORST HERGET

York is fighting spiralling fuel costs with conservation. BY LORNA R. MARSDEN

Saving Our Energy

The bill for energy at York University has risen to nearly \$20 million this year, which will stretch our budget to breaking point despite our innovative conservation measures. The University has more than 80 buildings to heat and cool, a fleet of vehicles, plus greenhouses and specialized facilities. The spiralling costs of energy have hit them all.

York is committed to long-term sustainability and has taken many positive steps to lower its energy costs. Our Facilities Services unit has led the way with the installation of two co-generation plants in 1998 and 2002. The co-generation process is a cleaner, more efficient and less costly means of producing electricity because it recycles waste heat for the production of steam, which is then used for heating and cooling. Increased use of co-generation resulted in a reduction of 32 per cent in York's



This year's bill has risen to nearly \$20 million, stretching our budget to breaking point.

annual purchase of electricity from Toronto Hydro in 2004-2005. Our expanded capacity also means that York has been able to meet 65 per cent of its average annual electrical load through co-generation.

The co-generators themselves run on natural gas. So we always watch both the natural gas and the hydro markets to decide which option makes most sense for us at any given time. If hydro costs are going through the roof, gas co-generation is a good option. If natural gas prices are rising, hydro from the grid becomes an alternative. The bottom line is that the co-generation plants help York become more independent of outrageous energy prices.

To further reduce our heating and cooling costs, two new buildings sport roofs covered in turf – an insulating material through the ages. The Computer Science & Engineering Building is the first cold-weather green building built by a Canadian university. It uses about one-third of the usual energy required for heating and cooling. A roof garden serves as insulation and controls the discharge of rainwater into the sewers. Altogether,

Lorna R. Marsden is York's president and vice-chancellor.

the building uses 68 per cent less energy than comparable structures. Similarly, the Pond Road Residence, an undergraduate housing complex, features a planted roof that increases thermal insulation and stores ground water. This nine-storey residence uses the advanced technology of in-slab radiant heating and cooling, which consumes less energy and provides more comfort than conventional forced-air or electric heaters.

We have also made great strides in transportation management over the past few years. Many of our buses and vans are fuelled by natural gas, a cleaner fuel which lowers costs and reduces emissions. Those red campus buses, emblazoned with "Can't you see it's green?", draw attention to this sustainability measure. Moreover, the layout of the York campuses is specifically designed to encourage walking as the most efficient way to move around.

One of York's most promising initiatives will be the creation this academic year of an energy conservation partnership. A review panel with representatives from Facilities Services, the Faculty of Environmental Studies and the Faculty of Science & Engineering will identify an energy service company for an Energy Performance Contract to upgrade our infrastructure and deliver savings that could be worth millions over time. It's a good example of the work so many at York are doing to help us conserve. More power to them. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY COREY MIHALIUK

UNIVERSE

FOOD

Here's the Beef

Hot dog vendor Najjat Kader does a sizzling trade – especially after midnight

Hot dog sellers have become a ubiquitous part of York's campus landscape, much as they have on downtown Toronto streets. And for hungry students, they're often a friendly oasis when other food outlets are closed. At present there are four hot dog carts, from which the University annually collects about \$8,000 in "associated hot dog revenue", according to Food Services.

One of York's long-time vendors, Najjat Kader, has been selling dogs from his cart in the front of the Student Centre since 1997 (he also has a new one in front of the Joan & Martin Goldfarb Centre for Fine Arts, facing the TEL Building). Kader sells about 50 dogs a day – of all kinds. "I've got halal and kosher and I've added vegetarian. All my beef hotdogs are 100 per cent meat. No filler."

Kader has many loyal customers, he says, and it's probably because his dogs are fresh each day, never frozen and are high-quality meat. Curiously, some of his best business is done between midnight and 4am – the wee hours of pub night. "Students are hungry and there's not much open at that hour except me," he says. "At 4am a hot dog and a soft drink can be a lifesaver." Would Kader ever eat dogs from downtown stands? "Absolutely not. I only eat my own because I know they've been cooked right and I know what's in them." ■

ALL THE TRIMMINGS: Kader at work

BOOKS

What They're Reading

York people reveal what's on the bedside table

Dawn Bazely
biologist and invasive species expert,
Faculty of Science & Engineering

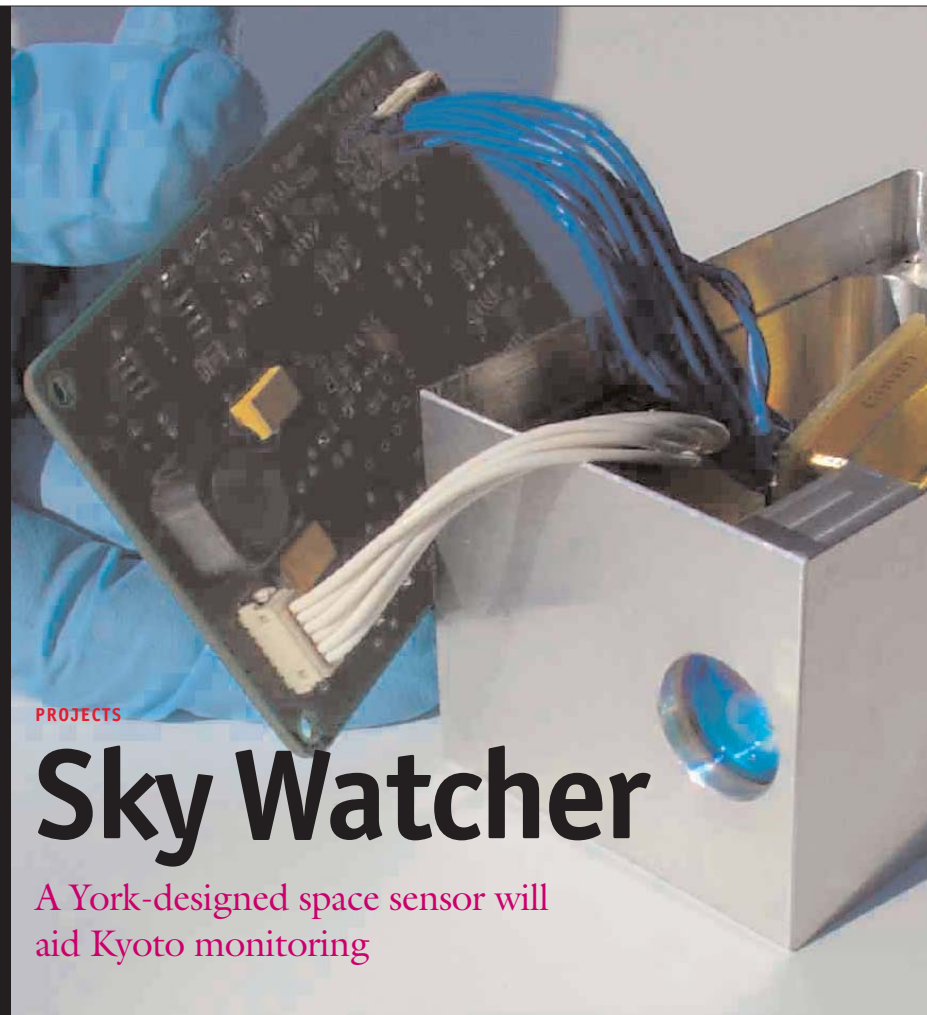
Sex On The Brain
By Deborah Blum

"I am a human vacuum cleaner when it comes to reading. Most Saturdays, I speed-read the Globe's book section and then log on to the Toronto Public Library to place holds on interesting-sounding books. I'd highly recommend *Sex On The Brain* by Deborah Blum, a very respected science journalist. Blum looks at the biological differences between males and females and her book gives a balanced framework for a consideration of the acrimonious debate ignited by [Harvard president] Lawrence Summers' ill-considered remarks on the reasons why there are few women research superstars in science."

Ron Burke
administrative studies professor,
Atkinson Faculty of Liberal & Professional Studies

Guilty as Sin
By Tami Hoag

"In the summer I read books that aren't related to my research interests. I usually have two on the go at the same time. First I read mystery and spy novels for pure enjoyment and am finishing *Guilty as Sin*, by Tami Hoag. I also tend to read stuff that tackles social issues. I recently finished Romeo Dallaire's *Shake Hands with the Devil*, and am about halfway through Thomas Friedman's *The World is Flat*."



PROJECTS

Sky Watcher

A York-designed space sensor will aid Kyoto monitoring

In Brendan Quine's world, small is beautiful. That's why the York space and planetary physics professor's latest project is the size of a coffee mug, weighs 225 grams and costs \$75,000. Although small, it does big things. One of those things is remotely sense Earth's atmosphere for greenhouse gas emissions, and produce images with a resolution of one square kilometre. Ten years ago an instrument capable of doing so would have weighed 200 kg.

