



YORKU

OCTOBER 2005

# JOURNEYS

Long bread lines. Fleeing war. Harsh schools. Ioana Nicoara and five other immigrant students write about life before York.

**PLUS:**  
The Cosmetics Queen  
Hip Hop Literacy  
Strokes and the Brain



..... A geologist sees fossil fuel.  
 ..... An engineer sees space stations.  
 ..... An historian sees war.

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**INSIDE**



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# YORKU

THE MAGAZINE OF YORK UNIVERSITY

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**OCTOBER 2005**

Chatting with Harry Arthurs. BY BERTON WOODWARD

# Then, Again

**W**hen you listen to legal scholar Harry Arthurs, York's president from 1985 to 1992, you may find yourself breaking into a tiny grin. His conversation is laced with a dry wit that shone through in our interview with him about the reshaping of the Keele campus (see page 30). As he spoke, I was also struck by certain parallels between the late 1980s and now, since York is again completing a major building program. A prominent York grad figures in both periods.



**AWARDS MAY NOT BE** the ultimate verdict on a given work, but they provide a nice benchmark. I'm delighted that *YorkU* has won several more, from two organizations. Early this year, the Washington, DC-based Council for Advancement and Support of Education gave *YorkU* a bronze Accolade in the university magazine category and an honourable mention for photography at a gala dinner in Baltimore, Maryland, honouring members in the northeastern US and Ontario. And in June, for the second year in a row, *YorkU* won silver in the best magazine category in the Prix d'Excellence awards bestowed by the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education. Moreover, *YorkU* was the only magazine to be recognized in both years. I think that's a fine tribute to the consistency of quality our talented staff produces.

We also again won silver in the best photograph category, for Edward Gajdel's brooding Summer 2004 cover shot of acclaimed author and York alum Nino Ricci, plus a bronze for best article for Ricci's own bylined memoir in that issue, "The Lifetime Reading Plan". As I told Ricci, "Your face did better than your fortune." He replied, "I'm always happy to win any award, for any reason." Good rule. ■

Shortly after he took over, Arthurs recalled, a new Liberal government gained power in Ontario. "The new minister of colleges and universities was Greg Sorbara, who had, four or five years earlier, been my student," he related. "I remember so vividly the very day he was appointed: the university presidents happened to be meeting, and he jumped out of his car, came up to our meeting, and delivered an off-the-cuff speech which stays with me still, 20 years later.

"He said, 'Some people are going to tell you that universities are about economic development. As far as I'm concerned, universities are about allowing people to grow to their full potential, and they're about intellectual development.' I thought that was just fabulous." Soon afterward, says Arthurs, the Liberals "actually pumped some money into the system, and we fought like hell to get our fair share of it."

Today, of course, Greg Sorbara is the finance minister of Ontario, and his most recent budget once again pumped money into the postsecondary system, promising more. Let the new battle begin.

Send letters, submissions, comments and ideas to [editor@yorku.ca](mailto:editor@yorku.ca).

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PHOTOGRAPH BY HORST HERGET

York prizes the autonomy it was given. BY LORNA R. MARSDEN

# Strong and Free

**A**warm welcome to each of the more than 7,500 first-year students joining us at York this fall term. And a welcome back to all the upper-year and graduate students returning for September. We are proud to have 120 new full-time faculty members joining us at York. We hope that everyone will have a happy and successful year.

Those starting first year are an historic group of students because, if they graduate in four years, they will be finishing in York's 50th year. This makes all the graduates of 2009 important in the annals of York history.

In 1959, when the first York Act was passed by the Ontario legislature, there was no York University – no students, no faculty, no campus, no president. But there was a great idea. The idea was to provide this province and, especially, the Greater



**In 1959, there was no York**

Toronto Area with a modern university that would welcome qualified students from all parts of the community.

York University grew from a handful of students to our present 50,000 very rapidly. Today there are 5,600 courses offered in 10 dynamic faculties boasting world-renowned intellectual talent. It's no accident. The founding faculty members together with the founding president, Murray Ross, and key staff members worked extremely hard to develop a unique academic approach. From the start, York's academic programs were interdisciplinary. Here's how Ross put it in 1960: "No one in his right mind would today oppose the need for a high degree of specialization. But to have specialization and nothing else is to possess but half an education.... We shall try to break down the barriers of specialization, to give to York University students a sense of the unity of knowledge."

But there was another important dimension to York's founding. Complementing the modernity of the interdisciplinary approach was how we were to be governed. The Government of Ontario created York in both the 1959 and the 1965

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

acts as an independent, self-governing, not-for-profit, charitable corporation. With our bicameral system – the board of governors and the senate – our governance is strong and autonomous.

We are not unique in Ontario in this regard. But it does distinguish us from those universities that were

established in the century prior to the 1960s. At York, we prize the autonomy we were given, which provides our students, faculty and community supporters much more say in our affairs than is the case at many other universities.

Moreover, contrary to popular belief, York receives less than half of its revenue from government. The majority comes from non-governmental sources such as tuition, university business operations and donations. In other words, York University operates just as other not-for-profit charitable organizations do. This independence is, in my view, the best way to guarantee academic freedom.

Today York has never been stronger – in academic reputation, in research and scholarly contributions, in service to the community, Canada and the world. Each student can be proud to be involved with York University, not only in the classroom but in the hundreds of student clubs, in our many sports groups and in the governance of York. Citizenship at York is an active affair and we encourage everyone to join in and get involved. ■

PHOTOGRAPH BY COREY MIHALIUK

# UNIVERSE

CAREERS

## JOB ONE

York experts have some suitable advice on dressing for work interviews



**E**xperts say you make the right – or wrong – impression on a prospective employer within seven seconds. So in a job interview you need to do everything possible to stack the odds in your favour. “We’re always putting forward an image,” says Farheen Rashid, career programs coordinator in York’s Career Centre. “We help students make sure it’s the right one.” Although there are many different types of business wear, the two most common are business casual and professional attire. The former presents an image that’s neat, clean and conservative but not too formal, often found in non-profit organizations, customer service industries and schools. The professional look is conservative, traditional and often associated with professions that involve more authority, such as law, finance or accounting – think power colours like black, blue and grey.

To help students put their best foot forward, Rashid developed a three-part “professional etiquette” series last academic year. The course was such a success that the Career Centre plans to offer students more sessions this year. Here are some key tips – for anyone – on dressing for success:

### WOMEN

**SKIN FLICK:** Cleavage is out. Experts agree that the more skin you show the less professional you look.

**YOU’VE GOT NAILS:** Keep them a normal length. Colour should be neutral.

**WHAT’S THAT SMELL?:** Tone down on perfume (if at all).

**SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL:** Giant tote bags/backpacks are good for camping, but not job interviews. Try a small portfolio.

**MAKEUP LITE:** Unless you’re in Cirque de Soleil, use cosmetics sparingly.

**ARE THOSE EARRINGS OR A CHANDELIER?:** Big jewellery is out.

**GOING UP?:** Reasonable hemlines are a must.

**SHEER INGENUITY:** Pantyhose should match shoes and hemline. It should also be flawless (no runs). Save the black fishnets for clubbing.

**HAIR DOS:** Do keep your coif pulled back and out of your face.

**WHAT A HEEL:** High heels are fine but they should be tasteful.

### MEN

**NO STRAGGLERS:** Facial hair (if any) should be neatly trimmed.

**A REAL CINCH:** A tasteful belt will help rein you in.

**SUITS YOU:** Choose suits in grey, black or blue.

**HANDS UP!:** Make sure hands are clean and have well-groomed fingernails. No motor-oil stains, please.

**BE BRIEF:** Classic leather briefcase/portfolio is good. No backpacks.

**LINT TRAP?:** Make sure your suit or clothing is stain and dust free.

**SPIT ‘N’ POLISH:** Stay with clean, closed (i.e. no sandals) dress shoes in good condition. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY LOZON

BOOKS

# What They're Reading

York people reveal what's on the bedside table

**Tom Cohen,**  
professor of history,  
Faculty of Arts  
*Gli italiani in Africa Orientale:  
III, la caduta dell'impero*  
By Angelo Del Boca

"When in Rome (and I'm on sabbatical) I do as the Romans do and read Italian things. The main block to buying books is the puzzle of how to fetch home the loot. A spavined bedside table (by necessity) trims my book pile, so I usually heap them on the marble dresser. My favourite book right now – and it's way outside my ken – is this tome on Italy's tragicomic brief empire in Ethiopia. I'm enjoying it immensely."

**Michael Moir,**  
University archivist and head,  
Archives & Special Collections  
*Generally Speaking: The Memoirs  
of Major-General Richard Rohmer*  
By Richard Rohmer

"Rohmer's memoirs have kept me company on the long bus rides along Jane Street as I travel to and from the Keele campus. I'm now arranging and describing the general's papers, which were donated to York this past December, and his memoirs serve as a road map to give context to correspondence and photographs. Then I'll be turning my attention to Derek Lundy's *The Way of a Ship: A Square-Rigger Voyage in the Last Days of Sail*. His tales of storm-tossed decks and balancing aloft on wet rigging may be the closest this archivist gets to an exotic journey for some time."



CITIES

# Bench Pressed

Steven Flusty gives Toronto's public spaces low marks

**S**teven Flusty knows a thing or two about cities that work and cities that don't. Flusty, a York urban geography prof who's LA born and bred, is peeved about cities that don't provide good public space or, when they do, seek to control it by using private security firms, gates and video surveillance.

Public space – parks, parkettes, public squares, benches etc. – are all part of the urban landscape Flusty has studied in cities worldwide, as part of his groundbreaking work to challenge our ideas about so-called globalization. He says such space is integral to successful cityscapes. So how's Toronto's public-space report card? A failure apparently.

"Toronto is a multicultural city and, like so many other global cities, it celebrates itself as a hotbed of diversity," says Flusty. "But it doesn't have public spaces that encourage different populations to mix."

Specifically, Flusty mentions Toronto's "bum-proof" benches as emblematic of our underlying uneasiness about urban space. "Most of Toronto's public benches are really *bench simulacra*," says Flusty. "They're post-postmodern benches. They *look* like places to sit, but aren't." He says that in the global postmodern city it's important to give the impression of friendliness, but you don't want people to linger or stay. "Globalization is about money and flow-through. Visit, spend, leave. Take Nathan Phillips and Dundas squares – they're designed for tourists, bureaucrats and business execs, not citizens."

Flusty suggests Toronto's discomfort with public space's "unpredictability" may have its antecedents in the city's pre-1970s WASP work ethic, where idle hands were seen to do the devil's work. Whatever the reasons, his students have walked along downtown Yonge Street and west along Bloor Street to Christie Pits, "and there are precious few places to just sit. No green space. I mean, these are major pedestrian thoroughfares! Why aren't there more benches?" ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED

UNIVERSE

PROJECTS

# Auto Save

Engineering students show how to stop car thieves

**F**our ingenious students from York's first graduating class in engineering have put together an alarming invention. But no worries, their gizmo – a remotely operated wireless vehicle security alarm that uses a cell phone to alert the owner to intruders – is the crowning achievement of a capstone course in engineering design. The four fourth-year students – Tristan Carvelho, Mina Gendi, Quingyang Kong and Eugene Oulman – came up with the car alarm idea after bandying about several projects, says Oulman. "We thought the remote, cell-phone-based car alarm that uses a mini-camera was the neatest project. It gives you notification as soon as your car is broken into and then it shows you the picture of the intruder. That way you have a pictorial record to show the police or you can call the police in real time to let them know a break-in is in progress."

The four combined their skills in both computer hardware engineering and software engineering for the project. They bought parts from the Internet or electronics stores and scrounged some from more unusual sources. Says Oulman, "The alarm's impact sensor came from a toy in a Kellogg's Corn Flakes box." ■



RESEARCH

# Forgetting Pain

A York health expert demonstrates how to outfox the nervous system

**A**s a graduate student, Joel Katz had been interested in why amputees could not only remember pain in phantom limbs but also experience it as real. It eventually led Katz, York's Canada Research Chair in Health Psychology, to study the phenomenon of the central nervous system's hypersensitivity to pain. Katz wondered if there were ways of pre-empting our nervous system from learning about pain.

