



Out of Our Minds...

'Back to School'
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Volume 9



**University
of Victoria**

Department of Psychology
<http://www.psyc.uvic.ca>

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Out of my mind ...

E. Brimacombe, Dept Chair



I grew up in a Canada-US border city, Sault Ste Marie, Ontario. As a kid, I loved riding my bike down to the tourist information centre at the border crossing. It was a thrill to see the trail of Ontario and Michigan license plates broken with signs of life from exotic places like Ohio or Wisconsin. For maximum thrills, I would stroll into the tourist information centre and browse the racks of pamphlets. Looking at the glossy pictures of the Mackinac Bridge, the cherry festival in Charlevoix, and the ski hills of Boyne, I imagined great journeys and adventures awaiting me. Ahhhh, the delightful head space of possibilities

As we settle into a new school year, I am reminded of my imaginings triggered by those pamphlets. Living steeped in the rhythm of the academic year, September sets before us a banquet of possibilities. New students, new classes, new research ideas. A fresh start beckons.

Happy Back to School!
Enjoy the journey the new school year brings!



The border crossing to SS Marie, Ontario

Why was there thunder and lightning in the laboratory?
The researchers were brainstorming!



Please plan to attend the Department's Back to School Shin-dig where we will extend a hearty welcome to our new graduate students.
Friday September 21, 3 – 5 pm at the Fireside Lounge in the University Club.
Come eat, drink, and be merry!

Flashback to Our Department Reception, Fall 2006 ...

We welcomed a wonderful group of new graduate students:



Chris Warren offers this thoughtful reflection on his first year at UVIC: *“There is a lot at this University that makes 50 hours a week at a computer in a basement office worthwhile, but mostly it's spending the rest of your time in an island paradise.”*

And we learned a few interesting things about a few people

Our Department is home to someone who once:

- (1) Slept in a snow hole
- (2) Played in a Cajun band
- (3) Served in the Armed Forces
- (4) Sold encyclopedias door to door
- (5) Won 2nd prize in a dance context in Mexico
- (6) Performed in a high school musical production of Robin Hood

Answers at bottom of the page

Come to the 2007 Department Reception, September 21st and add to your growing knowledge of little-known-facts about Department Members!

And extend a warm welcome to **new Faculty Members, Dr. Stuart MacDonald and Dr. Erica Woodin**, our **new Clinic Psychometrist, Laurie Fitzgerald**, and our **new Department Receptionist, Fariba Ardestani**.

Who was it? 1) Lori-Ann Larson, (2) Helena Kadlec, (3) Annette Barath, (4) Paul Taylor, (5) Ron Skelton, (6) Andreas Breuer

Attention Instructors and Teaching Assistants!

DON'T MISS THIS UPCOMING CONFERENCE

- ✚ Exploring TA dilemma's through "Interactive Theatre"
- ✚ How to prepare your teaching dossier/CV
- ✚ Giving Effective Presentations
- ✚ Identifying and Dealing with Writing Issues
- ✚ Icebreakers and getting to know your students
- ✚ Teaching Math
- ✚ Student assessment and grading
- ✚ Students in distress: Understanding risks, recognize the clues, and know the resources available to students in your classroom.

The TA conference is available **FREE** of charge to all Graduate Students, beginning instructors, and Sessionals, whether they hold a current TA or teaching position and regardless of level of experience. Spend a day learning valuable skills, gathering information, and meeting others from the various disciplines across the campus.

When: Saturday, September 15, 2007

Time: 9:00 am – 3:30 pm

Where: Harry Hickman Building

There is **NO** cost and lunch and goodies will be provided

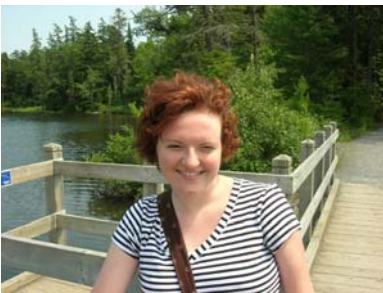
Register at ltc.uvic.ca

or for more information Contact your Psychology Department representative:

Janet Stepaniuk – Teaching Associate 2007/2008 for the Learning and Teaching Centre, janets@uvic.ca

Where do our Honours Students Go?

This month we catch up with 3 of our grads who are all heading back to school.



Erin Beam, graduate of the 2005-06 Honours Program, is now studying law at the University of New Brunswick. Erin anticipates specializing in contract law.



Jessica Ellis (2006 grad) moved on to graduate study at U of T where she is currently finishing up MA on object-based attention with Marlene Behrmann and then starting PhD this fall on eye-tracking and attention with Eyal Reingold.



Erin Walker (06) advances from MSc to PhD study this fall at the University of Sheffield in the UK. She'll work at King's College Hospital in London - the largest liver transplant center in Europe - to investigate quality of life in liver transplant patients.

*Ron prepared this helpful piece in fall 06.

As scholarship deadlines loom near, Ron's timely advice is brought to you again.