This micro-instrument, the product of a team of researchers and engineers in York's Department of Physics and Astronomy, will be used to measure greenhouse gas emissions as part of Canada's commitment to the Kyoto Accord. It will fly on a micro satellite scheduled to take off from Russia in January 2006, attached to a reclaimed former Russian nuclear missile. Its small size is partly a matter of economics, since to send an instrument into space these days costs in the range of \$10 million per kilo.

"Russia does a lot of these launches for everyone around the world – except the US," says Quine. "Converted ballistic missiles are horribly reliable, of course. They were designed that way. But that's good for us. I like the fact we're using former weapons technology for peaceful purposes."

Although Quine's instrument can't measure, say, the CO₂ emissions from your backyard barbecue, its infrared optics can easily track the "optical fingerprints" of smoky plumes from a factory or hydro plant. The unit will supply scientists with data that should aid in understanding global warming patterns, and assist Canada in quantifying not only our own backyard emissions, but those attributable to our US neighbours. "All this will help when it comes to acknowledging who's responsible for what emissions, where," says Quine. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF BRENDAN QUINE

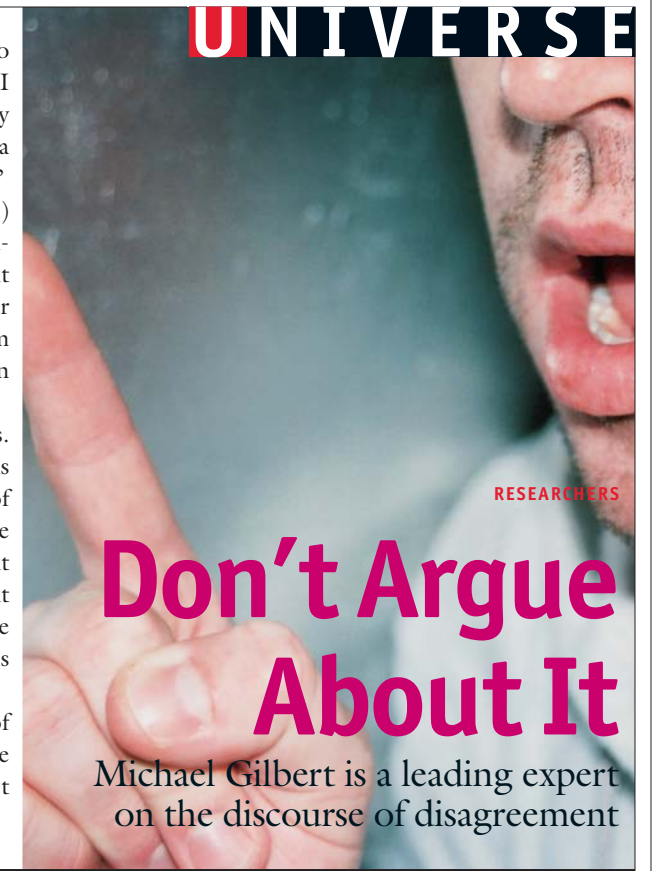
UNIVERSE

York philosophy Professor Michael Gilbert learned how to argue the hard way – on the streets of Flatbush in Brooklyn. "I was this short Jewish kid, and although you couldn't call my neighbourhood a bad one, it had its moments. Basically, I learned to be a good talker and argue my way out of things. That's where it all started."

The "it" that Gilbert's talking about is how to conduct (and win) an argument. His argument expertise is backed up by decades of real-life practice, a PhD in philosophy, and eight years of teaching a night course at Woodsworth College called *How to Win an Argument*. After Gilbert did a radio interview about the course, a publisher called him and suggested they do a book with the same title. First published in 1979, the book is still in print in a second edition.

Arguing isn't about getting mad or blowing off steam, Gilbert says. "It's about listening carefully to the other person." He also cautions against confusing quarrelling with arguing. "Quarrels are a kind of argument, sure," he says. "Bad soup is still soup. But does it taste good? Is it good for you? The important thing in any good argument is that all parties come out feeling they've gained something. I might 'win' an argument, but if you feel slighted because of it, and I alienate you, what have I achieved? In the best arguments everyone feels he's scored some points."

As a researcher, Gilbert is also interested in the interrelation of emotion and argument. "Rationality is good, but it's also impossible not to be emotional when you're arguing about something." Can't argue with that. ■



RESEARCHERS

Don't Argue About It

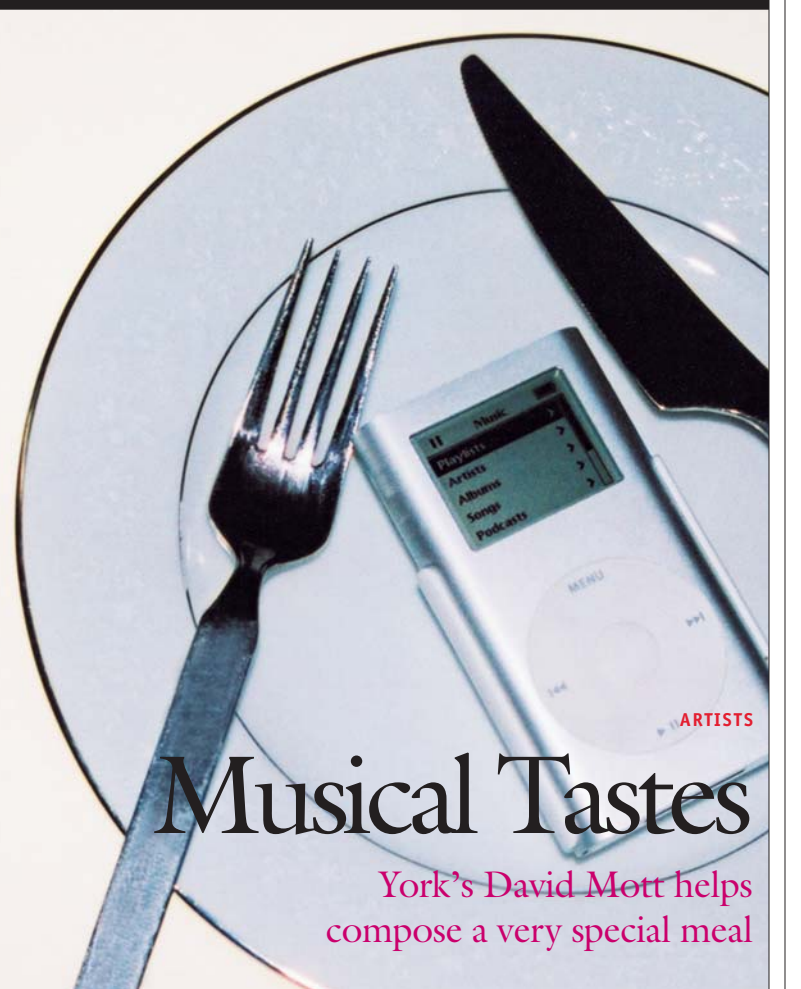
Michael Gilbert is a leading expert on the discourse of disagreement

Baritone sax player, York music prof, composer and performer, David Mott has always been interested in pushing the boundaries of music. That's why he and Joseph Petric, a concert accordionist and Mott's musical partner, decided they would try composing tunes to dishes served during an eight-course menu. They suggested the idea to owners of the Toronto restaurant, Pangaea. They loved it. And so, a few months and an Ontario Arts Grant later, Mott and Petric found themselves performing pieces to go with a special menu devised by Pangaea chefs and co-owners Martin Koupric and Peter Geary.

So how do you compose music to dishes like caribou, Quebec goat cheese, or a cube of absinthe? It wasn't always easy. "I did get a little stuck on the goat cheese until I asked a friend about it," says Mott. "He said, 'I think of those tinkling bells goats wear when I think of the cheese', and then it came together for me."

"I don't think anyone has ever composed music strictly for food," says Mott. "It reflected my take on the dishes and the ingredients." The compositions weren't designed to be entertainment though, says Mott. "We weren't a house band. The idea was to be part of the sensory experience of the act of tasting and eating as much as the food or wine."