Working with anesthetists at Toronto's University Health Network, Katz has now demonstrated, using pre-emptive pain techniques on 145 women undergoing abdominal surgery, that the theory works. Results show that patients who received analgesic epidurals 20 minutes before surgery had significantly less post-operative pain than those who did not, or than those who got painkillers during surgery. Katz's research is important in understanding pain management and how to treat it with drugs before and after surgery. Ideally, if the brain can be prevented from becoming hyper-sensitized to pain in the first place, half the battle will be won. "It's clear," says Katz, "that the best way to forget pain is never to have learned it in the first place." ■

ILLUSTRATION BY ROB MACDONALD; PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED





RESOURCES

## Madness Documented

A new Web site looks at an oft-hidden history

**I**t's a mad, mad world and three York professors are intent on helping us understand it better. Well, not the world's insanity perhaps, but at least Canada's. Faculty of Arts Professors Megan Davies (Health & Society Program) and Kimberley White (Law & Society Program) and Prof. Geoffrey Reaume of the Atkinson School of Health Policy & Management have come up with the not-so-crazy idea of creating a Web site devoted to documenting the history of madness in Canada ([www.historyofmadness.ca](http://www.historyofmadness.ca)). Its purpose, says the site, is "to access part of our past that has too often been hidden from view".

Davies says its academic, archival and teaching value (say, as a Web resource for high-school students) will be unparalleled. "A Web site has much more potential for reaching people compared to a book that would end up on a university library shelf." She notes that the site is not only an archival resource about the history of madness in Canada (included online will be items like NFB documentaries, photos, case files, newspaper articles, oral histories, and related medical and psychiatric articles), but also a forum for patient input.

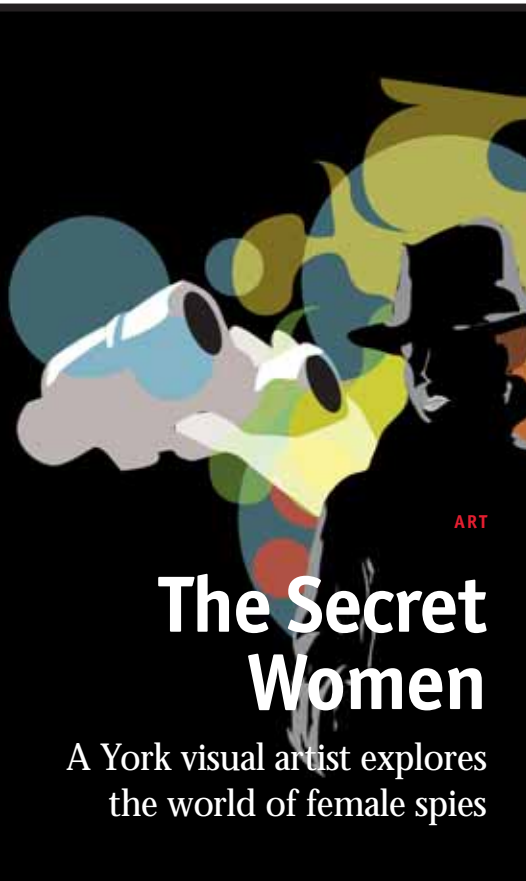
"As we develop the site there will be consistent representation from patients and consumers on the Web site committee and Web pages," says Davies. "It's definitely collaborative and represents a diversity of perspectives and disciplines." The bilingual site will contain links to educational resources, historical information, venues for discussion, and a place to undertake and publish research. "Madness is the dark side of living," says Davies, "but it's real life and it is both social and medical history. That's why it's important to have a resource that will archive this material, but it's also a place people can use to air and publish views and opinions." ■

**I**nstallation artist and York visual arts Professor Nina Levitt knows a great topic when she see one (or is that *spies* one?). And that was exactly the case when, while she was doing a show at an Oshawa art gallery four years ago, the curator mentioned that an ultra-secret "spy camp" had existed nearby during the Second World War. More specifically, the camp trained women agents for espionage assignments. Levitt was intrigued.

"Camp X", as it was known, was so secret that even then-prime minister Mackenzie King didn't know about it. Britain sent many women spies to Occupied France, but information about their identities and their role has only been recently declassified. "The important role women played as spies wasn't known until after the war," says Levitt. "My work is a way of exploring how history gets constructed and, perhaps, its unfinished nature."

Levitt's most recent installation, shown in Toronto and Montreal and titled *Little Breeze*, is the eponymous nickname of famous British spy Violette Szabo. Entering the gallery, the viewer sees 1940s-style vintage suitcases scattered about the floor. Picking up a case triggers sound clips that play through a small speaker, and a corresponding video clip emerges on a large screen from a field of ASCII code (which developed out of secret codes used in WWII). In a second room are portraits of nine other female British agents with biographical texts. Speakers play the sound of a Morse code radio transmission and the interactive sound changes as viewers move through the room. A third part of the installation is a text work on the lives of other special operations women.

"It's ironic," says Levitt, "but women's very social invisibility allowed them to be visible, literally, in France and helped them gather intelligence." ■



ART

## The Secret Women

A York visual artist explores the world of female spies

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROB MACDONALD

NEIGHBOURHOODS

# Worshipping History

Two York profs document Toronto's religious places

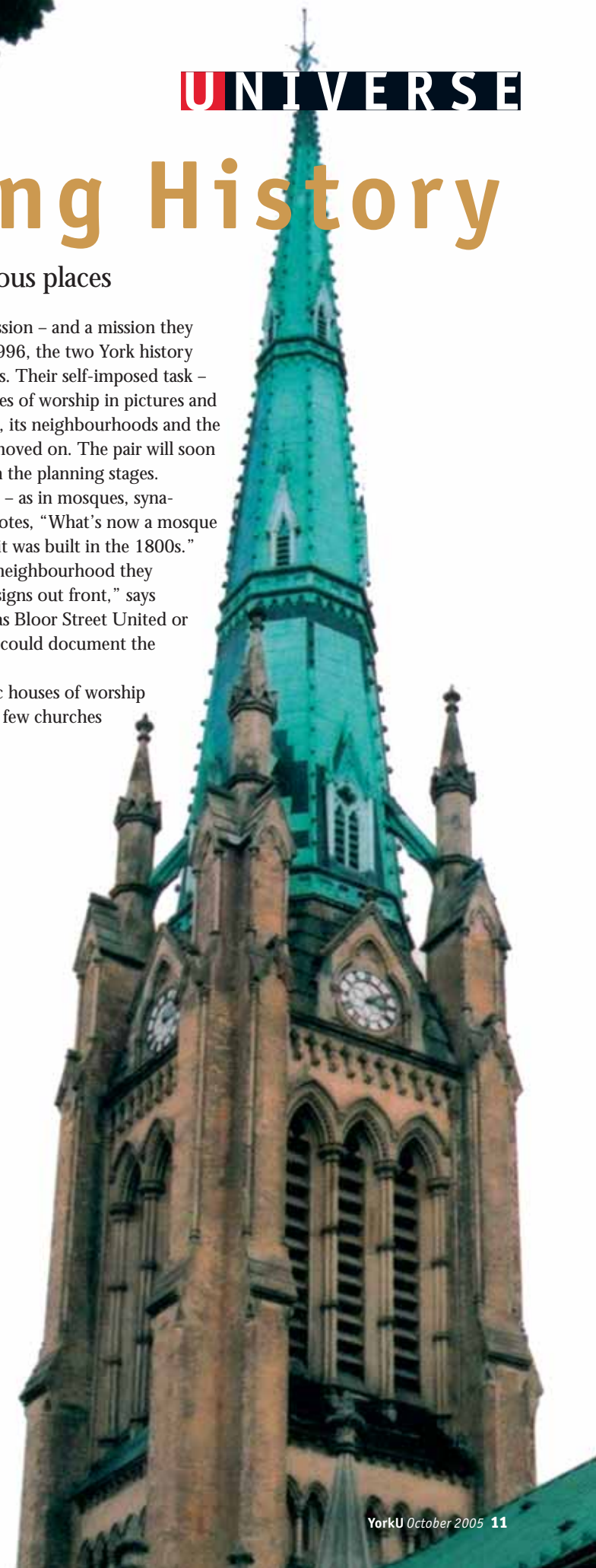
**G**abe Scardellato and Roberto Perin are on a religious mission – and a mission they pursue religiously. Nearly every summer Sunday since 1996, the two York history profs have met to walk around Toronto neighbourhoods. Their self-imposed task – which they love – is to document the history of 248 Toronto places of worship in pictures and words. They say the city's churches illustrate the story of Toronto, its neighbourhoods and the waves of immigrants who lived there, used them, and ultimately moved on. The pair will soon have a Web site documenting their findings, and a guidebook is in the planning stages.

Scardellato and Perin tend to use the term "places of worship" – as in mosques, synagogues, temples etc. – as much as "church". Although, as Perin notes, "What's now a mosque might have been owned by several different denominations since it was built in the 1800s."

When Perin and Scardellato started walking in their west-end neighbourhood they noticed something curious. "Many of these churches had several signs out front," says Scardellato. "You might have Koreans sharing the same building as Bloor Street United or High Park United. We thought, 'Isn't this interesting. Maybe we could document the denominational changes over the years.'"

But they also found it was a way of documenting many historic houses of worship before they disappeared. Says Perin, "Since we began this, quite a few churches have been sold and torn down to put up condos." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED



Their roots are all over the world. Six York students write about early experiences that helped shape them – and tell some very diverse stories.

BY MICHAEL TODD

# Journeys

EMPTY SHELVES: Ioana Nicoara

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY LOZON

**T**HE FOLLOWING STORIES – all by York students – probably wouldn't have been written 10 or more years ago. At least, not at York. Set in locales ranging from Eastern Europe to Southeast Asia, as well as Canada, these works represent the demographic diversity that is the campus today. York's ethnic makeup has changed dramatically in recent decades, mirroring the changes in the Greater Toronto Area itself. According to the 1996 census, almost 40 per cent of the total GTA population – a portion amounting to 1.8 million people – is foreign-born, compared to 17.4 per cent in the country as a whole. Recent figures show that the Big Smoke receives about 100,000 immigrants a year.

The stories presented here in edited excerpts are in the form of "fictional autobiography", drawing on the lives of the students themselves before they came to Canada or soon after they arrived. The stories were part of class assignments for the social science courses Childhood & Society and The School & Fiction, offered by Atkinson Professor Chris Searle.

"Many of the students in these classes are prospective teachers," says Searle. "The idea was to look critically at education. I've always found stories are really valuable as a way of clarifying experience and I've been continually struck by students' honest expression of the experience. What's amazing is that of my 120 students I have 32 different countries represented."

Whether fact or fiction, what's striking about all of the stories is their voice of authenticity. And in effect, the selected excerpts that follow are memoirs, because their writers repeatedly told *YorkU* that they didn't make anything up. The content is a reminder of the breadth of formative experiences that today's students – and Canadians – carry with them.

Searle eventually plans to collect the stories in a book, *Toronto Cosmos*, to be published in 2006 by Between the Lines. "We'll have 50-plus students' work represented," says Searle. "And about 31 different countries." Monies from the book will go to support Red Cross redevelopment efforts in the wake of the Asian tsunami disaster.

## Waiting in Line

From "Journey from Communism to Capitalism" by Ioana Nicoara

*Born in Romania, Ioana Nicoara immigrated to Canada in 1990 after the Romanian revolution and the demise of the communist party. This is the first time she has written about her life, and she fictionalized nothing, she says. Nicoara graduated this year with a BA (Specialized Honours) in physical geography and a BEd.*

**L**IFE IN ROMANIA WAS BITTERSWEET: hard yet beautiful. As a child I had minimal understanding of the adult world, let alone politics at the time. I do remember waiting in line for days in order to get meat. People would line up every day, from morning until afternoon (especially retired people, who had the time), waiting until the store would close. Then, they would pack up their portable chairs and go home, repeating that same activity the next day, until the meat truck would come: it was never known exactly when. The trucks frequently ran out of meat and so family members would take turns daily to wait in lines of hundreds.

The requirements were to bring the personal identification cards of all family members to prove how many people you were feeding; then you would get an "appropriate" portion based on that. When my grandparents died, we continued using their cards to get more meat. It's a horrible thing to do, but

we were living on vegetables, potatoes and pickled products. My parents needed to buy meat to make a decent meal for two young children.

