

UPDATE

A Newsletter for UNBC Alumni
and Friends

Spring 2004

UNBC'S 10th Anniversary

How building a university has impacted the North

Seals & Politics

Heather Myers and Tracy
Summerville on urban
attitudes toward the
environment

Poetic Geography

Sarah de Leeuw on her
award-winning research

UNBC UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Cover: Grad Student Joel Urquhart

Q & A

UpFront



On the Cover: UNBC Master's student Joel Urquhart is involved in cancer research.

UPDATE: Tell us a bit about yourself.

JU: After spending 2 years traveling throughout the South Pacific, I moved to Prince George to attend UNBC, where I graduated with a joint BSc in Biology and Chemistry in 2003. Now I'm in my first year of graduate studies in UNBC's Mathematics, Computer, and Physical Sciences (MCPS) program.

UPDATE: Why did you come to UNBC?

JU: I was initially attracted by the fact that UNBC was a small and new university. I felt I would have greater opportunities here than in a larger university.

UPDATE: What sort of research are you doing?

JU: Under the supervision of Dr. Chow Lee, I'm helping to identify and characterize a newly discovered enzyme that could potentially play an important role in regulating the spread of cancer. The enzyme has been found to degrade the mRNA of a gene that is known to contribute to the rapid growth of cancerous cells, but its identity remains unclear. By learning more about it, we can potentially help lead to the development of new cancer treatments.

UPDATE: Where will your education take you in the future?

JU: I'm very much looking forward to a career in biochemistry and molecular biology, but I haven't yet decided whether or not to pursue a PhD after I earn my Master's degree.

Interested in research at UNBC? Search for research grants, publications, and the activity of individual researchers online at www.unbc.ca/research/.

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Successful Dress Rehearsal

Eight students from UBC came to Prince George in January to test the technology that will be critical to launching the Northern Medical Program. A key component of BC's medical school expansion is linking students in the North with those at UBC and UVic. The videoconference and web technologies allow students at all three sites to participate in classes, see class notes/illustrations, and interact with the professor just as if they were all in the same classroom.

Research Prowess

So far this year, UNBC has attracted more than \$800,000 in federal funding for enhancements to its high-performance computing facility. The centre provides immense computing power for constructing 3D models and simulations of land management plans, air quality, and wildlife habitat. The University also opened the \$900,000 Social Science Multimedia Research lab and launched an online service – www.unbc.ca/research – for searching the large number of research grants and projects at UNBC.

Tuition Fees

A tuition fee increase of 10% will bring the average annual tuition for a full-time undergraduate student to just over \$4000. Fees are rising at other BC universities, including SFU and UBC, which are raising tuition by around 15%.

MBA Among New Programs

Starting this summer, UNBC will begin offering courses leading to a Master's of Business Administration (MBA) degree. Other new programs include a new bachelor's degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and both a certificate and diploma in Aboriginal Health Sciences.

Construction Update

The skyline of the Prince George campus is rapidly changing, with the new medical building and lab extension set for completion by late summer. Since the Prince George campus opened in 1994, there has been more than 225,000 square feet added to the campus, worth more than \$53 million. Meanwhile, growth continues: construction tenders have been issued for a new UNBC/CNC campus in Quesnel.

The Big 10 (again)

August 17 marks 10 years to the day since Queen Elizabeth II officially opened the Prince George campus.

Never before has an institution celebrated so many 10th anniversaries. The festivities at UNBC started in 2000, with the tenth anniversary of the official creation of the University by the BC Legislature. That was followed by the tenth anniversary of the start of classes in 2002 and the tenth graduating class in 2003. This summer, UNBC will celebrate the tenth anniversary of the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to officially open the Prince George campus, and the occasion will be used to open a new chapter in the University's future.

On August 17th, marking exactly ten years to the day since the Queen's visit, the University will host a special Convocation ceremony to recognize many of the early founders of the University – ten will be presented with honorary degrees. The event will also acknowledge the pioneering work of UNBC's staff, faculty, and students, many of whom staked their futures on a fledgling and unproven university.