How did it go? "Well," says Mott, "One customer told me, 'David, I've had two meals in my life that were psychedelic, and this was one of them.'" ■

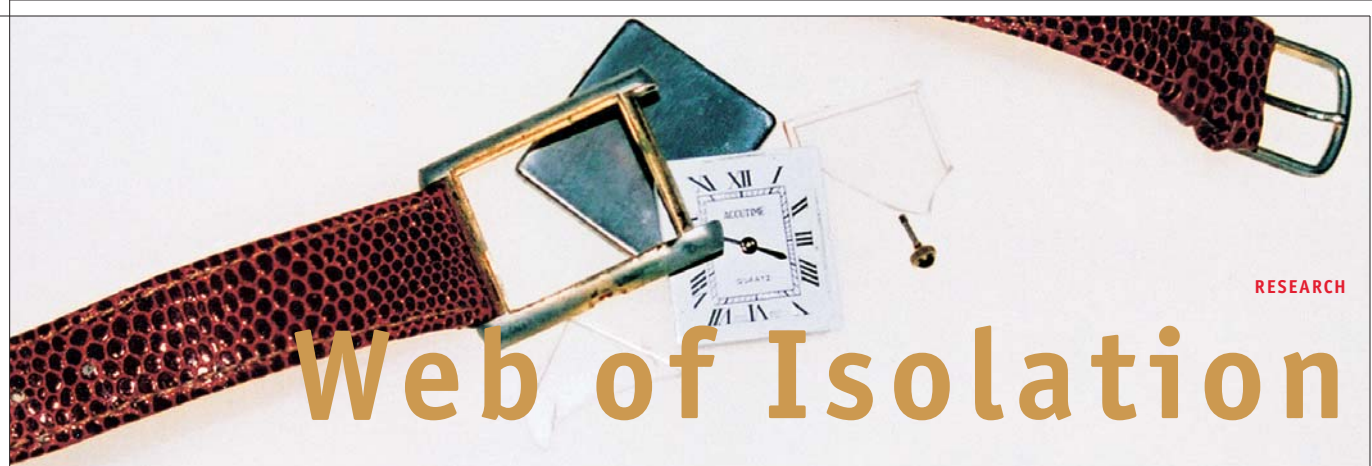


ARTISTS

Musical Tastes

York's David Mott helps compose a very special meal

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED



RESEARCH

Web of Isolation

Women cope better than men with online stress

There's a love-hate relationship going on with Web-based communications technology, and nowhere is that more evident than in the academy, suggests a study by York sociologist Janice Newson and Ottawa-based writer Heather Menzies. Paradoxically, the same technology that makes keeping in touch with students and academic peers so easy can create feelings of social isolation from colleagues and a sense of time fragmentation, increased workloads and higher stress levels.

Using a 35-page questionnaire, Newson did a pilot survey of 100 professors at six Canadian universities to explore gender differences in time and stress management, and intellectual engagement. "Our pilot study discovered that professors bemoan the lack of personal contact now, especially with

colleagues. Face-to-face meetings have been replaced by e-mail," says Newson. "On the other hand, we found online connectivity has helped alleviate women's sense of marginality and minority status in the academy."

In ticking stress indicators relating to the tech-driven culture, women reported higher stress levels than men did – from sleep deprivation and short-term memory loss, to problems concentrating and strained relations with colleagues. On the other hand, says Newson, "one of our most provocative findings was that women – compared to their male counterparts – showed a high degree of adaptability to the more fragmented, demanding and chaotic work environment at universities, and an even greater comfort level with its online culture." ■

In 1991, not long after Patricia Allen, a young Ottawa lawyer, was horrifically killed by her ex-husband with a crossbow, her father, Ottawa police officer George Allen, found out about York psychology Professor Desmond Ellis's research into male violence against female ex-partners. Ellis was in the process of developing a Domestic Violence Assessment Evaluation tool, called DOVE for short. Allen contacted Ellis and they met. Later a fund was set up in Patricia's memory from which DOVE (and other initiatives) now receives support.

DOVE is used by professionals and administered privately to male and female partners who are in divorce mediation, says Ellis. It uses 19 statistically significant predictors for risk of the likelihood of domestic violence after couples split. While it doesn't assess the risk of lethal violence, it does look at prior assaults, assaults resulting in serious injury, and other behaviours such as emotional abuse. Further high-risk traits could include a history of substance abuse, outbursts of violent anger, and a threat to harm or kill oneself.

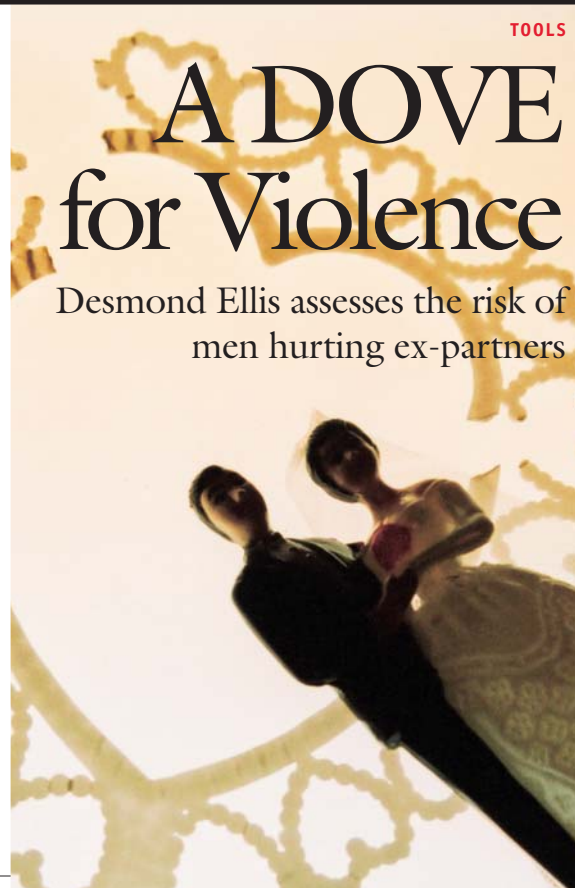
Based on DOVE scores, individuals are placed in one of four risk categories ranging from low to very high. The percentage of persons in each risk category who are likely to harm ex-partners is also assessed. For example, 12 per cent of individuals who are in the low risk category are likely to seriously harm their partners during the first four months following the termination of divorce mediation. A comparable figure for individuals in the very high-risk group is 54 per cent.

"The point isn't to predict violence," says Ellis. "It's to prevent it. Any risk assessment instrument can be misused. Nothing is foolproof and we're careful to include caveats with the manual." ■

TOOLS

A DOVE for Violence

Desmond Ellis assesses the risk of men hurting ex-partners



PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUSAN KING



UNIVERSE

PASSIONS

On a Roll

Aldo Parise loves the ups and downs of coasters

If you visited the Ontario Science Centre in July, you might have spotted the latest spectacular creation by York student Aldo Parise, 27, or experienced the ups and downs of him building it. That's because Parise is "obsessed" (his word) with the beauty and lore of roller coasters. The fine arts cultural studies major is so accomplished at building working scale models of them that the Ontario Science Centre invited him to construct a giant one on site. Usually, Parise,

who lives at home, constructs his coasters in the rec room of his parent's house.

"People think roller coasters are a 20th-century invention, but they actually date back to the 16th century," he says. "Initially, they were made of wood or ice. But the first truly modern roller coaster opened on Coney Island in 1884." The 1920s were the Golden Age of roller coasters (there were about 3,000 in the US) but they waned in popularity until Disneyland made them a hit again when it

opened in 1955, he notes.

Parise uses toy blocks made by K'NEX to craft his structures. When he heard the science centre was planning an exhibit on roller coasters he contacted them and offered them his expertise. "After they saw my models they invited me down to build a giant one. I made it up as I went along and visiting kids would help me." The centre's coaster was the biggest he's built so far (requiring 10 sets of K'NEX), and measured 3.4 metres tall at its highest point. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUSAN KING

Our annual list of the seven top undergrad achievers in mid-degree contains a surprise – there’s one extra.