The supermarkets reminded me of empty hospitals. They were big white rooms with empty shelves (except for mustard and detergent). The only necessities found on a regular basis in stores were bread and milk (if one woke up early enough to pick them up). What I remember well was that every Sunday, an old lady from a neighbouring rural village would walk down our street selling fresh sour cream, cheese, eggs and milk from her farm. The dairy products she sold were the best tasting that I have ever had!

School provided a very different atmosphere from home. I was always a good student and brought home good marks. The teachers in Romania during the 1980s were mostly female and dressed very stylishly, yet conservatively. The strategy used to discipline students varied among teachers. Corporal punishment or forms of mental pressure and threats were frequently used. For example, teachers would say things like: "You'll never amount to anything and your parents will be ashamed of you!" or they would hit you with a ruler and make you kneel on walnut shells.

As students, we had mandatory dress codes. For example, all female students were required to wear skirts with stockings and a headband that kept the hair in place (you were not allowed to wear your hair loose). Almost all students respected their teachers because we were brought up to respect anyone older than us and had a certain fear of authorities. Never would we speak back to a teacher! If you misbehaved, punishment would occur at school and at home.

## School of Combat

From "The Prison Without Bars" by Dae Jin Yang

*Third-year Atkinson student Dae Jin Yang was born in South Korea and grew up there. He came to Canada in 2000. His story is true, he says. "It is about my high school period and its education style – similar to a military education. I worry about whether publishing my story is the right thing to do. People might laugh or think my country is strange or uncivilized because of its strict style of education." Yang is studying human resources management.*

**T**he department of education in the city made decisions of what high school we went to, without concern about the distance. Sometimes, it was too far. For example, my friend lived in a place further from his school than from Waterloo to York University.

My school was a pretty long distance, so I had to get up by 5am to get on the bus. The bad thing was my parents also suffered because they had to make my lunch and dinner before 5am. This continued for three years.

On the first day, I was nervous because of unfamiliar classmates, teachers, the school system and new buildings. After an introduction and information from our class teacher, all the new students entered the auditorium to hear the principal's first address. He said a lot of things, but I just remembered one thing: Three-Winners, Four-Losers (students who sleep three hours can enter a good university but those who sleep four hours shouldn't even think about university – which meant study hard and don't sleep). His last words were, "Combat has started, soldiers now fight!"

There were different punishments according to students' levels of fault. Some teachers were very kind and punishment was not severe; they usually tried to communicate first. But most teachers didn't communicate too much. They used canes first, or baseball bats, pool cues and other instruments of hard wood. Smacking students' cheeks was common, or a physical discipline we called "head bombing". You put your head on the ground in the position of a push-up and then put both hands behind your back. In that position my body was held above the ground by my head and my feet for 10 to 20 minutes. This physical punishment pumped all my blood into my head and my face colour changed to full scarlet. I felt a freezing and empty sense in my head from the heavy blood pressure. Sometimes you might bleed from the head – it depended on the condition of the ground.

## Refugees From War

From "Escape to Paradise" by Armin Kumarshellah

*Born in Ahwaz, Iran, Armin Kumarshellah came to Canada when he was nearly seven, via the tortuous route he details in this story. With the exception of the name of "Dr. Nabbi", he says, "the whole thing is true." Kumarshellah has completed three years at Atkinson, majoring in marketing.*

**E**verybody hurry to the basement, it's the safest place!" my mother cried. I waddled as fast as I could, with my mother behind me and my two older sisters forming a close train behind her. It was dark and we could hardly see. I was scared but didn't know why. My mother picked me up in her arms trying to comfort me, so that I wouldn't realize the magnitude of what was happening around the house. I could see tears rolling down my oldest sister's cheek as she held my other sister close to her shivering body. Mostly, it was the horrific look pasted on my mother's face that led me to believe how scary this was. Mother would repeatedly pray for us and for my father, who was at work at the time. The loud sirens were howling across the city followed by the frequent sounds of blasting and explosions, which caused the house to tremble. Of course, being three years old I didn't know what made the noises; all I knew was that I didn't like it.

We had been suffering through a vicious war between Iran and Iraq for six years, and my parents were fed up. One day, my father began selling our assets and belongings so we could begin our journey to Canada. Throughout the years, my sisters and I were told many fairy tales of how wonderful and magical this land called Canada was. My sisters and I were very anxious to get there. We didn't know about the many obstacles that stood in our way.

Our journey began after we had sold almost everything. We were not permitted to cross the Iranian border while the country was at war with Iraq; therefore our escape was not only hard but extremely dangerous. If the authorities had realized that our passports were fake, they would have arrested us and executed us. Luckily we arrived safely in India. At this point we were stuck, not knowing what route to take out of India. It took nearly a year for a gentleman named Dr. Nabbi and his crooked associates to forge illegal documents for my father so that he could escape once again. They suggested to my parents that it would be wiser for my father to go by himself to Canada and work so that he could send money to finalize our documents. My father had no complications at the airport and

landed in Canada safely. I remember we were ecstatic when we got the long distance call from my dad. We thought that we would be reunited soon.

My father dutifully sent all the money he earned to Dr. Nabbi. After months of negotiations, Dr. Nabbi and his associates were ready to send us to Canada with a stopover at Bangkok airport. Our fake passports said that we were Italian, so my mother continuously reminded us not to speak Farsi while near any authorities at the airport. Before we could board the next plane in Bangkok that was supposed to take us to Canada, the customs officer became suspicious of our documents, so an Italian translator was brought out to expose us. When my mother didn't respond in Italian, they quickly realized that we were illegal refugees and threatened to throw all of us in a Bangkok prison. The thought of having to be separated from her children was unbearable for her. She pleaded with the authorities to let her speak to the Canadian embassy.

After several excruciating hours in the terminal we were informed we could go to the embassy. My mother explained our situation to the powerful gentleman behind the desk. She said that we were too young to be placed in jail and that we needed her to survive in Thailand; she begged for mercy. He recognized our plight and helped us stay out of jail but said we would have to stay in Thailand to apply for refugee status. My mother explained to us that this arrangement would only be temporary and we needed to stay there until my father could bring us to Canada.

During those years in Thailand, my family and I made frequent trips to the immigration offices. It had been almost three years, and we were beginning to lose hope of ever seeing our father again. So finally, in desperation, my mother packed our bags and took us to the immigration office, threatening to stay there with her three kids until they gave us some sort of answer. For the first few hours they tried to ignore us but later a woman with a white folder in her hand came out and told us she had our visas in the folder and we would be leaving for Canada in a month. And so it was. Soon we were on a plane heading toward Canada.

The anticipation of seeing my father made the plane ride seem twice as long as it was. It had been so long since I last saw him, I had forgotten what he looked like. As the plane flew over Toronto I smiled, knowing that this was my new home. As we walked through the maze of people and luggage, I saw two men walking towards us at the end of the hallway. My mother, in her wonderful whispering voice, turned towards me and said, "That's Daddy." I ran as fast as I could toward the two gentlemen, leaped up and hugged my father as hard as I could. But my mother walked to the other gentleman and hugged him. "Armin, this is Daddy," she said with a giggle. My life in Canada had begun.

## Teachers' Pet

From "Memories of School" by Olessia Belgorodskii

*Olessia Belgorodskii was born in Moscow and emigrated to Canada in 1997. "This was a true childhood experience," she says. "Writing this story gave me the opportunity to express my true feelings and my true fear." Belgorodskii is in her fourth year at Atkinson, majoring in accounting.*

**I**n Russia, we do not have kindergarten, so children go to school at six or seven years old. Oh, I cannot tell you how happy I was to go to school. My first day was wonderful. There were a lot of flowers and balloons everywhere. There were a lot of teachers with smiling and welcoming faces, who congratulated us with the big first step towards learning. When we entered the classroom, a young blond woman with a very pleasant smile said to us: "Hello, kids!

**We did not receive any gratitude, like little flags or stars for outstanding performance, as I was used to in my old school. It was like slave labour.**

Please sit down. I am going to be your teacher. You are about to start your journey into learning. I am going to be your help and also a friend." It was a miracle for me. I liked everything and everybody. But this good time came to an end as soon as I moved with my parents to another district in Moscow.

This district was newly built and it was as day and night compared to the old one. People on the streets were different. No more smiling faces. All faces were angry and unhappy. Many children were on the streets just wandering about, cursing, and without proper supervision. The school was even worse. There were a lot of young dropouts who were drinking, smoking and swearing on the steps of the school. These were the kids who did not want to continue to study and had nothing else to do. They were laughing at children like us who went to school, and called practically everybody names.

But not only the outside of the school was different. Something was in the teachers that reminded me of the people in the streets who were unhappy. There was a sense of fear together



with an emotionless cold in their eyes. During the classes we did not receive any gratitude, like little flags or stars for outstanding performance, as I was used to in my old school. It was like slave labour. Only later have I understood that only “favourite pets” could get special attention from a teacher. These were the pupils whose parents either gave expensive gifts to the teacher or did some service, like help her children enter university. The rest were either new students or children from poor families.

## A Question of Standards

From “I Have a Name” by Karishma Kapil

*Karishma Kapil's parent's are from India, although she was born in Lusaka, Zambia. “I lived there until I was 10 – that was when we came to Toronto,” she says. “This was the first time I had written anything like this. I remember getting pretty upset as I was writing it because I realized how much I was discriminated against. I remembered how lonely I felt.” Kapil graduated from York last year with a BA in psychology and now is pursuing a second degree in sociology.*

**H**ELLO,” he said in a big booming voice. “After reviewing her records I think we will place her in Grade 5 and she will have to attend ESL which is...”

“ESL?” My mother frowned. “What do you mean ESL? English is her first language. She was in Grade 6 in Zambia, so why not put her in Grade 6 here?”

“Well, our education standards in Canada are higher than what you may have had in Africa. I don’t think she’ll be able to cope with Grade 6 here. ESL will help her integrate properly in an English-speaking society,” said the principal. He seemed a little uncomfortable with the look my mother was giving him.

My mother left the office in a huff, and the principal led me to my new classroom. The label on the door said Grade 6. He walked over to the teacher and they started to talk. The teacher had a pained look on his face. “COME ON IN,” he said. The teacher also had a big loud voice.

“Attention class,” he said. I thought, why isn’t his voice loud when he speaks to them? “We have a new addition to our classroom. She has come all the way from Africa and is going to be joining us for the rest of the year.” Africa? Why was he say-

ing Africa? Africa is a continent, not a country. “Please make her feel comfortable. She may not speak English very well, but be patient. English is not everyone’s first language.” Why did he say I did not speak English well? I sat down at my new desk and prepared for my first day at school. My new teacher resumed his lesson in fractions. How come he did not ask me my name?

A loud bell rang and everyone started to line up at the door. I guessed we were going outside. I really wished I did not have to go. It was so cold. “Look, the refugee does not even have a winter jacket!” I put my head down and pretended not to have heard. I felt like shouting that I had a name and that I was not a refugee. The teacher opened the door and everyone shoved their way out. Within a few minutes I could not feel my nose anymore. My toes started to hurt and I started shuffling my feet to stop them from hurting.

A second bell rang and all the kids that were playing in the playground started to run back to the classroom. Once inside, the teacher moved to the front of the class and smiled at me.

“CAN...YOU...COME...TO...THE...FRONT...OF...THE...CLASS...AND...TELL...US...ABOUT...YOURSELF?” Why was everyone talking to me like that? I wasn’t deaf. He was beginning to make me feel stupid when he spoke so slowly. I walked to the front of the class.

**My new teacher resumed his lesson in fractions. Why did he say I did not speak English well? How come he did not ask me my name?**

“H...hi.” My mouth was frozen. My jaw did not want to move. I was still too cold from standing outside. Everyone started laughing. The teacher got that same pained look he had before.

“Okay class, that’s enough. We should not make fun of people who come from other countries and cannot speak English. She’ll learn. We’re going to send her to ESL and hopefully by the end of this year she will be able to communicate with us.” It wasn’t fair. He didn’t give me a chance to try again.

When I walked into the ESL class there was not a single student there. The teacher looked up and seemed happy to see me. “Hello. I’ve been waiting for you,” she said. “Okay, honey, what’s your name?”