In the afternoon, with the reminiscing complete, a special event will mark the most important development at UNBC since 1994: the opening of the spectacular Northern Health Sciences Centre, home of the new Northern Medical Program. Since the summer of 2000, the NMP has captured the imagination of citizens from across northern BC, who see the program as the best solution to the North's troubled health care system. This year, the dream will come alive.

August 17th will celebrate the successes of UNBC's first 10 years, and the beginning of a new decade of growth starting with the Northern Medical Program.



Construction of the Northern Health Sciences Centre – March, 2004



Construction of Student Services Street – March, 1994

A Special Invitation

Alumni, supporters, founders, and friends of UNBC are welcome to attend the 10th anniversary festivities at UNBC.

10:00am Agora Courtyard

A special Convocation Ceremony to present honorary degrees to 10 UNBC founders. Founding Chancellor and current BC Lieutenant-Governor Iona Campagnolo will speak.

2:00pm Northern Health Sciences Centre

Official opening of the Northern Medical Program & the new Northern Health Sciences Centre, acknowledging the special role of students and northern communities.

Evening Agora Courtyard

Enjoy entertainment and take part in a public tour of the new Northern Health Sciences Centre.

RSVP

Interested in attending any or all of the day's events? Email:

rspv@unbc.ca



Shari Wallace, left, is graduating with an Anthropology degree, while Lila Wallace (no relation) is graduating with a degree in First Nations Studies.

In the late 1980s, when the concept for what would become UNBC was first taking shape, only about 6% of high school grads in northern BC went on to university.

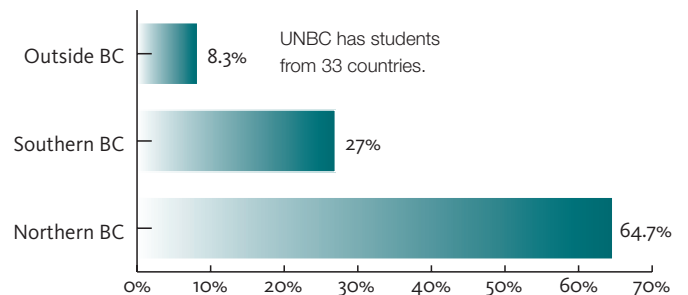
This single statistic was the inspiration for many of the initial founders of UNBC, who argued that having a university closer to home would encourage more northerners to pursue higher education. Today, we know they were right: 15% of northern BC high school grads now go to university, with the majority of them choosing to attend UNBC. In fact, the participation rate has grown faster in the North over the last decade than in southern BC – and it's still on the rise.

This is just one of the many statistics that paint a picture of UNBC's impact, after ten years of full operations. By almost every measure, UNBC has proven to be more successful than even its most imaginative early supporters would have predicted. The first enrolment forecast, for example, suggested an "optimistic" number of 2300 students by 1999 – in reality, the University's student body topped 3350 that year.

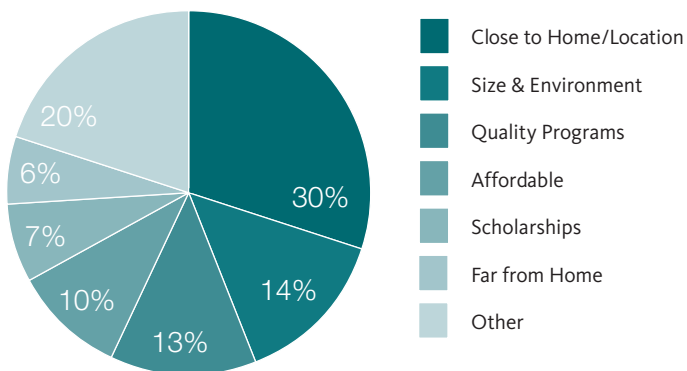
Even though it's providing more educational options for northerners, UNBC's success would be only partial if students were not staying in the North after graduation. Surveys of BC's alumni prove that graduates tend to stay and work in the region they are educated. Precise numbers range from year to year and program to program, but roughly speaking, about two-thirds of UNBC grads stay and work in the North, especially those from professional programs such as Nursing.