BY MARTHA TANCOCK ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY LOZON

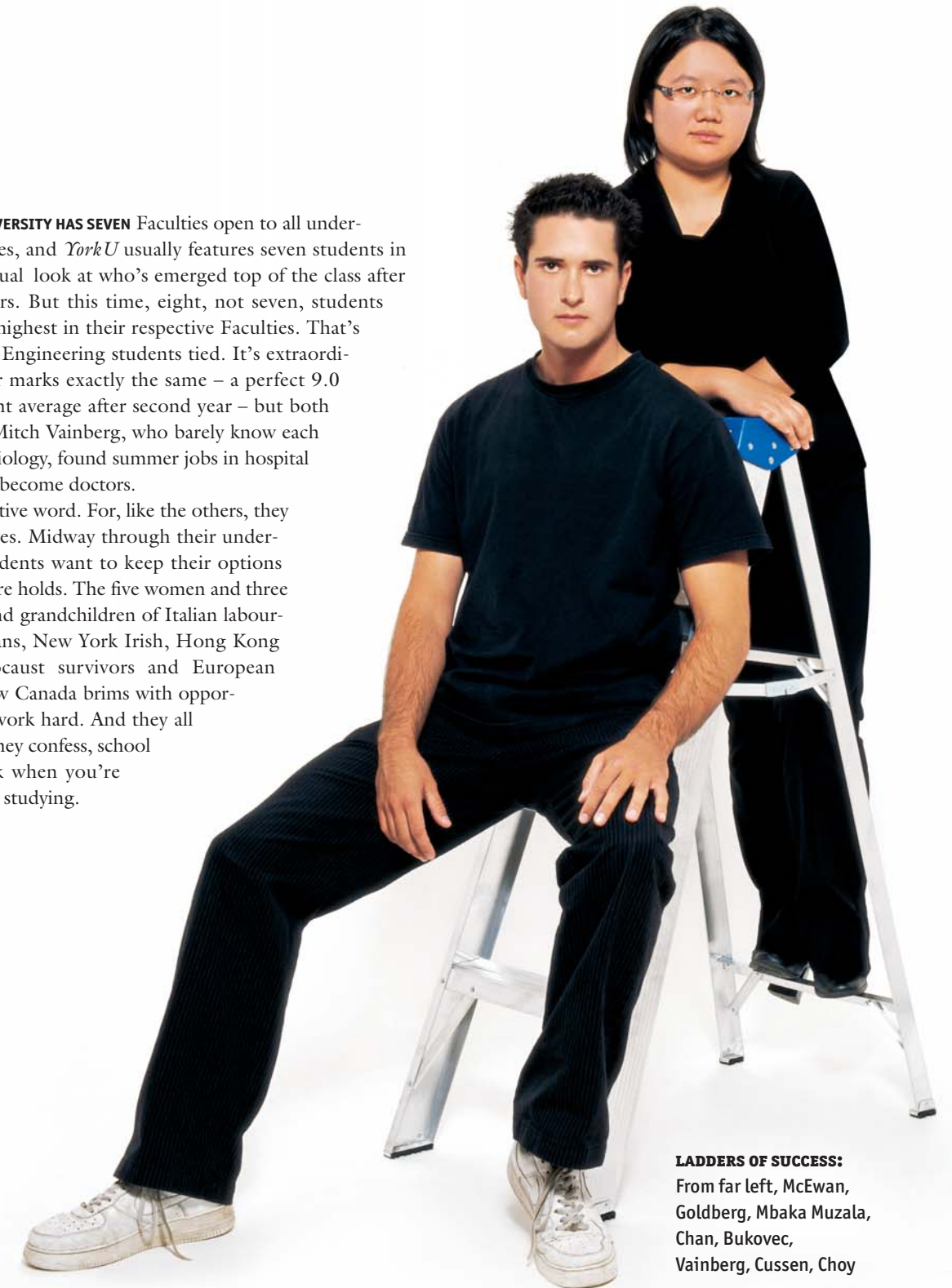
of the best

E I G H T

Y

ORK UNIVERSITY HAS SEVEN Faculties open to all undergraduates, and *YorkU* usually features seven students in our annual look at who’s emerged top of the class after two years. But this time, eight, not seven, students ranked highest in their respective Faculties. That’s because two Science & Engineering students tied. It’s extraordinary: not only are their marks exactly the same – a perfect 9.0 accumulated grade point average after second year – but both Robbie Goldberg and Mitch Vainberg, who barely know each other, are majoring in biology, found summer jobs in hospital research labs and might become doctors.

“Might” is the operative word. For, like the others, they refuse to limit themselves. Midway through their undergrad journey, these students want to keep their options open, whatever the future holds. The five women and three men include children and grandchildren of Italian labourers, Congolese politicians, New York Irish, Hong Kong Chinese, Jewish Holocaust survivors and European migrants, and they know Canada brims with opportunities for those who work hard. And they all work hard – although, they confess, school doesn’t seem like work when you’re crazy about what you’re studying.



LADDERS OF SUCCESS: From far left, McEwan, Goldberg, Mbaka Muzala, Chan, Bukovec, Vainberg, Cussen, Choy



Mind & Soul

JESSICA CHAN
Faculty of Arts
GPA: 8.75

SET JESSICA CHAN'S LIFE to music and you'd hear the sweet harmony of two distinct melodies. "I've always had a passion for children," says the 20-year-old psychology student who has parlayed hours she spent amusing her younger brother into a summer daycare job and volunteer work at a children's rehabilitation centre. "I'm a kid at heart." Like her social worker mother, Chan enjoys people, little people, and will likely become a child psychologist and researcher – after she earns a graduate degree or two. From the day she started kindergarten in North York, this daughter of Portuguese and Chinese immigrants strove to excel at everything, and did.

But not until she enrolled at York did a single subject – psychology – fire her intellect. Music, on the other hand, fires her soul. An accomplished pianist who escapes into Claude Debussy's *Clair de Lune*, Chan says piano taught her discipline and gained her entry into an elite Catholic arts school. There she met other "keen girls", still her best friends, and learned the viola, which she plays in York's symphony orchestra. If Chan's life were a song, music would be the powerful bass to psychology's treble. "The arts," she says, "provide a good balance in my life."

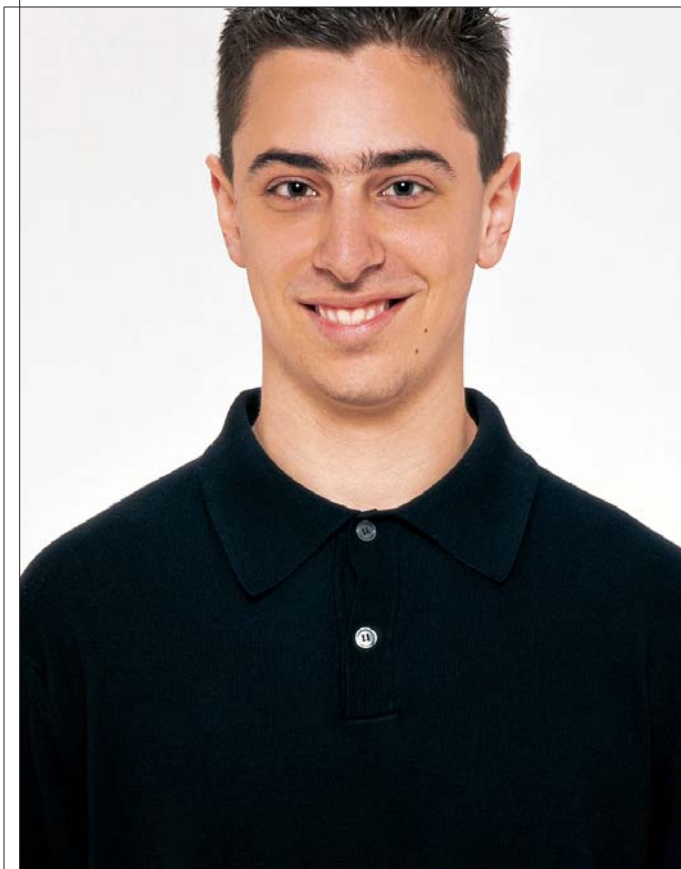


Going for the Difference

ROBBIE GOLDBERG
Faculty of Science & Engineering
GPA: 9.00

ONE DAY IN GRADE 9, Robbie Goldberg's teacher sent him to the office for yakking in class. A quick look at the teen's high marks and the vice-principal advised him to channel his energy into peer counselling. He did, among other things, and finished Hebrew school with a 94-per-cent average. At York, the biology major has picked up his pace – and his marks. He's still involved in peer advising, and he's Chair of the Science Student Caucus. Off campus, he volunteers at a nursing home and hospital emergency room, plays baseball and basketball, and hangs out with friends. He also studies hard for that perfect grade point average. "I find the busier I am, the better I can do in all aspects of my life." His parents encourage him to be well-rounded and strive for the best, he says. Every experience, positive or negative, is worthwhile. "You learn about yourself by exposing yourself to different experiences."

Goldberg learned he liked research after a scholarship-fuelled stint at the world-renowned Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel. But after two summers working in a Mount Sinai Hospital lab, the medical-researcher's son says he's "ready to try something different." Whatever his future choices – medicine is a possibility – "I like to make a difference."