“Karishma.”

“You understood my question, Karishma!” She looked very surprised.

“Yes.”

“So please tell me about yourself.”

I started to tell her that today was my second day in Toronto. I told her everything about my family, myself, my old school and how, today, after school, I was going to go shopping to buy some winter clothes. My new ESL teacher did not say anything to me. She got up and walked out of the classroom. I was left sitting there staring after her wondering what I had said that made her leave. After a long time, she returned; her face was all red. She seemed angry.

“Come along, honey. You’re going back to Mr. Herrick’s class, you don’t need mine. He is going to give you some tests the rest of the students have already taken. If you do well, you’ll stay. If you don’t, they’ll put you in Grade 5. Do you understand?”

I nodded my head, and got up from my chair. I guessed I would be staying in Mr. Herrick’s class after all because if he tested me on things he was teaching in class earlier in the day I’d do fine. I had already learned all that at my old school.

## Crowded Quarters

From “Good and Bad” by Yusuf Mohamed

*Yusuf Mohamed was born in Somalia, but grew up in Canada after moving here at the age of five. “To write this I had to go way back in time to a place I haven’t been in a long while. All sorts of emotions surfaced that took me by surprise,” he says. Mohamed is going into his second year at York, pursuing a degree in human resources management.*

**I** woke up extra early that morning, just to make sure I was not going to be late for my very first day of school in my new adopted home. We had just arrived in Canada from Somalia two weeks before. It took a while for us to settle in and get comfortable living with my uncle, his wife and two daughters in a small three-bedroom apartment. The apartment for the most part felt crowded, especially when all of us were there at the same time.

One dreadful thing was that there was only one bathroom in the apartment for nine people – everything else I coped with except for that. The wait for that bathroom got a bit ridiculous sometimes. No matter how much I tried I could never beat my

cousins to the bathroom, and once either one got in there I was guaranteed a long wait. I knew there was going to be a possibility of me being late for my first day of school because of the bath issue, so I took some precautions. I took a bath the night before – that would save a lot of time and keep me fresh; and I prepared my clothes on the side of my bed, so all I had to do was just slip into them and go. The last order of business was to pack my bag with all the school supplies I imagined I would need: pencil, pen, eraser, ruler, sharpener, glue, markers and lots of paper. With everything done I felt confident there was nothing that would go wrong. Sad to say, my plan was not as flawless as I thought. I totally forgot that I was not the only one heading to school. I was too busy getting excited over the possibility that I was going to learn, but my brother and cousin couldn’t have cared less. They were up until midnight playing video games and didn’t have an ounce of energy the next morning to wake up. For nearly 30 minutes I tried doing everything imaginable to awaken them, like zombies from a grave. The one thing I feared and tried to prevent was going to happen. I was helpless, I was going to be late. My grandma always told me that first impressions can make the biggest difference in how people see you, and because of those two knock-heads my attempt at a memorable first impression was ruined.

My teacher’s name was Miss Perrat. She was an older lady with an oval shape but had the brightest teeth in the world. You could tell she was proud of her teeth because she never stopped smiling, even when she was yelling at a child that misbehaved. There was one obvious difference between me and the rest of my classmates. I did not speak a sufficient amount of English to properly communicate. Some of my classmates saw this as an opportunity to take advantage of me, and they did. They figured out after a while that I didn’t have the ability to understand what I was saying, that I was merely repeating words. But Miss Perrat was always on my side defending me. She was like a mother away from home. The support she gave me instilled self-confidence in me that was vital to my ability to overcome the early obstacles I faced. It helped me grow as an individual – to refuse to be taken advantage of and refuse to be put down. ■

**For nearly 30 minutes I tried doing everything imaginable to awaken them, like zombies from a grave.**

# The Mind's Eye

Doug Crawford, winner of this year's Steacie Prize, gave up his guitar for brain research. BY MICHAEL TODD

**I**T WASN'T UNTIL HIS THIRD YEAR at the University of Western Ontario, while an undergrad, that Doug Crawford had his epiphany. That's when he decided to stop playing electric guitar three hours a day, and concentrate more on studying science. "At the time, I had the usual fantasies about becoming a rock star," says Crawford, who comes from a family with a farming background in southwest Ontario. He was the first among them to attend university.

Although he's not on stage cranking out tunes, Crawford has still earned star status. Earlier this year, he received the prestigious Steacie Prize. The award is given to a promising young Canadian scientist or engineer who is 40 or under. Essentially it's the Canadian science establishment's version of an Academy Award for its younger members. Past Steacie honorees have included such scientific big guns as chemist John Polanyi, who went on to win the Nobel Prize.

Crawford, who holds the Canada Research Chair in Visuomotor Neuroscience at York, is also associate director of York's Centre for Vision Research and a professor in the departments of Psychology, Biology and Kinesiology & Health Science. He's in charge of a lab that's engaged in three areas of vision research: eye-hand coordination; 3-D gaze control; and trans-saccadic integration (piecing together perceptions across different gaze fixations). In part, the award – York's first – recognizes the contributions to brain science made by Crawford and his interdisciplinary team of 20 researchers.

"I wasn't your prototypical geeky science kid," says Crawford. But he was always very curious about the natural world and how it worked. "As a child I was interested in frogs, bones and rocks and that kind of thing. I remember one day showing up on the back porch with a decomposing raccoon and asking my mom if we could do something that would strip all the flesh off it. I think there were a few childhood dissections sprinkled in there, too. And in Grade 4 I did a project on the human body."

One curiosity – considering that much of what Crawford and his labs now study is concerned with vision and the brain – is that in Grade 5 he proposed a project to his teacher on the vision of his pet tropical fish. "I wanted to know how they could see, or what it was they were seeing. It's strange when you look back on things like that."

But Crawford says his interests as a university student weren't all science-related. He had an abiding interest in philos-

ophy. "I was interested in the human mind and body. And now here I am looking at visual systems as they relate to our brain – our minds, if you want to think of it that way."

Philosophy, he says, still very much ties into what he does or, at least, his approach to science. "I'm interested in basic science but I've always tried to find a medical application for what I do. My work can help particularly where you have people with stroke or trauma damage to their visual or motor systems."

He and his collaborators recently released a groundbreaking study (appearing in the April issue of the respected journal *Nature Neuroscience*) that should aid stroke and head injury victims' rehabilitation. "We showed that our theory of spatial memory and eye-hand coordination can explain the problems observed in patients with damage to the parietal cortex of the brain," says Crawford.

"The question is: How do you know – after you've looked at an object and then are looking at something else – where that original object still is? How are we able to reach for it, more or less accurately, without actually looking at it?" asks Crawford. The scientists knew the brain creates visual maps (and keeps revising them) as we move our head and our eyes, he notes. "We showed this earlier using computer models, behavioral recordings and brain imaging, but this time we were actually able to use these findings to explain some unusual problems in brain-damaged patients. Amazingly, we found that these patients could reach quite normally to remembered objects, or quite poorly, depending on how they turned their eyes just before their reach." The simple secret, Crawford found, was that people with damage to the right side of the parietal cortex needed to look left, and vice versa. "So this is something they can learn to do to help them recover, and it is also a way for doctors to diagnose their problem."

Crawford says the parietal cortex relies on one fairly simple spatial "language" (or map) to guide our movements, whereas other areas of the frontal cortex can be thought of as "multilingual". Medical researchers are now working on ways to "hook up" these areas with prosthetic devices which may allow stroke or other trauma patients to regain certain movements.

Expect more such insights from Crawford's lab. "What I really enjoy these days is the synergy between training students, and research itself," he says. And if he wasn't busy being a scientist, what would he like to be doing? "Working as a writer. I'm too old for the rock guitar thing now." ■



PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID STREET

'FOLLOW YOUR BLISS': Zalzal

Starting in her den 10 years ago, Hana Zalzal has built CARGO Cosmetics into a glossy business success story.

BY MARTHA TANCOCK

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES REID

# MAKEUP ARTIST

ENTREPRENEURS

**W**HEN STERLING SILVER-PLATED BOXES filled with CARGO cosmetics found their way into the gift bags for 2003 Academy Award presenters and performers like Julie Andrews, Halle Berry, Renée Zellweger and Queen Latifah, York business grad Hana Zalzal could thumb her nose at the skeptics who doubted she could ever make it in makeup.

Since 1995, when she persuaded Eaton's to retail her new, uniquely Canadian – yet unproven – line, CARGO has burgeoned into an international, multimillion-dollar business. Celebrities and their makeup artists are hooked on the sheer, blendable and longwearing cosmetics that photograph well. They also like the practical packaging – lip glosses in jumbo metal tins, combo blush-bronzers and foundation-sealers, lip gloss blister packs. TV actors – including Courteney Cox of "Friends" and Debra Messing of "Will & Grace" – have leapt at Zalzal's invitation to design their own lipsticks, which retail with 142 other CARGO Cosmetics products at such stores as Macy's in New York and The Bay in Canada, as well as online. As the brand's star has risen, so has Zalzal's. Two years ago, when CARGO made its academy debut, Zalzal herself was named one of Canada's Top 40 Under 40 entrepreneurs and business leaders, and profiled in *Report on Business* magazine in *The Globe and Mail*.

What sweet success for a civil engineer from Scarborough who abandoned a promising corporate career at 30 to take on the Helena Rubinsteins and Revlons of this world. The guy who once sneered, "If Eaton's places an order, I'll eat my shirt," only spurred Zalzal on. "The idea is not to be scared," she says.

Zalzal never dreamed cosmetics would be her future. Good at art and English in high school, she started studying architecture at the University of Toronto. Students smoked in class, sat on the floor, addressed the prof by his first name. "It was a big culture shock" for the daughter of Egyptian Catholics who grew up in safe, suburban West Hill. She switched to engineering – her father's field – and fit right in. Most of her classmates came from immigrant families, lived at home and studied hard, just like her. Eventually, she married one of them.

"Engineering was so tough it made everything else I did seem easy," says Zalzal, who, after two restless years designing cable systems for Bell, earned an MBA from York in 1992. After another two years doing marketing at Bell, then financial analysis at The Molson Companies Limited, she bid goodbye to the corporate world for good in 1995. "I did not belong in a large company. It did not mesh with my personality. I wanted the

freedom to work in the fashion I wanted to and exercise all parts of my brain. I really wanted to create something." And she knew she could because a York course in self-assessment and career development "confirmed that entrepreneurship fit my personality."

She was 30, married without children and had a big idea. Like most teenage girls, Zalzal started wearing drugstore makeup. "It wasn't until I was in my 20s that I developed a passion for it. I was very experimental." It was the 1980s and young women "didn't want to wear their mother's makeup." But there wasn't a lot of choice. "The ladies behind the counters all looked liked stewardesses." And there were rules. "I remember wearing navy blue eyeliner and navy blue mascara and one woman told me it didn't go with brown eyes." Zalzal began checking out foreign makeup trends whenever she travelled. On a trip to New York in the early '90s, she noticed new niche brands and recognized an opportunity. "I saw a hole in the market in Canada."

She picked the brains of professional makeup artists, beginning with the woman who did her wedding makeup, to develop quality products, then outsourced the lab work to produce formulas and colours. Working from a small den in her home and using what she learned at York, she created a business plan, an accounting system and a marketing strategy. She came up with the brand – "makeup is a woman's cargo" – packaged her dual lip glosses in jumbo metal tins and christened her eye shadows after places (Costa Rica green, Persia purple, Toronto cream). The concept was so novel, she had no trouble persuading Eaton's to retail CARGO as its first independent boutique brand. "It was the big turnaround point," says Zalzal. Despite Eaton's collapse in 1999, CARGO quickly landed in prestigious European and American department stores.

As CARGO passes its 10th anniversary, Zalzal never stops working, dreaming up innovative packaging and product lines that professional makeup artists and their celebrity clients continue to endorse. Though CARGO is expanding into other corners of the globe, the mother of three boys intends to remain based in Toronto – her Don Mills headquarters is a mere eight-minute drive to her North York home. At 41, Zalzal is doing what she loves. "I'm trying to juggle an abundance of blessings." Every year, when she shares her success story with first-year students at York's Schulich School of Business, she gives this advice: "The best lesson you can learn is follow your bliss. Be your authentic self, to quote Dr. Phil. If you love your job, you never work a day in your life." ■

**T**he alien invaders have been among us for years. They came quietly, unobtrusively: some by air, others by land and sea. Most were invited to our shores by complacent citizens, serene in their assurance of their empire over nature. As their numbers grew, the invaders gathered strength, preparing for the wave of assaults now crashing upon us. Habitats have been destroyed and victims have suffered starvation, convulsions, comas and death. It is truly a war of the worlds.