How to win an NSERC scholarship: A guide for applicants (and their supervisors)

By Ron Skelton, Grad Advisor

- If you are applying for a Master's scholarship, have a GPA greater than 8.8.
- If you are applying for a doctoral, have 3 pubs before your second year in the PhD.
- Write a great proposal and get great letters.

Yes, I'm kidding, but only partly. If you meet those criteria, you are almost sure to get a scholarship. If you don't, read on.

I was at the university NSERC-allocation committee recently. At the meeting, there were reps from 16 departments organized into 8 subcommittees picking 49 of 91 applicants to send to the competition in Ottawa. Last year, 75% of UVic's applicants were successful (compared to national average of 65%). Applicants from PSYC were considered alongside applicants from all natural science and engineering departments on campus. The goal of the committee was to send the very best applications to Ottawa, because the greater the success rate, the greater UVic's allocation will be next year.

The process begins with each subcommittee putting their top names up on a whiteboard (top = 40-70%) in rank order within the subcommittee. Subcommittees are then polled about the competitiveness of their lowest ranked applicant(s) and some are dropped. Applicants for Doctoral fellowships without any pubs* rarely make it to the board or get dropped quickly. Ditto for applicants for Master's scholarships with GPAs less than 8.0.

Then, every name on the board is checked to make sure it belongs there. For doctoral applicants, if the pub count is low (0-1), the quality of the letters and proposal are considered. They need to be outstanding. GPA's don't matter much at this level (as long as they are above 7.5 or so). For Master's applicants, if the GPA is below 8.5, then the quality of the proposal and letters is considered. Poorly written proposals or unenthusiastic letters are kisses of death. Be sure to involve your supervisor in your application process, especially for their advice on your written proposal. For applications for a Master's scholarship, publications aren't expected but are a tremendous asset if present. A pub might even rescue an applicant with a GPA in the 7.5-8.0 range.

Lots of other things can come into play if an application is on the recommend/not borderline, but without any pubs (for Doc's) and 1st class GPA's (for MSc's) they can only help a little. Be sure to look around for other advice (can you say "Google"?) and don't be put off by how high the bar appears to be. If you get into a lab, enjoy the work and make a real contribution, there will be a future for you in science.

* papers accepted or published in referred journals

Applying for an NSERC or SSHRC fellowship this year?

Plan to attend an information session:

NSERC: Eligibility and Application Information, Wed. Sept 12th, 1:30 pm, UC A180

Grants Crafting Session with Dr. Rosemary Ommer, Sept 13th, 10 am, UC A180

SSHRC: Eligibility and Application Information, Mon Sept 17th, 9 am, UC A180

Master's Grants Crafting Session with Dr. Rosemary Ommer, Sept 27th, 10 am, UC A180

Doctoral Grants Crafting Session with Dr. Ommer, Sept 27th, 1:30 pm, UC A180

Psi Chi Update



It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I take this opportunity to introduce myself as the 2007/08 Chapter President of UVic's Psi Chi. My name is Mehul Gandhi and I am a fourth year honours psychology student. I am fortunate enough to be conducting research under one of the great professors and researchers here at the university, Dr. Ron Skelton. Our lab is investigating spatial navigation in virtual environments with hopes to better understand spatial deficits in individuals who have survived traumatic head injuries. At the same time, I can be found working along side other research assistants and graduate students in Dr. Jim Tanaka's state-of-the-art Visual Cognition lab. My future goals include going to medical school or entering a doctoral program in clinical psychology here in Canada.

I feel very fortunate to be a part of a determined executive team that includes Jeffrey Sun as Vice President, Brian Buchan as Treasurer, and Kim Maynard as Secretary. Under the guidance of our inspirational faculty advisors, Dr. Steve Lindsay and Dr. Elizabeth Brimacombe, we feel that this year is going to be as memorable as it will be successful. Thanks to the incredible leadership of last year's exec, headed by my good friend Kyle Mathewson, we feel that we can achieve the ambitious goals we have set forth for ourselves.

Our membership drive is underway and the hard work by some of our members has already attracted the interest of many students from the summer psychology classes. We hope to continue this enthusiasm throughout the month of September and culminate the membership drive with a fun filled social event that will be open to all members. We also plan to continue in the philanthropic footsteps of our predecessors by getting involved in the UVic community as well as the Victoria community as a whole. I urge you all to stay tuned announcements of the coming events.

I look forward to the year that lies ahead as I know it will be filled with growth, success, and lots of special memories.

Sincerely,

Mehul Gandhi
psichi@uvic.ca

Be sure to check out our website at <http://web.uvic.ca/~psichi/> for upcoming events, job postings, links and much more.

News Flash!

Steve Lindsay recently received the wonderful news that our UVIC chapter of Psi Chi received a Psi Chi "Model Chapter" award for the year ending June 2007. Bravo UVIC Psi Chi-ers!