Going for the Meaning

MITCH VAINBERG
Faculty of Science & Engineering
GPA: 9.00

FOR THE PAST TWO SUMMERS, Mitch Vainberg has investigated the survival and death of T cells in a Toronto hospital lab. The research seized his imagination as much as the fantasy novel he wrote when he was 14. "I think the immune system is amazing," says the 20-year-old who's doing a double major in biology and psychology. "It's uncanny how the body has adapted to various threats over millions of years." However intoxicating, labs figure only partially in the destiny of this only child from North York. The discerning reader of *Don Quixote*, reality-show glutton and certified tennis instructor wants to be a doctor as well as a researcher. "I can think of no better job than helping people," says the peer mentor who started a study group to help struggling first-year chemistry students. The grandson of Holocaust survivors who "imbued in me a sense of commitment and hard work," Vainberg attributes his A-pluses to a burning interest and desire to understand. Always probing for deeper meaning, he is taking ethics courses this year and devouring literary classics. For the science whiz who almost enrolled in English and pens a monthly campus-newspaper column, he is keeping his options open. "Whatever I do, I will always write."



Role Model Mom

IRENE MCEWAN
Atkinson Faculty of Liberal & Professional Studies
GPA: 8.52

BY AGE 26, Irene McEwan had three kids, a husband moving up the corporate ladder, a home in Calgary – and a high-school diploma. The college dropout from rural BC had always wanted to go to university but never had the chance – until after her divorce. At 39, she started taking evening courses in psychology at York. The kids were teenagers, she had a steady job and she owned a house in Newmarket, north of Toronto. Despite family and work stresses, the single parent has persisted every year since 1997. "When I set my mind to do something, I do it," she says.

Next year, she's taking leave to attend university full time. Both daughters already have degrees and "my goal is to have a degree before my son," she jokes. Her high marks have set the bar at home. "Without really realizing it, I've been an example to my kids. I just do the best I can." At 47, the high-school special-needs assistant has paid the mortgage, bought a new cottage, is in biking-hiking good shape and is considering her options. She speaks Italian (her parents' tongue), French and sign, and dreams of launching a new career as a speech pathologist. "It's a good feeling to control your own destiny."



A Love of Thinking

STELLA MBAKA MUZALA
Glendon
GPA: 8.50

FOUR YEARS AGO, Stella Mbaka Muzala, her mother and a sister landed in Toronto from the Democratic Republic of Congo for another sister's wedding – and may never return. She was almost 15, and her father, a refinery plant owner and former deputy minister in the politically volatile African nation, would finance their self-imposed exile in a safer Canada. Settled in a Don Mills apartment, Mbaka Muzala, the youngest of seven – but “not very spoiled” – attended a French high school, graduated in two years, then followed her older sister to York. For the bilingual francophone, Glendon seemed ideal, though most of her computer science and math courses are delivered in English.

“I love calculus,” says the 19-year-old who could spend all day doing math exercises. “You have to think. I love thinking.” She doggedly masters every new lesson, devotedly sings in her church choir four times a week – and draws. Intrigued at a young age by NASA's 3-D images from space, she hopes for a career in computer graphics – combining passions for art and computer programming. She works hard for her high marks to please her parents and reflect the glory of Jesus, she says. She also knows that “when you love what you do, you will work hard to be good.”



Tastes of Everything

KAR-WOON CHOY
Schulich School of Business
GPA: 8.65

CALL HER THE APPRENTICE. Every summer, Kar-Woon Choy samples a different job. “My objective is to get a taste of everything I learn at school.” After first year, she was a human resources intern for the Catholic Children's Aid Society; after second, an assistant brand manager at Procter & Gamble. At 20, the future executive from Markham is “trying to keep as many doors open as possible. If I equip myself well, I can do all these things.”

She's well equipped already. Since Grade 1, she has consistently come top of her class, driven by a desire “to be the best.” She got hooked on business competitions in high school, twice winning Ontario championships. Fluent in Mandarin, Cantonese, English and French, she entered Schulich's international business program and pays her entire way with multiple, ample and renewable scholarships every year.

A disciplined student and busy coordinator of youth leadership programs, Choy frees her inner child at home. She's addicted to TV, her room is a mess and “I'm so indecisive my sister won't go shopping with me anymore.” This year, she's saving up for a winter exchange to Hong Kong, which she left at age three. Once she earns her MBA, she'll do more travelling – in the global corporate world.



The Next Tarantino?

JAMIE CUSSEN
Faculty of Fine Arts
GPA: 8.2

JAMIE CUSSEN DOESN'T BELIEVE in starting at the bottom. Straight out of high school, he set up a film production company, keen to turn skills he learned making shorts for media studies class into a bona fide enterprise. “I've always been interested in storytelling,” says the 21-year-old film student from High Park in Toronto. “With film you see, you don't just read, what's happening.” He and his creative partners have shot weddings and recitals, edited music videos for TV and, this summer, made a video of a wakeboarding team they'll use as their corporate “calling card”.

Cussen, a basketball hotshot with a 97.5-per-cent average, was prepared to study science at York until he won two fat entry scholarships. “I decided if I'm paying for university myself, I'm going to do what I want.” That meant film – and sports. Last year, he played on 13 intramural teams and was assistant coordinator of his college sports council. The busier he is, the less time the perfectionist can fuss over assignments. “I work best under pressure,” he says. Still, he's giving himself two years to script a feature he wants to film after he graduates. It could kick-start an illustrious career or, if it doesn't pan out, reroute him to law school. But “I won't lie; I do want fame and fortune. I would love to be the next Quentin Tarantino.”



Finding Smarter Ways

JENNY BUKOVEC
Faculty of Environmental Studies
GPA: 8.30

URBAN SPRAWL MADE a big impression on Jenny Bukovec. Raised in Bramalea, northwest of Toronto, she saw farmland disappear as developers built row upon identical row of big single-family homes. “It was a wasteful way of building. Everything centred on the car and the roads got busier and busier,” says the 21-year-old, who travels mostly by bus. “It's not really a smart way to develop.” She's learning smarter ways as she studies urban regional environments.

Musical and artistic, Bukovec dreamed of careers in graphic or interior design. Instead the high-school graduate with a 94-per-cent average – and deep concern about the ecological health of the planet – accepted a substantial, renewable scholarship from York and enrolled in environmental studies. Last year, she chose courses that will also lead to a certificate in environmental landscape design. “I want to keep my options open,” she says. The occasional Bruce Trail hiker and backyard gardener juggles Sunday work in a bakery with a weekend social life and full-time courses, which she continues to ace by dint of “hard, hard work,” hooked on high marks. “I'm a very motivated person,” says Bukovec, who still draws and paints. Whatever is in her future, it's likely to meld her creativity and her concern for the natural world. ■

Caitlin Fisher is finding high-tech ways to bring 'strange and unique linkages' into a narrative.

BY DAVID FULLER

Digital Storyteller

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOPHIE KINACHTCHOUK

CAITLIN FISHER'S 21ST-CENTURY research in York's Faculty of Fine Arts is so speculative, even her funders are hedging their bets a little. The official outlook on her work as Canada Research Chair in Digital Culture says "innovations may include the refashioning of conventions used in film," the quintessential 20th-century art form. Although Fisher can't predict exactly how those conventions will change, she is certain digital technology is already transforming the way Canadians read, write and communicate with one another. What that means for storytelling is what she wants to learn more about, once she gets into the lab.

Wait a minute...the lab? Why, you may ask, does an award-winning writer, artist and editor need a laboratory? Because, in one version of the future cinema, we may be using computerized goggles to access the ever-increasing layers of meaning that multimedia techniques are bringing to the art of the narrative. As part of her research into new ways of telling stories, Fisher is looking forward to the installation of augmented reality (AR) technology, developed at Atlanta's Georgia Institute of Technology, in a state-of-the-art facility in the new Accolade East Building. She hopes the lab will give creative minds from many disciplines a chance to experience and react to how storytelling is changing in an age when video games outsell Hollywood films.

Fisher's theoretical work also has implications for other areas affected by digital technology, such as what it means to archive memories in an era of blogs and personal databases, and how museums and other public spaces can use computers and global positioning satellites to enhance interpretive aids. Making sense of the many currents in this digital wave suits Fisher's outlook on the world. "A lot of my work has been about connecting disparate pieces of data, the ability to show people what I thought were strange and unique linkages."

Fisher began her academic life as an economist and gravitated to theorizing about economic social justice. She eventually did her PhD in social and political thought at York after studying at both the University of Toronto and Carleton. "I was fleeing fine arts," she admits. "I come from a family of poets and writers, visual artists and papermakers. I rebelled by becoming an economist." But while working in the area of feminist political economy, she became ever more intrigued by

creative approaches to contemporary political thought, by attempts to communicate philosophical ideas in forms that departed from the traditional, and by efforts to weave together creative and academic work. At the same time, programs began to appear for writing hypertext, or linkable computer prose, and Fisher saw its potential in approaching both theory and "multiple pathways to narrative". "It seemed such an ideal direction," Fisher recalls, "and I sort of realized I was no longer a traditional political economist."