Is it science fiction? Not at all, says ecologist Dawn Bazely, professor of biology in York's Faculty of Science & Engineering and co-author of *Ecology and Control of Introduced Plants* (2003). The invaders are all too real, and Bazely and her colleagues are the real-life scientist heroes looking for ways to save our economy, habitats and lives. They have realized that, while scientific research is an essential part of the solution, this is a broad social, political and ethical issue. Their interdisciplinary counterassault forms part of a global effort to understand and control invasive species as diverse as the microbic SARS virus and the 25-metre-high Tree-of-heaven that can grow out of a crack in cement. The danger can literally hit home. In some residential neighbourhoods, notes Bazely, "we ought to document how property values have declined because all the trees have been chopped down to stop the Asian long-horned beetle."

Invasive non-indigenous species – INIS, or invasives, as they're sometimes called – represent just a tiny fraction of the 1,442 non-indigenous species that inhabit Canada's lakes, forests and farms, most of them introduced, accidentally or intentionally, by humans. But these keystone species dominate the ecosystems they settle into, causing disruption to everything there. Researchers such as economist Peter Victor of York's Faculty of Environmental Studies (FES) are still trying to accurately assess the economic impact of invasives but he pegs it somewhere between \$13.3 billion and \$34.7 billion in Canada. The figure is US\$125-140 billion south of the border.

In 2004, the York Centre for International & Security Studies and York biologist Laurence Packer organized a national conference in which participants from fields as diverse as mathematics, philosophy, ethics and the law looked at a wide range of issues relating to invasive species. The event highlighted York's growing expertise in this struggle. One of the most notorious aquatic invaders of the 1980s, zebra mussels, shut down the water supply of a town in Michigan for three days thanks to its capacity for rapid growth in the nitrogen-polluted waters of the Great Lakes. It and another species from eastern Europe, the spiny water flea, are the focus of York biologist Norman Yan's research for Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources at a field laboratory in Dorset, Ont. Jocelyn Martel, biology profes-

or in Glendon's Multidisciplinary Studies Department, has charted the land-based invasive Norway maple in his ongoing research into interaction between plants and herbivores.

The deadliest and most costly arrival of recent years came to Toronto and other cities by plane, in the lungs of travellers infected with the SARS virus. Another potentially fatal airborne invasive, West Nile virus, flew into our habitat on infected mosquitoes. How these threats to human health spread and interact with the environment is the subject of mathematical modelling research led by York's Jianhong Wu, Canada Research Chair in Applied Mathematics. At a recent workshop on Mathematical Modelling of Invasive Diseases held at Winnipeg's National Microbiology Laboratory, mathematicians, public health researchers and two ecologists discussed the need for an interdisciplinary response. Bazely, who spoke at the meeting, was delighted at the inclusion of ecology, which is often separated from health research.

There are some experts – the "learn-to-love-ems", as Bazely calls them – who contend we're overreacting and cite the benefits of, for example, zebra mussels. These creatures' feeding habits do contribute to clearer water that promotes the growth of water plants and a more hospitable environment for ducks and other desirable species. But, with the high cost of controlling the mussels' spread into water systems, they are still considered an undesirable menace. To better define the term invasive, researchers like York FES Professor Leesa Fawcett, who studies public attitudes and environmental education efforts about pests and invasive species, hope to clarify the answers to questions such as "what is a pest?" and "who decides which species are dangerous and why?" Her FES colleague Jennifer Foster, an expert in ecological restoration, has written about the relationship between native and exotic species, questioning assumptions that the exotic varieties are universally damaging. It's a complex issue – after all, Canada's wheat and cattle originally came from elsewhere. Bazely agrees that most introduced species have little impact on ecosystems – it's just that it doesn't take many to wreak havoc.

The Canadian government is waking up to the economic impact of invasive species, and has set aside \$85 million in funding. Bazely has attended many meetings with government staff developing something she sees as urgent: a Canadian National Strategy on Invasives, echoing similar policy and legislation efforts in Europe, Australia, New Zealand and the US.

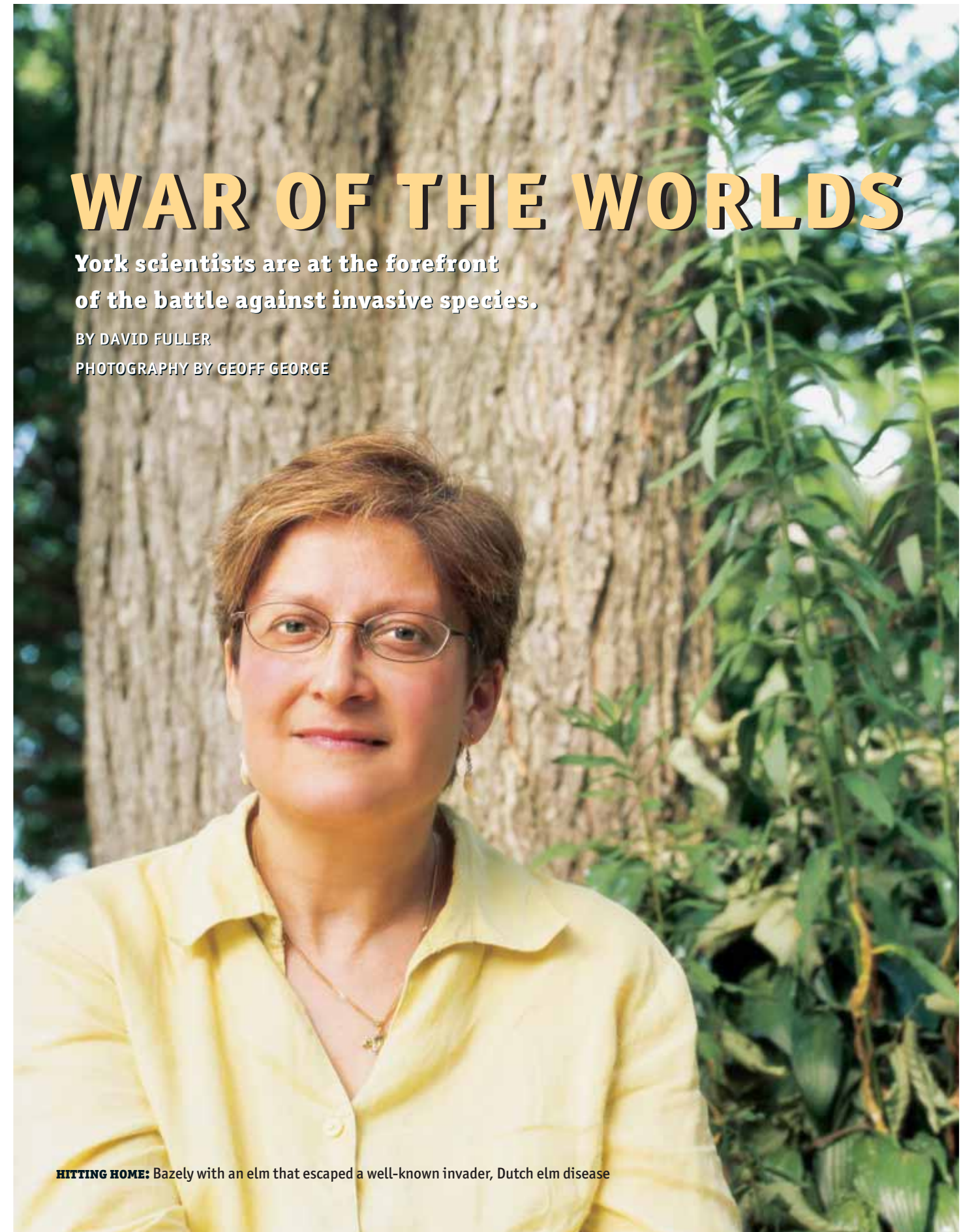
To Bazely, all the activity has already produced a helpful result, one that York has actively promoted since the 2004 conference: increased collaboration among researchers Canada-wide. "Academics," says Bazely, "are actually having conversations with academics from other disciplines they wouldn't normally have." The war isn't over. ■

# WAR OF THE WORLDS

York scientists are at the forefront of the battle against invasive species.

BY DAVID FULLER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE



**HITTING HOME:** Bazely with an elm that escaped a well-known invader, Dutch elm disease

**T**WO DOWN, THREE TO GO. "I figure I've got five books in me. Then I'm going to stop," declares Dalton Higgins, dreadlocks bobbing to a Dire Straits tune filling the empty cafeteria at Toronto's Harbourfront Centre, where he works as a music programmer. He has already co-authored two: in 2002, *Much Master T: One VJ's Journey*, reminiscences of popular MuchMusic host Tony "Master T" Young, and this year, *Hip Hop*, a splashy primer designed to engage struggling readers.

Higgins, an increasingly high-profile cultural pundit who defies easy categorization, has been promoting *Hip Hop*, complete with teacher's manual, to school boards, non-profit organizations, concert-goers, subway riders and "school boreds" in his old 'hood. Already, the Toronto District School Board has ordered 6,000 copies. He's betting that kids from Grade 4 to 12 who might not otherwise willingly crack open a book, will leaf through this one. Crammed with celebrity photographs, comic-strip narratives and quizzes, the colourful, notebook-sized paperback explores everything about hip hop – its stars, its beginnings, its world-wide appeal, its sound, its message – and teaches lessons in history, geography, music, language and gender issues along the way. "Hip hop is youth culture. It's the only music that matters if you're under 35," says Higgins, who co-wrote the book with educator Greg Smith. "It's the perfect gateway to literacy. And literacy is not all about reading Shakespeare or Wordsworth or V.S. Naipaul or Margaret Atwood."

Hip hop was not Higgins's gateway to literacy. But it was a big part of his teen years in Toronto in the 1980s, when he would hang out at a local record store after school. "Hip hop was in its embryonic stage. I got to listen to all the new recordings. As the voice of a disenfranchised culture, it spoke to my experience."

The son of working-class Jamaican immigrants, Higgins excelled in high school. "While scoring high 90s in English lit, I was also scoring points on the basketball courts," he recalls. He credits his mother for his impeccable enunciation and love of words. Despite hankering for a writing career, Higgins rejected the narrow scope of journalism school for the cornucopia of courses offered by York. By the time he graduated with a BA in English and mass communications in 1995, he'd won a provincial bronze on the University's sprint relay team and taken courses ranging from African and South Asian women's literature to broadcasting policy. He'd also gained media skills as an *Excalibur* writer and radio host on York's CHRY. "York broadened my parameters."

His favourite course was Psychodrama and Sociometry. It stressed spontaneity and living "with no preconceived notions of the world". His favourite book, discovered at York, is still Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*. "The theme of invisibility really resonates with me," says Higgins. Even though he is as Canadian as the next guy, "black was the first thing people saw. They expected to hear me speak reggae. They didn't know I played hockey at Maple Leaf Gardens."

Take away the dreadlocks and Higgins, in casual pullover and pants, would disappear in a crowd. "The reason I got into print journalism is because a good story is a good story. Readers don't care if you come from China or India or Jamaica or England." Print is colourblind. So during his early career, Higgins worked as managing editor of black-culture magazine *Word*, wrote feature stories and conducted A-list artist interviews for New York-based *The Source* and reported for Toronto's weekly alternative *NOW* magazine. In 2001, he won honourable mention at the National Magazine Awards for his *Saturday Night* feature "15 Ways Of Looking At Vince Carter." In 2002, he co-authored *Much Master T* for ECW Press, vaulting him into pop culture and hip-hop expert status.