Between the time when students arrive and when they graduate, UNBC has a significant social and economic impact. While it's inaccurate to measure a university through quantitative measures alone, these statistics can provide a glimpse into the contributions UNBC has made to Prince George and the northern region.

Where do UNBC students come from?

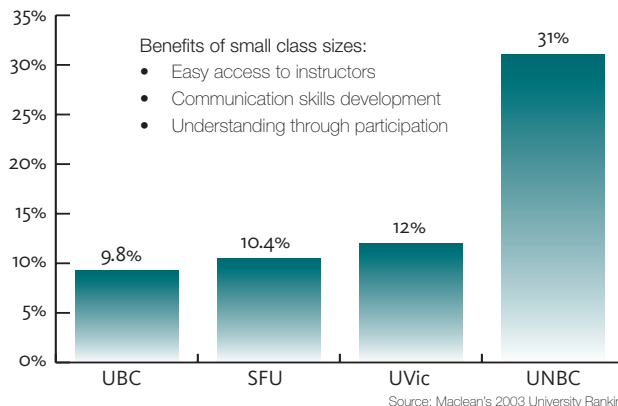


Why do students attend UNBC?



Which university has more small classes?

Percentage of 1st and 2nd year classes with 25 students or less:

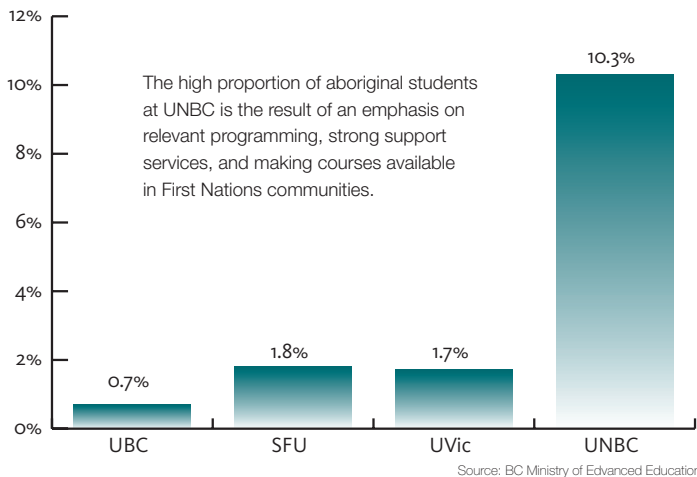


- Benefits of small class sizes:
- Easy access to instructors
 - Communication skills development
 - Understanding through participation

Making a Big Impact

Over 10 Years

What's the percentage of Aboriginal students?



Boosting the Economy

- UNBC's direct annual economic impact – with no multiplier applied – is about \$81.2 million, adding together the operating budget, research revenue, and student expenses.
- An average student spends about \$12,000 per year in tuition, housing, food and entertainment, etc. Most is spent locally.
- Research employs 150 people directly, while there were 145 contracts for services in 2003-04 related to research.
- Since opening in 1994, the Prince George campus has seen \$53.5 million worth of new construction, equivalent to 160 person years of employment.

Student Satisfaction

- UNBC's Year 2000 grads make about 5% more in annual salaries than other BC university grads of the same year.
- UNBC grads consistently rank the quality of their education higher than those from UBC, SFU, and UVic.
- 94% of UNBC students surveyed in 2003 would recommend UNBC to a friend.



Hal Friesen of Prince George plans to earn his BSc degree tuition-free, after receiving a UNBC scholarship for graduating from high school at the top of his class.



Sarah de Leeuw's MA thesis received the top award for graduate research from the Canadian Association of Geographers.

St. Mary's Spring

Sarah de Leeuw, UNBC Grad

St. Mary's Spring is located on the edge of a highway between Queen Charlotte City and Tlell. Like many water sources on Haida Gwaii (the Queen Charlotte Islands), the spring's water is tea coloured, the surface often dotted with salal leaves and needles from red cedar and hemlock trees. Across the highway from the hand carved wooden statue standing over St. Mary's Spring, the Pacific Ocean hurls itself against black boulders and driftwood.