As her artistic heritage reasserted itself, Fisher began writing with a group of friends called the Stern Writing Mistresses and became particularly interested in technology's effect on storytelling. Her 2001 hypermedia novella, *These Waves of Girls*, won the 2001 International Electronic Literature Award for Fiction and she is founding editor of the Web-based *j_spot: Journal of Social and Political Thought*.

In defending her thesis just after her mentor and supervisor Ioan Davies died suddenly in February 2000, Fisher became the first and only doctoral candidate at York to submit her work in entirely digital form. For her and Davies, who argued in favour of the unique presentation, the medium was the message; it represented her growing fascination with how the connections between those disparate items of data can be communicated with the help of technology. Films of the future, she suggests, could be composed of different pieces of media stored in a database and served up by a computer in a progression that conveys the artist's thought process as well as intended meaning.

Recipient of a University-Wide Teaching Award in 1999, Fisher also conducts a graduate course on future cinemas with York colleague Janine Marchessault, Canada Research Chair in Art, Digital Media and Globalization. But, says Fisher, while the prospect of AR technology has interested the Canada Foundation for Innovation enough to put out calls for designs of head-mounted retinal displays, you may have to wait a bit longer for the experience. "I don't imagine that many people in the next five years are going to experience AR," Fisher says. "But I think, as a form, it's very interesting to think about moving images and specialized sound and what it means to bring that technology with you walking through a space and into a story." And wherever her research leads her, Fisher is sure she's in the best place to do it. "York," she says, "is very good at enabling this kind of interdisciplinary work." ■

LEADERS

Fiona Crean brings global experience and a passion for social justice to her new role as York's ombudsperson and director of the Centre for Human Rights.

BY MICHAEL TODD ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUSAN KING

WHEN FIONA CREAN, York's new ombudsperson, got the call to interview for one of York's top (and, arguably, more politically sensitive) jobs, she wasn't sitting behind a desk brushing up a CV. She was in the middle of a Panamanian rainforest listening to the concerns of indigenous women. "My immediate response to the recruiter was, 'What are you talking about? How can I come for a job interview in Toronto?'" Crean recalls. But it wasn't long before she grew enamoured of the idea ("It sounds cliché, I know, but I truly love a challenge and I want to make a difference"). The position Crean was vying for actually involved two roles: York's first official ombudsperson, combined with the directorship of York's Centre for Human Rights.

Crean's rainforest anecdote is, perhaps, indicative of her life since the time she was a child. She and her three siblings spent their youth following their peripatetic diplomat father around the world. Although that kind of life had its hardships, it was also an experience that paid off later. Crean (who speaks four languages fluently) got used to living on the fly. She and her brothers and sister "moved every three to four years," she says. Each time that meant a new school, a new set of friends, a new language.

"We were thrown into new situations all the time," says Crean, whose first language is French. "We continually had to adapt to new places. But you were a kid so you thought this was normal. I experienced a huge variety of cultures. I'm sure that's what has partly informed what I do and my interest in, and convictions about, the importance of human rights and social justice."

Although Crean says she felt "intensely Canadian", she was, oddly, almost a total stranger to her native land. So, in her early 20s, while still a student at Manchester University (where she got some early learning on social justice issues during the mine closures), she came to Canada for the summer, boarded a Greyhound bus and did a cross-country tour. Reaching Yellowknife, she decided on a whim to explore the Arctic, ending up in Kugluktuk (known then as Coppermine).

Captivated by Canada's North, she would eventually go back to teach in a Cree school on the James Bay coast after receiving a master's degree in special education from the University of Toronto (where she specialized in aboriginal education). But somehow the schoolroom seemed too small a world for what Crean ultimately wanted to do, which was to help shape public policy. Maybe she couldn't change the world, but she felt she

could change a small part of it, and so she came back to Toronto and worked at the Ontario Human Rights Commission for six years. She then set up Canada's first municipal employment equity program at the City of Toronto. Crean made sure that the city, whose workforce then totaled about 9,000 people, extended equitable opportunities to Aboriginal Peoples, women, ethno-racial minorities and people with disabilities.

After that, Crean spent 11 years at the Ontario ombudsman's office, most of them as its executive director, where she oversaw the operation of investigations and complaint resolution as well as public education. When she left the ombuds post, she decided to establish her own consulting firm, offering ombuds, human rights and organizational development services to non-profit and governmental organizations around the world. During more than 20 years as a public servant, Crean has worked in Central and South America, eastern Europe and southern Africa.

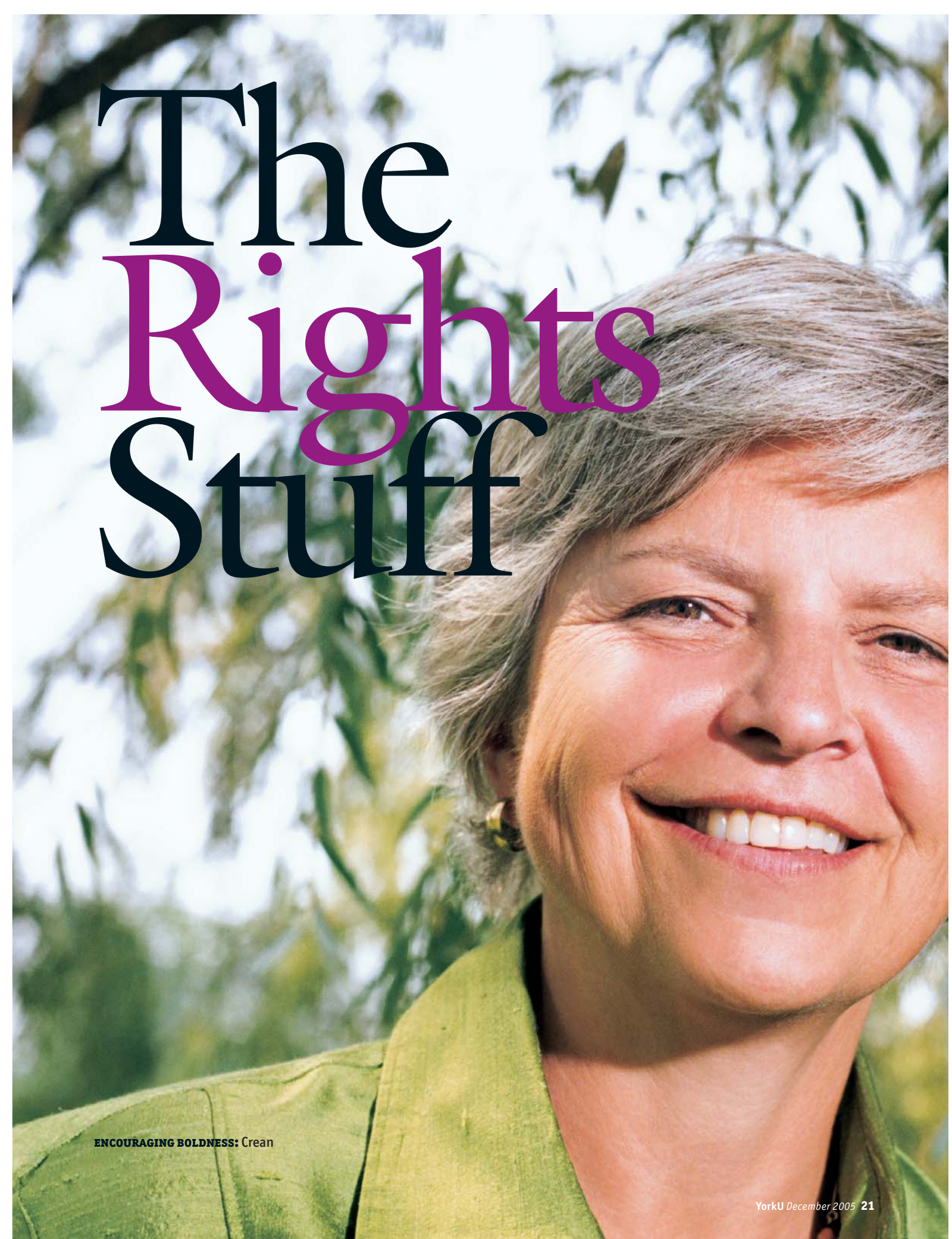
An ombudsperson is an official who acts as a watchdog for fairness, most commonly in government. Impartial, he or she is charged with investigating and addressing complaints reported by citizens. Crean's job at York is no different. "York is a small city of some 60,000 people with competing interests and, like any large organization of its complexity, inequity does exist," she says. "I'm here to help solve and improve systemic inequality and get the message out that we are here."

As York's ombudsperson, Crean's mandate is to address allegations of unfairness in the University's policies, processes or procedures. In her other hat as director of human rights, she mediates and investigates complaints of discrimination and harassment. The office also conducts education and training on human rights and fair processes.