But print couldn't contain the exuberantly verbal Higgins, who answers questions with "let me tell you a story," relishes "slanguage" and can riff authoritatively on everything from teenagers' false notion of success to the importance of family. "I'm a big, fat, wet African-Canadian sponge," he says. "I take it all in." Trained in film and television production at York, he slid seamlessly into broadcast media. CBC Radio's "Outfront" aired his documentary on mouth musicians and "Metro Morning" recruited him to talk about the municipal election, then kept inviting him back. The print journalist morphed into a TV pundit, chattering about new music, books and movies as host of digital specialty channel bpm:tv's "Urban Groove" and on talk shows such as CBC News-world's "Counterspin", Much Music's "Rap City" and TSN's "Off the Record". "I'm generally obsessed with pop culture," says Higgins. "That's what I am. I'm a polyglot, a multi-interested cultural schizophrenic who takes on the world. It's very hard to pin me down."

Last year, Harbourfront hired Higgins full time as a music programmer, no doubt impressed by this Juno Awards jury member's sweeping musical knowledge, by his often charitable work organizing youth conferences, media literacy workshops and festivals and by his infectious energy. These days, when he's not out evenings vetting acts and bands to perform at events like Harbourfront's Chinese festival Dim Sum, Higgins is hard at work on his third book (working title "Babylonia"), a collection of essays about Canadian culture. Soon three down, two to go. ■

LIKE A SPONGE: Higgins



**Dalton Higgins promotes literacy through, yes, hip hop music.**

BY MARTHA TANCOCK  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE

SPACES

# Beautiful Music

Delighted fundraisers for the Accolade Project raise their goal to \$10 million

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOPHIE KINACHTCHOUK

**MOVING IN SOON:** Elmes with Jazz Ensemble members (clockwise from top left) George Karounos, Karen Ng, James McEleney, Mike Cado and David Steffan

**T**O MUSIC PROFESSOR AND JAZZ DRUMMER Barry Elmes, the new Accolade complex rising behind him will provide “one of the best facilities in North America for anybody to study music.” Elmes and members of the York University Jazz Ensemble he directs don’t have long to wait before they move in. Classrooms in Accolade West are already in use for the fall term, and theatres, studios and other superb facilities for the Faculty of Fine Arts in Accolade East are due to be completed in the new year. The Music Department, notes Elmes, has long since outgrown its old, scattered digs. Its new home will have a fully-equipped recital hall, state-of-the-art recording facilities, dozens of sound-proof practice rooms, and top-quality acoustic design throughout. “It’s very impressive,” he says.

The two Accolade structures, located on the south side of the Harry W. Arthurs Common, effectively complete a grand horseshoe of buildings in the heart of the Keele campus that began going up around the Common in the 1980s under then-president Harry Arthurs (see next page). Accolade will be a sublime new neighbour. The buildings will house a 325-seat proscenium theatre and a 325-seat recital hall flowing from a boldly designed performance halls lobby, plus a 500-seat high-tech cinema, a new home for the Art Gallery of York University and classroom space for the entire University.

The \$107.5-million project, funded by the Ontario government and York, will become a new centre of the arts for all of the Greater Toronto Area. Community support has already been highly gratifying – so much so that the York University Foundation and the Faculty of Fine Arts have now doubled their fundraising goal to \$10 million, after reaching their \$5-million initial target from key donors sooner than expected. “These are people who are leaders in their commitment to the arts,” says Martin Goldfarb, who heads the Accolade Project fundraising drive. Among the most generous, each donating at least \$1 million, were Tribute Communities and Ivan Fecan and Sandra Faire. CIBC has also made a \$1 million gift to York which will in part support the Accolade Project. In late August, York showed its gratitude with an elegant reception to thank the donors.

In coming months, Goldfarb and the York Foundation will broaden their quest for donations from the public. And next May, the gala Brazilian Carnival Ball will be held in Toronto with all the flamboyance, fun and fundraising it’s known for. The ball’s beneficiary: the Accolade Project. “It’s terrific,” says Goldfarb of all the support. “The arts are so important in the legacy of our society. And York graduates so many people who work in the arts all across the country – I don’t think there’s another institution in Canada that compares.” ■

UNCOMMON MAN: Arthurs on the Common named after him

# THE RAMP KILLER

Retiring Osgoode Professor Harry Arthurs, York's president from 1985 to 1992, talks about how he reshaped the campus – and got rid of an 'inhuman' hunk of concrete.

BY BERTON WOODWARD

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE

## LEADERS

**U**NIVERSITY PROFESSOR HARRY ARTHURS has at least two formal claims to his fame: as an internationally respected legal scholar based at York's Osgoode Hall Law School since 1961, and as York's president from 1985 to 1992. But in the wake of his recent retirement, many who have tramped York's grounds may appreciate him most for the building program he presided over, which reshaped the Keele campus. Vari Hall, York Lanes, the Student Centre and the Centre for Film & Theatre were among the projects carried out during his highly active presidency, and the Harry W. Arthurs Common that they flank is named in his honour. Arthurs looked back at that time, and his work, when he sat down with *YorkU* editor Berton Woodward and managing editor Michael Todd. Here are excerpts from the conversation:

**Could you paint us a picture of York – particularly the physical York – as it was when you began your presidency?**

The place to start is right there [*pointing to an item on his desk*], with that piece of concrete, which formed part of the ramp leading up to the podium in the Ross Building. It just symbolized everything that was functionally wrong with the Keele campus. First of all, it was built on an inhuman, unaesthetic scale. It had no connection to the way people actually moved around the campus. It was virtually unusable in cold weather. All in all it was a bad idea.

But we had other problems. When I became president, as I recall, York had only about 65 per cent of the space it was entitled to under provincial guidelines, and we really got to the point where we couldn't hire another faculty member – there was no place for her or him to park their bum, it was that simple. We couldn't clean out classrooms because they were used hour after hour after hour – our utilization rates were stratospheric compared to other universities – so we simply had to have more space.

And finally, in environmental terms things were pretty desperate. We were parking cars in the middle of the campus – what's now the Common was a parking lot. So part of the strategy – and it's a very long-term strategy that the University is still working on – was to transform this from a sort of quintessential '60s shopping mall concept to a much more urban concept. A lot of that's just now coming to fruition.

**You launched York's master plan, didn't you?**

Indeed. The master planning exercise actually brought out a fourth dimension of why campus development was so important – it made people feel good about the place. We engaged the community – particularly the York community – very intimately in the development of this master plan. Obviously we also had planning consultants and transportation consultants. One of the things we did, for example, was, every time we designed a building, we'd put a model in a wind tunnel because we were determined to create pedestrian movement which was less brutal than we were used to at the time.

Gradually we advanced with the in-fill of spaces among the buildings, the creation of logical patterns of pedestrian movement, and the walkway around the Common which resulted, alas, in the sacrifice of the ramp. We were able to get some government money. And we got some help from private donors. The Varis, for example, gave us what was then an amazing gift amounting to about \$3 million.

**For Vari Hall – effectively York's front door. It's amazing that York didn't have a front door. It was a loading dock.**

You're exactly right. We got into the Ross Building by walking into a loading dock under the ramp, which was originally designed to accommodate mail deliveries. There were two or three little steps up, you walked by a loading dock just on your right, and you squeezed down this little corridor, and that's how everybody entered the Ross Building.

Some people were very attached to it, for reasons that escape me. I remember having a discussion

## LEADERS

with one of my then vice-presidents. I wanted to do something with the part of the Ross Building that was right at the top of the ramp. I'd just become president on Jan. 1, and this guy said, "You can't use this space, this is the University's prime entrance. You come up the ramp, you enter this space," which was a big atrium on the north side of the Ross Building. So we're up on the ninth floor, and I said, "Okay, it snowed last night. It's now 11 o'clock, let's go downstairs and see how many people came in, because we'll be able to see the footprints." There wasn't a single footprint, it was utterly pristine. So people weren't using it, couldn't use it. Ironically, I think about the only thing it was ever used for was the procession for my own installation, which took place in May. They formed people up in the podium of the Ross Building and marched them down the ramp, and that was about it. Then the ramp was gone.

### **You've probably heard some York urban myths –**

It was not designed for California. That's the myth I know best, that this was borrowed from a design intended for California. The truth of the matter is that through the '60s, when universities were expanding rapidly, there was a certain philosophy of architecture. It was a brutalist philosophy, it was a suburban philosophy, and campuses were built in California, in Stockholm, in Buffalo, in Melbourne, all over the world, inspired by the same really unfortunate style of architecture. So, to that extent the myth is true. People were inspired by the same theories of architecture.

### **Could you go into the thinking behind York Lanes? We've heard students say, often with delight, "York's got a mall!"**

Well it wasn't, obviously, to cater to the mall rats. York had no adjacent community. When I became president we had 35,000 people living, working or studying on the campus, and if you needed a set of eyeglasses there was no place to go. There was hardly anywhere to eat. There were cafeterias – really appalling cafeterias – in the colleges, and not much else.

A second part of our thinking was that we wanted to form a kind of street with the Student Centre and the colonnade, which would help to create an edge to the Common. The third objective was to make some money. The cash flow from York Lanes helps support the University's research space up above.

### **What were the other key elements of your presidency beyond the building program?**

Well, as passionately interested and involved in that as I was – and I really was involved on a minute-by-minute basis, just because it was, let's say, a hobby of mine – by no means was it

the central part of my presidency. As far as I was concerned I was an academic president, and my job was to build up the academic strength of York University.

I think the absolutely crucial thing we were able to do was to make people care about appointments, to realize that every appointment was precious. You commit to millions of dollars when you hire a new PhD, and a long period of time, and so making people really, really sensitive about finding the best people and attracting them, and making them feel excited and loved – I really tried to get that idea across.

### **As a legal expert, you wrote a very influential report in 1983 about the state of Canadian law schools. How have they changed since then?**

Most schools have become much more research-intensive, and more intellectually ambitious. The credentials of people joining law faculties today are much stronger. And one of the things we urged was differentiation among law schools. Now, I think there is more variety. Some have emphasized graduate work, some have emphasized interdisciplinarity, some are focusing on globalization, some have a very regional mandate.

### **What does this mean for Canadian society?**

Well, I hope that a new kind of lawyer is emerging, several new kinds of lawyer. One is what you might call legal intellectuals, whose work will show up in things like law reform, policy-making, even policy-making within law firms that act for influential corporations and governments. A second development is that social justice law has taken on a significant role within the profession. There are now people who make careers in social justice, acting for NGOs, staffing clinics, or working inside government policy units etc. As legal education has diversified, so too have the careers of lawyers. Many people with legal training now find themselves not in private practice, but contributing their knowledge and intelligence to businesses or community organizations, or for public service.

What's also starting to emerge is that a lot of lawyers aspire to be Canada's face on the world. Globalization has come to law. In certain ways Canadian lawyers are uniquely located to go global – partly because of our common and civil law systems and our two languages, but also because we're a small power and not least because we are developing a different understanding of what constitutes legal knowledge, which used to be very local, very parochial. A broadening out of that understanding has helped create a group of people who will be important links between this country and the rest of the world. ■



'ALL IN ALL IT WAS A BAD IDEA': The ramp

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CLARA THOMAS ARCHIVES, YORK UNIVERSITY



Béa Gonzalez  
Author

## Mapping Passion

IN BÉA GONZALEZ'S LATEST NOVEL, *The Mapmaker's Opera*, a grandmother tells the story of Diego, a poor boy who leaves Spain to sketch the brilliant birds of Mexico for Edward Nelson, a 19th-century American naturalist. As the *abuela's* finger traces Diego's journey on a treasured old map, she tells his tragic tale as if it were an opera. Maps and opera are her passions. And passion defines a person, believes Gonzalez.

The 42-year-old York history grad (BA '85) not only shares hers – for everything Spanish – with readers of her fiction but with cultural tourists she leads around Seville, Spain, and Mérida, Mexico – old-world-new-world settings in *The Mapmaker's Opera* and symbols of an idealized past and unknown future in an immigrant's ambivalent heart. Like Gonzalez's. Born in Spain, she moved to Canada at age 8, went back to Spain for high school, attended York, studied in London. Now settled in Toronto with her family, she is writing her third novel, this time mapping non-Hispanic territory and exploring different passions. ■



PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOPHIE KINACHTCHOUK

Chen Kupperman  
Math whiz

## 'Age is Just a Number'

FROM THE SECOND he was conceived, Chen Kupperman was special. So welcome was this test-tube baby that his parents called him Chen, the Hebrew word for "charming". That he is, and so smart the Kuppermans left home in Haifa last year to enrol him at York full time, a privilege Israel had denied the 13-year-old math whiz because he was too young. York accepted him in two days, impressed by his academic credentials. "Age is just a number," shrugs Kupperman, now 14 and in second year.