As a child I drank from St. Mary's Spring on a regular basis, my family's old Datsun stopping both for the dogs to fetch sticks on the beach and for my sister and I to gulp cups of water from the spring's small pool.

According to local legend, whoever drank from St. Mary's Spring would always return to the Islands.

Perhaps that is why I often feel as if northern British Columbia is in my blood; as if my heart is somehow part of its landscapes. Perhaps St. Mary's Spring is the reason I have chosen to do the research that I do, research that tries to unite the fine arts and geography, that makes an attempt to understand geographic concepts like place and landscape through art and literature.

I came to the discipline of geography in a round-about way, a way that involved the tremendous imagination and support of both the Geography and English departments at the University of Northern British Columbia. Although I have a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Victoria, geography has always fascinated me. As an undergraduate student, I remember wanting to understand hydrology or geomorphology in relation to poetry; and I remember thinking about GIS-produced maps as being beautiful pieces of art.

Sometimes people think of art and poetry as products of an almost mystical creative process. Conversely, sometimes we consider products of science as pinnacles of truthfulness and objectivity.

I often feel as if northern British Columbia is in my blood; as if my heart is somehow part of its landscapes

I believe that geography is perfectly positioned to let us contemplate both scientific processes as creative and artistic processes as rigorous and disciplined.

Of course I am not the only one to have had these thoughts. Generations of people before me have considered how novels, paintings, or even tapestries might be repositories of information about a great variety of things, from climate and weather conditions, to clothing and harvesting

styles. And there are people who know far better than I that stories, or even carvings and songs, carry in them the knowledge of survival, the knowledge of maps, lineages, territories and social structures.

In this way, each of us might be thought of as having what might be understood as a geography of the heart; this is what makes us catch our breath as we come home, it is what stirs our blood when we set eyes upon a landscape of importance to us. The best way I know how to understand these geographies is to research how they are produced and represented in art and literature.



Sarah de Leeuw

Sarah de Leeuw graduated with an MA in Interdisciplinary Studies from UNBC in 2002. In 2003, her MA thesis was awarded the Starkey-Robinson Award by the Canadian Association of Geographers, a national award recognizing quality graduate research that furthers understanding of the geography of Canada.

Sarah is currently a PhD student with the Department of Geography at Queen's University, where her doctoral research is centered on how art and literature were used in the colonizing curriculums of Residential Schools in British Columbia.

Her first book, "Unmarked: Landscapes Along Highway 16", will be released in the fall of 2004 from NeWest Press.

This space features an article by a UNBC grad in every issue of UPDATE



Alumni News & Events

Alumni Reception

All UNBC grads are invited to the Annual Alumni Wine & Cheese Reception

Date: Thursday, May 27, 2004
Time: 8:00pm to 10:00pm
Place: UNBC Dining Hall, Prince George

Please RSVP by Friday, May 21 by calling (250) 960-5620. Partners or guests are welcome to attend.

UNBC Alumni Association Annual General Meeting

Date: Wednesday, May 26, 2004
Time: 6:30 pm
Place: UNBC Senate Chambers (Room 1079), Prince George

The 2nd Annual UNBC Alumni Golf Tournament

Date: Thursday, May 27, 2004
Place: Aberdeen Glen Golf Course, Prince George

Entries include green fees, golf cart rental, lunch, refreshments, dinner and a golf shirt. All proceeds benefit UNBC Athletics.

For more information, contact Zane at (250) 960-5882.



UNBC grad Jennifer Paige (BA Geography '03) is currently teaching English in Korea.

UNBC Grads: Where are they Now?

92% of year 2000 grads feel UNBC helped them learn to analyze, think critically, and work effectively with others.

Eric Beach (BSc Environmental Planning '02) is a Planner for the City of Williams Lake.

Kelli Berrisford (BA English '00) is a teacher in Waterloo, Ontario.

Kevin McCarty (BSc Resource Recreation '02) is a Land and Resource Analyst for the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management in McBride.

Kevin Lowenberger (BComm '03) is a Commercial Account Manager for the Bank of Montreal in Kelowna.