The ombuds function of Crean's office is designed to be a place of last resort. "If all other avenues of appeal have been exhausted and the problem still isn't solved, then people can come to us," she says. (The office will also help route those who don't know where to begin.) "And if you have a human rights complaint," she adds, "you can come anytime."

Crean sees the creation of her autonomous office as a bold move on the University's part, "a measure of York's willingness to be scrutinized." Now, she wants to encourage a similar boldness among people who feel they were wronged. "It's an act of courage to complain," she says. "Today, more than ever, people see that access to an independent review of complaints is a basic right. This office is an essential means of protecting individuals from any abuse, mistake or violation." ■

The Rights Stuff



ENCOURAGING BOLDNESS: Crean

Murder Mystery

Award-winning filmmaker Eylem Kaftan searches for the truth about a family honour killing in Kurdish Turkey.

BY MARTHA TANCOCK

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SPYROS BOURBOULOS



READY TO EDIT: Kaftan

FILM

EYLEM KAFTAN'S DOCUMENTARY *Vendetta Song* has all the ingredients of a murder mystery – a motherless child, forbidden love, a tribal feud – and plays out in the barren landscape and dirt-poor villages of Kurdish Turkey. It traces the 31-year-old director's search for the truth about Guzide, the half-sister her father never knew who died in an honour killing 30 years before. And it chronicles Kaftan's very personal journey of discovery back to the ancient culture her father rejected.

Only the second documentary Kaftan has directed since she earned a York MA in film five years ago, *Vendetta Song* has scooped up critics' prizes at three major festivals in Quebec and Ontario this year – and made the top 10 audience picks at Toronto's Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival. The National Film Board, a co-producer, chose it as one of only three feature documentaries to promote for the TV market at Cannes this spring and showed it at film festivals in Spain, Italy, Sweden and Canada this fall. "I thought there would be interest," admits the willowy, soft-spoken Kaftan. "Whenever I told the story to my friends, I saw how they were so moved. I knew it had the potential to touch people."

At the root of its appeal is the enigma of Guzide, the daughter Kaftan's grandmother was forced to give up to her first husband's family when they separated. "I was haunted by her and wanted to go there and visit her grave and meet the people who knew her," says Kaftan. She tried twice. The first time was in the summer of 1999, a year after she'd started her master's. She was sidetracked by an earthquake that flattened parts of western Turkey, so she turned a borrowed Sony camera on the rubble and survivors instead. "It was one of the most transformative experiences I ever had," says Kaftan. She spent the next year back in Canada piecing together footage to create her first documentary, the award-winning *Faultlines*.

Four years later, armed with a faded family photo of two men and a boy, a few telephone numbers and addresses and a Canadian film crew, Kaftan started her second pilgrimage. She had a month. *Vendetta Song*, this time meticulously imagined ahead of time, documents her journey into the unknown. "It was like going back in time," says Kaftan in her film voiceover. Little had changed in 3,000 years: men ruled, women were treated as chattel. A girl who was raped could be killed by her brothers to preserve the family honour; culture-shocked Kaftan found recent newspaper stories to prove it. And she found

villagers who spoke of how widowed Guzide was promised to one of her late husband's brothers but eloped with another.

Educated, well-travelled, multilingual, independent and thoroughly Western, Kaftan is as removed from her cultural roots as she could be. She was raised a Turk in Istanbul by parents determined to spare their daughters the prejudice they had experienced as Kurds. She attended an English-language high school and studied modern philosophy at university. Nobody stopped her from leaving the country and studying film at York – which offered her a perfect mix of theory and practice. Nobody stopped her from marrying a Canadian and living in Montreal. Nobody prevented her – the way they had Guzide – from following her heart and fulfilling her dream.

She deliberately chose a female crew. "I wanted to have access to women's lives. Women are less threatening for both men and women." She didn't camouflage herself in hijabs and long skirts, but wore jeans and T-shirts. The Muslim Kurds didn't blink an eye. "One of the best qualities of the Kurds is that they are so accepting, not judgmental at all. They have an amazing hospitality. They were proud I came back and was doing a story about them because their stories are rarely told."

Of many surprises she had shooting the film, the biggest came at the end. Kaftan had dispatched her crew back to Canada but stayed on, desperate to locate the men in the photo. After dozens of phone calls, she happened to contact one of them, Kadri, and he agreed to meet her in the courtyard of her hotel with his son. The meeting is filmed by a local crew and as Kadri reveals who Guzide's killer is, Kaftan's cousin Sharif suddenly appears and is shocked to see her talking to the family's "enemies." Gingerly, he sits down with them. Did they plan to carry on the feud over Guzide's murder, asks Kaftan. In one of the most riveting moments of the film, the men look at each other, unsure, then shake hands, awkward but relieved. It is obvious that such feuds victimize men as much as women. "That was one of my intentions – to be as just to men as to women," says Kaftan. "None of the ending was in the script."

The film brings some sense of closure. The murder is solved. But Kaftan has heard through the grapevine that the man Kadri accused has denied he murdered Guzide. "I don't know how things will unfold," says Kaftan, especially once *Vendetta Song* is broadcast on Kurdish television. Its reception could be the litmus test for whether Kaftan can safely return to make more films in her native land. "In a way, life doesn't have closure like films." ■

York grads come to the rescue after the Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina.

BY MARTHA TANCOCK

a tale of two disasters

The Matchmaker

IN POST-TSUNAMI BANDA ACEH, Indonesia, Jamal Gawi has started an introduction service. He introduces those in need to those who can help. It's part of his job as chief adviser for the Canadian International Development Agency's Aceh Program, a job he accepted a week after a giant wave triggered by an earthquake in the Indian Ocean flattened the city – his city – and killed more than 130,000 people – his people – in the region on Dec. 26, 2004. It was a job he accepted even though he was still weak from a bout of hepatitis, even though it would take him away from his wife and three children in Jakarta for three out of every four weeks for at least two years. But it was a job for which the 41-year-old York environmental studies grad is uniquely qualified.

Gawi speaks English, so he can translate applications for aid. He has access to e-mail and the Internet, so he can find and share information quickly. He also studied agriculture and taught at the university in Banda Aceh, so he can tap into local expertise and resources in the northern Sumatra city of 300,000 where he grew up. And he works for CIDA, so he knows what aid is available. Gawi is a rare and valuable resource in a disaster zone where 500,000 people in the region lost their homes and now live in tents, temporary barracks or with host families.

Gawi was lucky. He didn't lose family or close friends to the tsunami. But he is still haunted by his first glimpses of dead children and devastation. Though he shares comfortable Canadian-leased digs, he feels frustrated at the tortoise-paced progress to rebuild and revive Banda Aceh and the surrounding area. As the first anniversary of the tsunami approached, fewer than 5,000 new houses had been built of 100,000 needed. "One of the biggest issues is lack of coordination. I really see the need for me here."

He found a Japanese donor to fund houses that a local non-profit group wanted to build. He persuaded a local gender working group to share its data about the needs of women and children with an agency set up to help them. When a local prof told him how to rehabilitate salt-saturated land, Gawi called the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. "I try to do what I can to improve the situation."

Three years ago Gawi was a conservation officer protecting endangered orangutans, rhinoceroses, elephants and tigers in tropical forests in Aceh. He'd earned a master's in environmental studies from York in 1994, and in 2002 was about to start doctoral studies when CIDA hired him as an environmental and natural-resource management adviser. His job now, though, monitoring and enabling aid projects in Banda Aceh "is the best job I ever had."



Jamal Gawi

JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER BATON ROUGE (LEFT); JAMAL GAWI

Louisiana Lifeline

BEFORE HURRICANE KATRINA, there were 10,000 Jews in New Orleans. By the time the levees broke on Aug. 29, most had scattered "to all four corners of the continent," says Adam Bronstone, community relations director for the Greater New Orleans Jewish Federation. He should know. After he fled to Houston, his boss dispatched him to Baton Rouge, closer to the disaster zone. There, in a borrowed room, the 36-year-old ex-Winnipegger and York political science grad (MA '91) set up communications central for his community. He created a Web presence on a friend's blog site, plugged in fax and phone lines. The day after the hurricane hit, Bronstone experienced a Katrina all his own – a flood of calls and e-mails. Distraught family members begged him to find missing relatives or get to parents stranded in homes surrounded by water.

A federation team rescued several Jewish and non-Jewish residents. Meanwhile, people wanted to know about schools for their children, insurance coverage, resettlement plans, long-term assistance and counselling services. Bronstone worked feverishly coordinating relief and evacuation operations with the sheriff's office and posting helpful links and contact information on the ad hoc Web site. Bronstone also literally charged to the rescue. In a convoy directed by the sheriff, he entered

flooded New Orleans synagogues to retrieve precious Judaic objects and computer files.