Ever since he was a toddler switching TV channels, Kupperman has been intrigued by number patterns. He can't learn fast enough and loses himself for hours working out mathematical proofs. Relentlessly logical, he is also a typical teenager: "I'm always questioning and not accepting anything until it makes sense." And he is as possessed by music as by math. At 12, he was playing recorder professionally and these days he's improvising jazz on piano.

By 16, Kupperman will hold an honours BA. But don't call him a genius. "I don't think I'm gifted. I just want to do it. I go for it," says the teen who reads books three times to understand every nuance. He's unstoppable. ■



PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE

## YORK PEOPLE

AT A DOWNCHILD BLUES BAND REUNION at Toronto's Grossman's Tavern 10 years ago, Eric Alper learned a lesson in charity. The freshly minted York English grad saw a grateful man shove a \$500 wad into Al Grossman's hand, repayment for giving him free room and board when he was down and out. "My grandfather wouldn't take it," remembers Alper of the tavern's late founder. "He was a real mensch." You could say the same about Alper these days.

At 35, the award-winning, music-industry publicist has helped raise \$1 million for the Canadian Music Therapy Trust Fund and Hear Here, a charity he founded to buy hearing aids for kids who can't afford them. It's a cause close to his heart. Born with minor hearing loss that a steady diet of rock concerts made major, the Shakespeare-quoting promoter for Koch Entertainment has worn hearing aids since before he became *Excalibur* arts editor, yet still managed to carve out a career in the music industry. And give back. "If I can make half the difference my grandfather did," says Alper, "I'd be a happy man." ■

### Eric Alper Music publicist, charity founder

# Speaking Loud



PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL PACEY

# ALUMNI

## News:

### Are You Being Served?

York will soon be asking alumni what they think

**Y**ES, SEPTEMBER is the time of year when the air turns crisp, the days get shorter, and students across Canada return to school. But this fall at York, it's not just the students who are hitting the books: the Alumni Office is going back to school. And "Dr." James Allan wants you to be the teacher.

"It's time to talk to our alumni, and ask them what they want from their alumni association," says Allan, who was recently appointed director, alumni, and does, in fact, have a PhD (University of Massachusetts, '03). "The Alumni Office offers some great events, programs and services at the moment – or at least we think they're great. But we need to talk to the people who actually use them. I want to hear what our alumni have to say."

Starting this fall, the Alumni Office will undertake a

series of research projects designed to enhance and improve its services. "We'll be conducting a cross-Canada phone survey, but that's just the beginning," says Allan. Plans also include a series of focus groups in the Greater Toronto Area and satisfaction surveys for people who attend alumni events.

One of the important areas of inquiry will be the affinity programs, or "perks", available to York's 190,000 alumni. "We want to make sure that we're offering people programs that have real value," says Jouda Seghair, manager, alumni affinity & business services. "But it's not just about discounts on life insurance or cheap tickets to the Blue Jays – we need our alumni to tell us what they want, what kinds of perks are important to them."

Events and volunteering will be other key areas of focus in the research. "We want to create new volunteering op-



ADDING VALUE: Seghair and Allan

portunities and expand our slate of alumni events in the GTA," says Allan, "but we want to make sure we do so with solid data to back up our choices. So we hope that when the phone rings or the e-mail arrives, people will be willing to participate."

The research plan is still

being finalized, but you can visit the Communications section of the Alumni Web site ([www.yorku.ca/alumni](http://www.yorku.ca/alumni)) for updates. And while you're there, sign up for the monthly e-newsletter *Alumni Matters*, so you can have the details delivered to your inbox as they develop. ■

### All Dressed Up

Click! Check out the new, improved Alumni Web site, complete with event listings, grad profiles and plenty of other info, at [www.yorku.ca/alumni](http://www.yorku.ca/alumni).

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY LOZON

## Class Notes:

1970

**Burka, Astra** (BA Glendon) is an architect and filmmaker in Toronto. She has designed and built a flex house consisting of two pink cubes and a red rectangle.

1971

**O'Leary, David** (BA Glendon) lives in Margaretsville, NS, and is self-employed as an organic farmer, theatre manager and income tax consultant.

1972

**Brown, Susan** (BA Stong) taught hospitality marketing at George Brown College for 14 years. She and husband Drew Fesar moved from Toronto 4 years ago and bought a small hotel, A Snug Harbour Inn, on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

**Long, Dennis** (BA Spec. Hons. Vanier) has been the executive director of Breakaway, an addiction treatment centre in Toronto, for the last 16 years.

1973

**Smolkin, Sheryl** (LLB) retired from Watson Wyatt Worldwide where she had been director of the Canadian Research & Information Centre since 1987. In March, she became editor-in-chief of *Employee Benefit News Canada*, a magazine for employers.

1975

**Appelberg, Art** (BSc Hons. '73 Winters, MBA) is president of Northwood Mortgage. His son **Jordan Appelberg** (BA '03, BEd '04) is a teacher in York Region.

**Walker, Marnie** (MBA), founder of Student Express Ltd., a school bus company that provides transportation for people with special needs, was named an Extraordinary Woman of the Year 2005 by the Canadian Association of Women Executives & Entrepreneurs.

1976

**Flaherty, George** (BA, BEd McLaughlin) is a multiple-exceptionalities teacher at Pine Ridge Secondary School in Pickering, Ont. He is also branch president of the Ont. Secondary School Teachers Federation.

1979

**Ross, Ian** (MBA) has stepped down as dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences & Management at Malaspina University-College, Nanaimo, BC, after 16 years, to return to teaching as professor of international business & strategic management.

**Stroud, Marilyn** (BA Atkinson) is the assistant archivist of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada International Office, Mississauga, Ont., where many students come for historical research.

1980

**Bouchard, Johanne** (BSc Bethune) is the founder & CEO of BOSS (Bouchard On Strategic Services), and is an executive leader & adviser for leaders. In 1997 she received the Outstanding Achievement Award from the Seminaire de Quebec.

1981

**Bashevkin, Sylvia** (PhD) began a six-year term in July as the new principal of University College, University of Toronto. Best known for her research in the field of women and politics, Sylvia is the author of several books, including *Welfare Hot Buttons: Women, Work and Social Policy Reform* (2002).

1982

**Situma, Lanfranc** (MES) is chief director, Integrated Planning Branch, of the Ministry of Transport in South Africa.

1984

**Ablett, Christopher** (BA Hons. '81 McLaughlin, MA) began a career in foreign exchange trading & sales in 1984, and is now with CIBC World Markets. He is married with two daughters.

**Jeffery, Michael**, QC (LLM) and wife **Donna Craig** (LLM '83) are both faculty members at Macquarie University in Australia. Toronto-born Michael was senior partner in charge of the environmental law practice at the city's Fraser & Beatty law firm. After he and Donna married in 1998, Michael was appointed Chair of Law at Macquarie, and is now director of

its Centre for Environmental Law (CEL). Donna, who began her teaching career at Macquarie's law school in 1976 as a tutor, is a co-founder of CEL. Now a professor of law at the university, Donna is also the inaugural Professor of Desert Knowledge at Charles Darwin University.

**Perodeau, Guilheme** (BA '75, MA '78, PhD Vanier) is a full-time professor of psychology at the University of Quebec in Outaouais, and also has a private practice. He is married with two children.

1986

**Gui, Kevin** (BA Stong) lives in San Leandro, Calif., after 19 years in Asia where he did corporate banking as senior VP with HSBC Bank. He is now head of west coast sales at Fundtech Corp., an e-banking software house.

1988

**Breda, Rudy** (BA Spec. Hons. Stong) has recently moved back to Toronto, from Adelaide, Australia, where he had been living since 2001.

**Genco, Tony** (BA Vanier) was recently appointed president & CEO of Parc Downsview Park Inc. by Canada's minister of state (infrastructure & communities). Tony is an External Fellow of McLaughlin College and has lectured in McLaughlin's Lunch Talks series.

**MacDonald, Gord M.** (BSc Calumet) is an educational assistant with special-needs kids for Trillium Lakelands District School Board in Huntsville, Ont. He is also a self-employed respite provider & camp counsellor for kids with neurological and physical disabilities.

**Strange, Colin** (BA Hons., BEd Founders) teaches physical & health education at Toronto's Arlington Middle School. He also runs three SMART (Sports, Math and Recreational Training) camps in Toronto.

1989

**Alia, Valerie** (PhD) is, as we said in our last issue, a professor of ethics

and identity at Leeds Metropolitan University in northeast England, where she lives with husband Pete Steffens. Her sons, however, live in Canada: David Restivo is a distinguished jazz pianist and Daniel Restivo is an acclaimed player of traditional Irish flutes and whistles.

**Bradley-St-Cyr, Ruth** (née Bradley) (BA '84, BA Hons. '87, MA Glendon) is director of University of Ottawa Press, has started her own publishing house, Winding Trail Press, and is pursuing a PhD in Canadian studies at Carleton University. Her husband **Baudouin St-Cyr** (BA '82, BA Spec. Hons. '84 Glendon) received his MA in political science at McMaster University and he is now the executive director of Meals on Wheels in Ottawa. Ruth and Bau married in 1984 and have 3 children.

**Ginther, James** (BA Spec. Hons. Glendon) was recently promoted to associate professor of historical theology at St. Louis University in Missouri.

**Locke, Greg** (BA '85, MBA Winters) works for Bell Canada as product manager for the Entertainment and Small Biz channels of the Web portal Sympatico.MSN.ca.

1990

**Bourque, Cindy** (née Hurtubise) (BA Hons. Stong) married Ray in 1993 and they have two daughters. Cindy is an intermediate teacher at Caledon East Public School, Peel District School Board.

**Mylvaganam, Chandran** (MBA) was the chief of staff, 1990-1995, to three Ontario transportation ministers. He co-authored *"If you build it...": Business, Government and Ontario's Electronic Toll Highway* (2004) with Sandford Borins (former York faculty member, Schulich 1977-1991). The book details the history of Highway 407.

**Pearce, Jacqueline** (MES) returned home to BC where she developed environmental programs at VanCity Credit Union in Vancouver. Jacqueline published her first novel for children in 2002, *The Reunion*, and this fall her fifth book, *Dog House*

*Blues*, will be launched at a local animal shelter.

**Sciala, Miriam** (MA) has been teaching English as a second language overseas for 10 years. She lives in the United Arab Emirates.

1991

**Rovina, Catherine** (née Allum) (BA Hons. Founders) has been on maternity leave with her new son Shaun from her job as account associate at Manulife's Group Sales Office.

1992

**Chaplin, Elyse** (BA Founders) is completing her PhD at the University of Toronto in higher educational theory & policy studies.

**Olsen, Dave** (MES) is owner of Ethical Environmental Consulting, which provides bicycle and bus-focused transportation planning & consultation as well as composting & recycling services for local festivals. Dave's first child, Anicca Rosalia Chinniah, was born in April.

1993

**Fairlie, Paul** (BA Spec. Hons. '88, MA McLaughlin) is working on his PhD in psychology and is currently director of research at WarrenShepell, a leading employee assistance provider.

**McKenzie-Kerr, Robert** (BA '91 Winters, BA Spec. Hons. McLaughlin) is an insolvency subject matter expert for the Regional Insolvency Pilot Project at the Canada Revenue Agency.

**Rechtshaffen, Ted** (BBA Spec. Hons. '92, MBA McLaughlin) left RBC Dominion Securities, where he was VP of strategic initiatives, to launch TriDelta Financial Partners.

**Yuen, Henry Y.T.** (BA '91, BA Hons. '92, MA Stong) was married 6 years ago and has two daughters - Corinna, 5, and Vera, 2. He recently joined MasterCard as VP, based in Hong Kong.

1994

**Carney, Lenora** (née Bertulli) (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) married her

Australian partner Shane in 2004. Currently a permanent resident in Australia, she hopes to become a citizen in the near future. Lenora still has an active role in the Canadian Australian Club in Sydney.

**Lonergan, Mark** (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) is artistic director of New York-based theatre company Parallel Exit, with which he has presented productions in Canada, the US, Scotland, Poland and Japan. Currently he is working on *This is the Way*, to premiere in New York in 2006.