Dave Gummesson (BSc Wildlife Biology '03) is a Field Coordinator at the UBC Marine Mammal Research Unit in Vancouver.

Marc Imus (BSc Environmental Planning '98) is Manager of the Inter-Agency Management Committee for the Province of BC in Prince George.

Michael Brown (BComm '97) is a Senior Research Assistant for Global Equities with Phillips, Hager & North Investment Management LP in Vancouver.

Rilla Middleton (BSc Natural Resource Management '03) is a Forest Resource Technologist for the Ministry of Forests in Houston.

Kathryn Easson (BSc Nursing '03) is a Registered Nurse in Prince George.

Rachel Polyck (BSW '03) is a Child Protection Social Worker for the Ministry of Children and Family Development in Telkwa.

Ray Proulx (BSc Environmental Planning '99) is an Economic Development Officer in Tumbler Ridge.

Theodore Gosnell (BComm '99) is a Senior Accountant for the Nisga'a Lisims Government in New Aiyansh.

Mark Cleveland (BSc Biology '99) is the Head Fisheries Biologist with the Gitanyow Fisheries Authority in Terrace.

Andrea Larson (BSc Biology/Chemistry '03) is a Research Associate for Angiotech Pharmaceuticals in Coquitlam.



These UNBC students from the Williams Lake area are planning to graduate this year.



Janet & Tim Curry, co-chairs of the Prince George committee raising support for the Northern Medical Programs Trust, welcomed UBC medical students to Prince George during the NMP Prototypical Week in January. The students tested interactive technologies designed to connect UNBC classrooms with those at UBC and Uvic.

Coming Events

Annual Williston Circle Recognition Event
June 10th, 2004

Annual Donor Recognition Event
September 25th, 2004

This year, roughly one in every seven students is attending UNBC with the help of a scholarship or bursary.

Giving to UNBC

Much of the funding for student awards comes from private donors who generously support UNBC on an annual basis.

UNBC Donations

Office of University Development

University of Northern British Columbia
3333 University Way
Prince George, BC V2N 4Z9

Phone: (250) 960-5750
1-866-960-5750
Fax: (250) 960-5799
Email: devoff@unbc.ca
Web: www.unbc.ca/giving/

The 2003-2004 Annual Campaign exceeded its goal of \$200,000 by reaching \$260,000. Each year, UNBC students benefit from the generous support of alumni, faculty, staff, individuals, businesses, corporations, foundations, and associations. For information on participating in the 2004-2005 Annual Campaign, visit our website at www.unbc.ca/giving/.

The 2nd Annual Jim Fowlie Memorial Talent Show and Dinner was a success, featuring artists such as Out of Alba, the Rainbow Singers, the Sacred Heart Choir and, the Judy Russell Dance Group. Thanks to organizers Bill Hogan and Tony Bond, the event raised valuable funds for the Northern Medical Program.

The 2nd Annual UNBC Alumni Association Golf Tournament will be held at the Aberdeen Glen Golf Course on May 27th. The goal of the tournament is to raise funds for UNBC Athletics. Student athletes give back to the community by volunteering in community initiatives, such as the UNBC Outreach Program, designed to teach athletic skills to kids while promoting teamwork and fair play.

Alumni donors have increased by almost 75% this year, thanks in part to a February appeal by the Alumni Association. Most gifts were designated to scholarships and bursaries, Athletics, the Library, and the NMP. The growing number of alumni supporters will have a profound impact on the university in the years to come.



District VPs Andrew Siu and Skip Bates of Scotiabank present a cheque for \$150,000 to David Snadden, leader of the NMP, and Charles Jago, President of UNBC.

Scotiabank's \$150,000 investment to the Northern Health Sciences Centre will help fund the acquisition of state-of-the-art telecommunication equipment that will support the distributed delivery of the Northern Medical Program. For more information on the NMP, check out www.unbc.ca/nmp/.



The Development Office has released a comprehensive guide to UNBC's charitable gift planning program, which outlines current and future giving opportunities. Please call 960-5750 for a personal copy or to arrange a meeting to discuss a legacy gift to UNBC.