But for one of his most intense search efforts, he never left his office. On their flight out of New Orleans, Lainie and Tad Breaux had stopped at the hospital to make arrangements for their six-day-old son Zachary, who was in intensive care, only to discover the hospital was empty. "For five or six hours, no one was sure where Zachary was," said Bronstone. He finally found a list of the hospital's evacuees posted on the Internet. "I wouldn't wish my worst enemies the prospect of not knowing where their six-day-old baby was."



Adam Bronstone

Like other mobile residents, most Jews from New Orleans landed safely on the doorsteps of family and friends in Southern cities – with nothing. No homes, no equity, no jobs. "Middle and upper middle class citizens are calling FEMA for debit cards," said Bronstone. "They are in the exact same boat as everybody else. Everybody's starting over."

Bronstone was also left homeless – and won't go back. He retrieved photos, paintings, books and keepsakes from his second-floor apartment on the edge of Lake Pontchartrain, but left clothes and furniture dank with must and mould. "I don't want to move back. I've been evacuated before. It's painful to think of not returning, because New Orleans is one of the world's great cities." ■

AFTERMATH: (Below, clockwise from far right) damaged mosque in Banda Aceh; saving precious items from New Orleans synagogues (two photos); rescued family in New Orleans; Lainie, Tad and Zachary Breaux, reunited; (opposite) a woman is evacuated in New Orleans; wrecked landscape in Banda Aceh



JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER BATON ROUGE; ACEH KITA (RIGHT)

OFF THE MAP

A life in an office:
urban geographer Steven Flusty. BY MICHAEL TODD

URBAN GEOGRAPHY Professor Steven Flusty's office doesn't fit the usual academic shelves-of-books-and-big-bulky-computer model. In fact, there's hardly a book visible (but lots of shelves if he's so inclined). Instead, his floor space boasts a four-foot-tall blowup doll of Edvard Munch's *The Scream* and, on the side of his desk, finger puppets of the "axis of evil" and other figures.

In short, visitors to Flusty's office are likely to find something that dispels the usual academic stereotypes – which may be just what he wants. On the floor, covering the carpet, are brightly coloured interlocking children's sponge tiles, but with a difference. Picked up on one of his many trips, the tiles don't have an English alphabet on them; instead they're in Armenian.

Flusty says he's moved the Armenian-flag piece off to one side though. "I didn't want anyone to think we were walking on it, and showing disrespect," he says, ever the geographer. On the day of this photograph, he was wearing a kilt to illustrate to a class an ancient notion of civilization (pants are for barbarians who ride horses). And the significance of Munch? "I think any academic who's had more and more administrative duties piled on top of research and teaching will understand why I have that doll." ■



YORK PEOPLE

Serene Porter
Hockey player, lenswoman

Ice Artist

SERENE PORTER THINKS HER PARENTS got her name wrong. "I'm totally not serene," laughs the captain of the York Lions women's hockey team. On the ice, she is the team's most aggressive player and so talented that Hockey Canada scout Wally Kozak picked her for the All-Star Team at this year's National Aboriginal Hockey Championships.

When she was 12, Porter threw away figure skates to play hockey with the boys and points proudly at a scar on her chin to prove it. "I still go out and practise with the guys," says the soft-spoken 20-year-old from Ontario's Six Nations. Hockey is an adrenalin rush and a stress-buster – but not her whole life. The third-year student – who also excelled at javelin, track and baseball in high school – turned down sports scholarships in the United States to come to York, impressed by its fine arts program. Some day, the future photographer will switch from shooting pucks to shooting athletes – on film. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KIRK

YORK PEOPLE

Leonard Brody
Entrepreneur, author

Made in Canada

IF CANADIANS EVER ADOPTED Bachman Turner Overdrive's 1970s monster hit Taking Care of Business as a new national anthem, you can bet Osgoode Hall Law School grad Leonard Brody (LLB '97) would approve. Brody, who's an entrepreneur himself, always wondered why it was that Canadians aren't more recognized for their commercial prowess. "Everyone knows about Canadian sports heroes like Gretsky, so why not business people?" he asks. Bent on rectifying this, he and co-author David J. Raffa interviewed successful Canadian biz people to see what, in their opinion, makes True

North know-how a winner. The authors have published that collective wisdom in a new book, *Everything I Needed to Know about Business...I Learned from a Canadian*. Brody interviewed the likes of Paul Tellier (former CEO of CN Rail and Bombardier), York grad Rob McEwen (chairman and founder of Goldcorp), Moshe Safdie (world-renowned architect), and Bonnie Fuller (editorial director of American Media Inc.) – along with a dozen

other movers and shakers. "I wanted to show that we have the same kind of success stories here at home as the US does with Bill Gates," says Brody. "It's just a matter of scale." The other good thing about the book? "We're donating the profits from Canadian sales to Junior Achievement of Canada." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUSAN KING

When the boxes came, they held much more than old papers. **BY PRISCILA UPPAL**

Smoke and Mirrors

IN EARLY DECEMBER the boxes started arriving. My spouse's estranged father had died in his Brampton home and as his only heir Chris was immediately and irrevocably the keeper of these boxes. Dozens arrived. Then large pieces of furniture. Then a cat.

First came a smell: Paul Joseph Doda, recently deceased, smoked as though paid by the cigarette. Not a single piece of paper or swatch of fabric or pendant managed to ward off a thick layer of smoke and ash. Ironically (or fittingly, depending on how you look at it), Mr. Doda Senior was also a firefighter

My spouse has been charged to reconstruct a life and a relationship with his late father.

for 30 years, and the smoke that now clung to the walls and windowsills of each room spoke to us of his profession, a profession of heroes, and a point of confusion for Mr.

Doda Junior, who could never reconcile this image with the gruff and distant father who had little to do with him since his parents separated when he was four. We spent days with the windows open, trying to get the worst of the smell out, but it remains and we have come to accept its presence.

Next: papers, more papers, and photographs. Not just financial documents that have to this day yet to be completely filed away through lawyers and probate, but the elusive family archives, including grandparents' passports, medical reports, calendars, letters, Polish books, bills and wedding albums, many containing conflicting information, telling discrepancies for a Europe racked with war. As my spouse is an archivist, he hopes his ancestors can rest easy that not a single paper, even those he doesn't understand, has been wasted on him. Through arrangement and examination, not only have we discovered a tentative Doda family history, but in some ways also that of 20th-century Eastern European immigration to Canada.

The inheritance: stunning tiger oak furniture in need of restoration, carved jewellery boxes, his father's rings, firefighter medals, pins and uniforms, cigarette cases, a perfect cribbage hand mounted and framed, family china, a vacuum cleaner, a Singer

Humanities Prof. Priscila Uppal (shown with Nero) is coordinator of York's Creative Writing Program and a poet and novelist.

sewing machine, a dozen pairs of the exact same black leather shoe, a Have Gun Will Travel board game, stacks of vinyl records from the 1960s, a gramophone, stacks of CHUM charts, a stamp collection, a picture of Jesus in bombed out Krakow in 1944, a bible and 40 years (without a missing issue!) of *Playboy* magazine. Oh yes, and a 22-year-old tuxedo pussycat, who survived two months out in the winter snow before we were able to locate him and bring him home, aptly named Nero.



With this my spouse has been charged to reconstruct a life and a relationship with his father. Was it Paul's cribbage hand? It must be. The firefighter pins tell the story of a long and dedicated career. But

who are the people he saved? Does Chris remember playing Have Gun Will Travel with his father? Yes. But he doesn't remember his father being much of a reader, yet on the back of a dictionary, in clear handwriting, is the message: "This is a book of learning. Too bad no one wants to learn." The *Playboys* have no address labels on them, suggesting they must have been purchased each month at a convenience store rather than through subscription, but why did he keep them all? We don't know where Nero came from, but we do know that he was loved, as Paul took several rolls of film of him padding around the yard. Yet, Paul's is a life like many others, and Chris's search for the meaning of that life is also like many others, an attempt to understand how we connect to people and to the objects they leave behind.

And I now have a relationship with Mr. Doda Senior too. If it weren't for his careful squirrelling away, we would not be able to afford our new home, nor would we be taking an incredibly affectionate cat there with us to enjoy his last years. Of course, there are several boxes which have since been dropped off at Goodwill, and there are several more that still require culling and sorting, especially now that we are moving. But there are many more that we are taking with us, and some, I imagine, that we have not yet discovered or opened, those hard-to-grasp boxes lifted somewhere in memory, but which, when carried over from the past, speak of the future. ■