1995

**Johnston, Kelly** (BA Founders) is married to **Ana N. Dundek** (BA '99 Founders), whom he met during first-year orientation in 1990 at York. Both eventually graduated with a BA in women's studies.

1996

**Bonnell, Phillip** (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) is marrying fellow York alum **Christine Strickland** (BFA Spec. Hons. '99 Winters) in 2006.

Phillip is an award-winning art director at a leading online marketing firm, henderson bas.

**de Souza, Ian Fitzgerald** (BA Calumet) is a project manager for a major Canadian bank, and is also pursuing a career as a musician. Ian recently got engaged to girlfriend Ilana.

**James, Angela** (BES Hons. Bethune) lives in Auckland with her husband and two sons, Liam & Samuel, with a third baby boy on the way. Angela owns and manages a professional services consultancy business as well as two Internet retail stores.

**Kralidis, Tom** (BA Vanier) is a senior systems scientist at Environment Canada. He recently completed his master's at Carleton University.

1997

**Macleod, Leslie** (LLB '79, LLM) received the Ontario Bar Association Award for Excellence in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in May in Toronto.

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## Personal Information

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Previous surname

Address

Telephone

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Degree(s)

Faculty

Year of graduation

College

Major(s)

Student no.

Signature

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**Vogtle, Janice** (MES) works for the Department of Foreign Affairs but on secondment to International Trade in Toronto 2005-2006. She and husband Tim Lewis have a baby girl, Aiden.

## 1998

**Burch, Wendy** (BA Spec. Hons. Stong) and Matthew Jones were married Dec. 31, 2004, in Paris, Ont. With 90 of their closest family and friends, they rang in the new year with a candlelight ceremony, followed by a lively cocktail reception. They now live in Riverdale, Toronto.

**Carol, Brenda** (BA McLaughlin), a jazz/progressive rock vocalist with her band Claire Voyance, performed in the TD Canada Trust Toronto Jazz Festival in June. With two critically acclaimed jazz CDs, Brenda is a private vocal instructor in Toronto where she and pianist husband Stephen Gardner live with their children, Ava & Emerson.

**Gonsalves, Venetia** (BA Hons. Glendon) completed her BEd at Queen's University in 2002 and is a special education teacher with Toronto Catholic District School Board. She recently married Paul Hugel, and has a son, Jeffrey.

**Varghese, Sarah** (née Alexander) (BEd, BSc Bethune) lives in Alberta with her husband and son. She received the 2003 Prime Minister's Teaching Excellence Award.

## 1999

**Acherman, Alice** (BA Hons. Founders) recently moved to the Netherlands and is working for a printing company in Amsterdam.

**Anderson, Rebecca** (née Hornbrook) (BEd, BSc Spec. Hons. Bethune) is working as a post-doc at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado.

**Fernando, Trifoila** (BA Hons. McLaughlin) graduated with honours from the Court & Tribunal Agent (Paralegal) accelerated program at Seneca College in Toronto. She has just completed three years as a law clerk in the legal services department of Sprint Canada Inc.

**Ferragine, Maria** (BA Spec. Hons. Vanier) pursued a master's degree at U of T in public policy and then worked at the Ministry of Health. She has just completed a BEd at U of T's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

**McReelis, Kevin** (BA Bethune) is a probation officer in Lindsay, Ont., for youth justice services in the Ministry of Children & Youth Services. Kevin is married to **Emily Bray** (BA '97 Bethune) and they have a three-year-old son.

**Tarlattini, Suzanne** (née Chin) (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) runs a multimedia arts studio for at-risk children and youth in a low-income public housing community. She married Paul Tarlattini in January.

## 2000

**Albisser, Jeremy** (BSc Vanier) is project manager, Enterprise, at the Centre for Addiction & Mental Health in Toronto.

**Elliott, Jay** (BA Spec. Hons. Winters) graduated with a PhD in psychology from the University of North Carolina in May of this year, and has moved to Charleston, SC, with wife Deborah and daughter Sydney. Jay is now a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Medical University of South Carolina, specializing in drug addiction research.

**Joshua, Shiri** (née Yehoshua) (BA Vanier) is a clinical psychotherapist in Toronto, and is the founder of Mental Health Resources Canada, an online community of mental health professionals.

**McInroy, Katherine** (BA Vanier) works for a biopharmaceutical contract research organization in human resources and previously worked in a community hospital as an HR recruitment specialist.

## 2001

**Belli, Danny** (BA Spec. Hons. '97, MBA Vanier) is senior project manager in Scotiabank's International Banking Group (Mexico, Caribbean, Central America).

**Punzalan, Ray** (BA Founders) recently accepted a position as a realtor at Century 21- Landstars Realty, in Richmond Hill, Ont., after 11 years with Bell Canada.

**Wharton, Timea** (BFA Spec. Hons. '98, MBA Winters) performed with the company she founded in 1999, Eclipse Dance. In January she opened Turning Point Fitness, a fitness studio that combines the yoga/dance studio business model with the gym membership model.

## 2002

**Gaio-Machado, Elizabeth** (née Gaio) (BA Hons. '96 Glendon, BSW Spec. Hons. Atkinson) teaches extended French with the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, and is a social worker with men who have been abusive to their partners.

**Hohn, Nyisha** (BA Hons. Calumet) is an MPA candidate at the Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service at New York University and a board member of the American College of Healthcare Executives at NYU.

**Mitsios, Mary** (BA Spec. Hons. Founders) volunteered with HIV/AIDS organizations in Canada and India after graduation. She is currently working on her LLB at the University of Ottawa.

**Orenstein, Barak** (MBA) is marketing manager for Garnier Fructis, at L'Oreal Canada.

**Song, Hyoung Suk** (BA '01, BA Hons. Calumet) is an area sales manager with Lyreco Korea Inc. in Seoul.

**Spacek, Michael** (BA Spec. Hons. McLaughlin) is completing his master's in international relations at the London School of Economics & Political Science, supported by a Commonwealth scholarship.

## 2003

**Banai, Hussein** (BA Hons. McLaughlin) is pursuing an MSc in international relations at the London School of Economics & Political Science.

**Perri, David** (BA Hons. Stong) has taken a position as account manager for sales with Walker Credit Canada Ltd. in Markham, Ont.

## 2004

**Boljkovac, Nadine** (née Rumble) (MA Winters) was the recipient of the George Vari Graduate Award in Film & Video at York in 2003. She began her PhD at the University of Cambridge in January.

**Fish, Adrian** (MFA) has been appointed full-time lecturer for the 2005-2006 academic year at NSCAD University in Halifax, teaching in the departments of photography and foundation studies.

**Garfinkle, Michael S.** (BA Bethune) is in the clinical psychology PhD program at Adelphi University in Garden

City, NY. (Incorrect information appeared in a previous issue.)

**Irwin, Sherri-Lyn** (BScN Spec. Hons. Atkinson) is pursuing a possible future in teaching, and is currently working at Southlake Regional Hospital as a registered nurse.

## 2005

**Jovanovic-Krstic, Viktorija** (née Jovanovic) (BA Hons. '94, MA '96, PhD Stong) is a contract faculty member for the English departments at York University and Humber College. She and her husband have a five-year-old daughter, Nastasia-Simonida.

## IN MEMORIAM

## 1956

**Cullen, Bud** (LLB), a cabinet minister in Pierre Trudeau's Liberal government, died in Ottawa on July 5 at 78. Born in Creighton Mine in northern Ontario, Bud served as minister of national revenue and as minister of employment & immigration. In 1984, he was named a trial division judge for the Federal Court of Canada and retained this position until his retirement in 2000.

## 1989

**Crothall, Wm. Robert (Bob)** (BEd) died at 61 of heart complications, in Victoria, BC, on May 10. Born in Victoria, Bob moved to Toronto in 1967 and for 31 years, was a teacher and counsellor at the secondary level for the City of York. He retired to Vancouver Island in 1999.

## 1995

**Vera, Yvonne** (BA '90, MA '91, PhD), one of Zimbabwe's most important novelists, died at 41 of meningitis, on April 7 in Toronto. Born in Bulawayo, Yvonne taught for two years before moving to Toronto in 1980. During her studies in English literature at York, she began to publish novels and short stories that revolved around imperial, racial, sexual and gender oppression. Her novels *Nehanda* (1993) and *Without a Name* (1994) were short-listed for the Commonwealth Writers Prize Africa Region, and in 1997 she won this prestigious prize for *Under the Tongue*.

Exclusive! York grad chases celebs! BY DAVID CAPLAN

# Shocking Revelation

**I**T'S A TYPICAL SPRING MORNING in lower Manhattan's once dilapidated but now ever-so-hip Meatpacking District: restaurateurs are prepping outdoor patios for the lunch rush, stiletto-heeled fashionistas are sauntering from one boutique to another – and a throng of reporters and long-lens-toting paparazzi are surrounding the exterior of a photo studio. Inside, America's most buzzed-about embattled couple, Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey, are hosting a luncheon for the fashion press.

One of those reporters spends three hours outside waiting

**Maybe, just maybe, the Hollywood It Couple will engage in an impromptu squabble. No such luck.**

for the couple to emerge, with hopes that their body language will convey their disdain for each other, ultimately bolstering reporting that they are on the outs. Or maybe, just

maybe, the Hollywood It Couple will engage in an impromptu squabble. No such luck: the media-trained pair pose for a few "we're so in love" photos, and then are whisked away in a chauffeur-driven SUV. Later that day, the reporter moves on to Brad Pitt, whose alleged affair with his *Mr. & Mrs. Smith* co-star, Angelina Jolie, is the story *du jour* for celebrity journalists, considering he's married to actress Jennifer Aniston. Back at his office, the reporter calls Pitt's paternal grandmother in rural Oklahoma, hoping she'll divulge a scintillating secret. A chatty woman in her early 80s, she reveals that the Pitt family is devastated that Pitt and Aniston are divorcing. Mission accomplished: a *Star* exclusive!

So who is this intrepid reporter? Well, he's not part of some clandestine group of scruffy news hounds, lurking in the gutters. No, it's me, a well-educated, North York, Ont.-reared senior reporter for *Star* magazine – and a York University graduate, with a bachelor of arts in geography, of all things!

Surprised? Don't be. The perception that "real journalists" only work for the likes of *The New York Times*, *Newsweek* or CNN is a tired and dated notion. Unfortunately, there's a tendency among skeptics to dismiss celebrity journalists, and more specifically the publications for which they work: *People*, *Us*

David Caplan (BA '96) writes for *Star* magazine in New York.

*Weekly*, *In Touch*, *Star* et al. Sure, having worked at the likes of *Time* and *Women's Wear Daily*, I was a bit skeptical when I joined *Star* two years ago, after Canadian-born editorial director Bonnie Fuller relaunched the magazine as a glossy newsweekly.

But the bottom line is – as corny as it may sound – I absolutely adore my job. Unlike other genres of journalism, investigative celebrity journalism forces the reporter to be industrious. You



can't just rely on what the primary subject – say, Jessica Simpson – claims. You have to hunt down her family, friends and business associates, or hang out at her favorite nighttime haunts. That's when you'll find the real story –

about people whose wealth and power, particularly as cultural role models, make them just as worthy of scrutiny as any politician.

So why do skeptics always ask, "Is it really true what I read?" For the record, *Star* publishes only factual stories – there's a reason it employs top-notch attorneys who vet every word in the magazine for accuracy.

And what about the tactics used to get the insider tidbits for *Star*'s nine million readers? First off, they're legal. Intrusive? All reporting is – after all, you're poking around someone or something. Granted, calling Brad Pitt's elderly grandmother may appear out of line, but that's what investigative journalism involves. I believe it's just plain lazy not to seek reporting beyond some publicist's glowing statement.

There's also a perception that *Star* and its competitors are solely interested in negative, image-destroying pieces. That's simply not true. The fact is, no one's life is a fairy tale, especially those who run in Hollywood circles. Imagine what political reporting would be like if scandals such as bribery, infidelity and abuses of power were rarely reported. There would be a sea of stories of how civic-minded, ethical and God-fearing our elected officials are. And let's face it, that's not the world we live in, in Washington, Ottawa or Hollywood. Deep Throat, after all, wasn't only a movie. ■