On Whistlestops and Breathing

These unrealistic lines fold
stations into horizon into valley
trestles of light, tracks of words
and you follow, read origins, speed,
imagine destinations.

The faces out the window cheer,
petals waving – and when they climb
aboard, they become real
and hand you a poem, that one poem,
and it stands still in the sway
of geography, lives.

On the train, words move further.

By Robert Budde

Poetry Train

UNBC's English program hit the rails in March, putting on a unique program that involved having some of Canada's best poets present workshops and public readings on a Via Rail train between Winnipeg and Prince George. The trip lasted three days and provided on-board interaction with six poets as well as public readings at various stops en route. In all, more than 400 people took in either the trip or the public readings (or both), including a big crowd of 75 at the reading in McBride. The Poetry Train arrived in Prince George to a gala evening at the Railway and Forestry Museum, after garnering national attention from the literary community.



English prof Robert Budde was one of the organizers of the Poetry Train, which journeyed from Winnipeg to Prince George.



New Chancellor & VP Academic

After starting with UNBC as Dean of Arts and Science in the early 1990s, Deborah Poff is ending her ten-year term as Vice-President Academic & Provost this summer. Deborah has shepherded a number of significant projects, including the academic plan, the

Northern Medical Program, and various programs aimed at making the campus safer and more welcoming. She is being replaced by Howard Brunt, current Associate VP of Research at the University of Victoria. There is also a changing of the guard at the top of the organization, with Canfor Chairman Peter Bentley taking over as Chancellor from George Pedersen.

Canada-Russia Collaboration

Political Science professors Gary Wilson and John Young joined Prince George Mayor Colin Kinsley and City Manager George Paul at meetings in Moscow aimed at strengthening links between Canadian and Russian municipalities. In particular, the Canadian delegation (which included other educators and government officials) was aiming to develop a Circumpolar Municipalities Association and local government training courses, modeled after UNBC's certificate program in public administration.

People in the News

UNBC's Office of Communications issued 40% more news releases in 2003 than the previous year, mostly surrounding research, student successes, and new developments.



Ski Successes

It only makes sense that athletes at a northern university would succeed in winter sports. Students Barb Sharp, Marnie Graf, and Ian Jackson have all posted top finishes in Nordic skiing: Barb finished 2nd and 4th in two races at the Canadian Biathlon

Championships, Marnie earned gold among women in the BC University/College cross-country ski series, and Ian took third in the men's division of the University/College Cup. Building on the development of the Northern Sport Centre, UNBC has joined with other community and sport organizations to establish Prince George as a centre of excellence for Nordic ski training and competition. The development could soon result in Olympic-calibre skiers training and going to school in the city.

The Explorers Club

What does Geography prof Kevin Hall have in common with explorer Roald Amundsen, astronaut Neil Armstrong, and climber Edmund Hillary? All are among the 3000 great adventurers who are members of The Explorers Club. Dr Hall was inducted as a Fellow this year, the club's centennial year. He has ventured out on 23 expeditions to Antarctica, South America, Africa, Tibet, and the Arctic – primarily examining weathering in cold regions. This year, he's heading off to the Drakensburg Mountains in South Africa to conduct research on the weathering of cave art.



Pain in New York

Psychology professor Ken Prkachin brought some of his research findings to the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, where his presentation focused on pain in hospital emergency wards. Along with grad student Liz Hughes, Ken developed a

health assessment system that provides physicians and other health care providers with clues on how to recognize and assess pain in patients. Ken also conducts research on the impacts of stress on heart health.

It's In Our Genes

Biology professor Brent Murray successfully initiated a plan to expand the genetic research capacity at UNBC – with the support of both the federal and provincial governments. The new Centre for Molecular and Population Genetics is initially supporting research on wildlife genetics, such as fish and marine mammal immunology. The research will be key to understanding the treatment and prevention of diseases in animal populations.