"Our membership drive is underway and the hard work of some of our members has already attracted the interest of many students"

The CIHR SPA Experience

-Janet Stepaniuk Reports

June 3 – 8 found several people from the department of Psychology in Harrison Hot Springs at the second annual Summer Program in Aging (SPA) sponsored by CIHR. The program is designed to offer advanced training to students and post-doctoral fellows involved in aging research that crosses disciplines, sectors, and institutions across Canada. Volunteering her time as a mentor was Dr. Holly Tuokko. Dr. Tuokko also holds an award as a CIHR Institute of Aging Senior Investigator. Two of Dr. Tuokko's students were chosen to attend this year's conference; Lesley Ritchie (clinical neuropsych) and Janet Stepaniuk (life-span development).

There were many informative workshops. These included; how to write an effective grant proposal, how to review a paper for a peer reviewed journal, and the importance of dissemination in research. A unique aspect of this year's conference was the addition of "Forum Theatre". Directed by Dr. Phyllis McGee (Health Research and Community Liaison Officer, Centre on Aging), a short skit was used as a means of exploring the challenges of working on collaborative research teams.

Forum theatre uses events based on real-life scenarios, adapted for the stage and performed by actors. Audience members have an opportunity to reflect upon the incidents and events portrayed in the scenario, then become involved in the process of changing how the scenario unfolds. Dr. McGee, who has become very interested in using theatre as a learning tool, enlisted the help of Dr. Tuokko, Leslie, and Janet. To round out the cast, they were joined by Dr. Elaine Gallagher (Director of the Centre on Aging) and Laura Funk (Sociology Phd Student). Together this group brought the issue of "Collaborative Research" to the stage and very much to life. This innovative new approach to learning was greatly appreciated by the students of SPA. In response to enquiries about future performances, the cast members were overheard to say, that they would be more than willing to "take the show on the road."



Cast of Characters (left to right): Front Row – Dr. Holly Tuokko (the harried "Grad" student) and Lesley Ritchie (the Bullied Nurse) Back Row – Dr. Elaine Gallagher (nurse), Laura (professor), Janet (the "Bully" manager), and Dr. Phyllis McGee (director).

What did you do this summer?



Sharon Livingstone:
Write, write, write



“There’s never enough time to do all the nothing you want”
-Calvin



Kristina Kowalski:
Finished my Masters Thesis, had fun in the sun, and played a lot of volleyball!



Stacey Ross:
Not enough work



Zoe Brimacombe:
Got my face morphed at Face Camp

Farewell to Cheryl Gonnason!



Cheryl leaves us August 31, 2007 to head back to school after many memorable years as our Department Receptionist.
Bon Voyage Cheryl!
Best wishes for grand new life adventures!

Face Camp? Learn about it in the next Newsletter!

Applause Arena

Robert Gifford was recently awarded Fellow Status by the Association for Psychological Science! Fellow status honours APS Members who have made sustained outstanding contributions to the science of psychology. **Bob was also awarded a prestigious Career Award** from the Environmental Design Research Association in recognition of 37 years of sustained dedication and distinguished achievement in Environment and Behavior research.

<http://www.edra.org/content/view/133/137/>



Holly Tuokko received an Excellence in BC Healthcare Award from the Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC). The award recognizes the work Holly and Alice Jean Raffan of Central Care Corporation have done on the development and implementation of a new health care model that focuses on supporting seniors living with persistent mental illness.



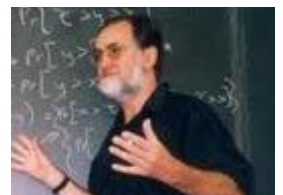
Valerie Gonzales added new feathers to her cap of athletic triumphs as she sped from triathlon to triathlon over the course of the summer. Valerie once again qualified for the Ironman Triathlon in Hawaii in October. Details concerning Valerie's successes will be shared in a future newsletter.



Mike Masson served as conference organizer for the 2007 meeting of the *Canadian Society for Brain Behaviour and Cognitive Science*. Mike led the 17th annual conference to a rousing success!



Tony Marley's recent publication, *Behavioral Social Choice* (co-authored with M. Regenwetter, B. Grofman and I. Tsetlin) received a glowing review in *Choice Reviews Online*. The *Choice* review applauds *Behavioral Social Choice* as "one of the most original books on social choice theory in the past 10 years" .



Andreas Breuer won the Donald O. Hebb Award for the best student paper at the 2007 meeting of the *Canadian Society for Brain, Behaviour, and Cognitive Science!* Andreas' poster was entitled *Memory consolidation during rapid visual presentation: Investigations using indirect and direct memory tests*.



Chris Warren won the Donald O. Hebb Award for the best student poster presented at the 2007 meeting of the *Canadian Society for Brain, Behaviour, and Cognitive Science!* Chris' poster was entitled *The involvement of motor representations in conceptual operations*.



Andreas and Chris each receive a certificate and a 1-year membership in the Canadian Society for Brain, Behaviour, and Cognitive Science in recognition of their awards.