Big in Norway

Around the northern world, UNBC has friends in influential places. The Canadian ambassador to Norway is one example. During a recent visit to Norway to promote UNBC as an option for international students, UNBC employees Carolyn Russell and Susan Deevy were invited to an event hosted by the Ambassador. Shirley Wolff Serafini specifically mentioned UNBC and its northern focus, singling UNBC out among the other Canadian colleges and universities participating in the student recruitment program. The event itself – one of Europe's biggest international university fairs – was UNBC's first major foray into international student recruitment, with UNBC drawing positive reviews from many of the 20,000 attendees.



Managing Resources

Geography professor Gail Fondahl is leading a large, multi-year research program north of Fort St James that will provide new opportunities for First Nations people to more effectively participate in natural resource management. Involving the Tl'azt'en

Nation and focused at the John Prince Research Forest, the research will examine co-management partnerships, traditional ecological knowledge, appropriate educational programming, and environmental tourism opportunities. The JPRF is jointly managed by UNBC and the Tl'azt'en Nation – an arrangement unique in North America.



Heather Myers and Tracy Summerville

International Studies associate professor Heather Myers and Political Science assistant professor Tracy Summerville are actively engaged in research and teaching that explores northern issues. Dr Myers, who has lived and worked in the Far North, is currently involved in teaching courses for the University of Arctic and researching the community understanding of Arctic contaminants. Dr Summerville is primarily interested in the political challenges that face the northern parts of the provinces. She is also part of a team that created the new Social Science Multimedia Research lab at the Prince George campus.

The Cost of Being Politically Correct

Heather Myers and Tracy Summerville

Over the past two decades or so, Canada and other industrial and wealthy countries have experienced a change in values about the environment. This has led to greater balancing of economic, social and environmental goals in resource management – an important aspect of achieving “sustainable development” – but we argue that there are extremes on the spectrum of “environmentalism” that are counter-productive. At one end of the spectrum are anti-use campaigns (AUCs), which argue against extractive harvesting of resources.

At least in part, the impetus for our article, “Anti-use campaigns and resource communities: the consequences of political correctness”, that will be published in *Policy Options* this spring, came from a piece that appeared in the *Globe and Mail* in 2002. “Ashamed to be a Canadian”, written by Margaret Wenthe, included the *de rigueur* pictures of a sealer skinning a seal pup, and aptly captured the attitude of the comfortable urbanite. She wrote:

As you read this paper over your morning latte, hundreds of hunters are hard at work on the ice floes off the shores of Newfoundland. They're shooting and clubbing as many harp seals as they can find... (Wenthe 2002, A15)

The article decried the hunt on a number of fronts including the most ridiculous idea that it should be halted because seal meat “tastes terrible” (we don’t like green peppers, but don’t think that’s a reason to ban the industry). The second more shocking comment in the article was the author’s dismissal of sealers’ culture and values and their ability to pursue well-managed sustainable resource use, chirping instead that “these people exist in harmony with EI cheques”.

This kind of attitude is prevalent in urban Canada, as well as in other industrial states that have been experiencing changes in values, attitudes to authority, and accepted behaviours. The growth of anti-harvesting trapping/sealing/logging movements illustrates these changes. Most obvious, there is a shift in public values about resources and the environment, from an extractive approach to one in which nature is valued more. AUCs have co-opted the representation of these new values, defined as the “public good”, but have narrowly focused on particular activities without the obligation to consider the broader contexts in which those practices occur. By appearing to represent the public good, AUCs have gained access to public policy processes, and failing satisfaction with those, have used market influence, such as boycotts, to achieve their goals. These have typically excluded the resource communities and cultures most directly affected.

Campaigns against the use of animal and natural resources have had devastating impacts on northern and rural communities and they fail to recognize the critical elements of sustainable development: economy, ecology, and society.

Moving? Let us know!

Name: _____
 New Address: _____

 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Are you a UNBC Graduate? Yes No

Snail Mail

Fill out this form and mail to:

Office of Communications
 University of Northern British Columbia
 3333 University Way
 Prince George, BC
 V2N 4Z9

Online

Email us your updated contact information at communications@unbc.ca or do it online at www.unbc.ca/alumni/.