Adrian Stimson: Making Art in the Theatre of War

Water-Destitute Future? An interview with hydrologist John Pomeroy

Trevor Herriot on saving prairie grasslands
Welcome to Saskatchewan’s Premier Leadership Conference!

Dear U of S Alumni and Friends,

We at the University of Saskatchewan Centre for Continuing & Distance Education are proud to host our fifth leadership conference, Leadership Conversations—from the practical to the emerging.

Leadership Conference 2011 is your opportunity to explore the leader in you—regardless of where you are at in your career. Build your professional network by having conversations with others, who like you, bring their unique perspective and ideas to the table with one common goal—to tackle those every-day issues we all face as team-members, mentors and managers, and come up with creative solutions to resolve those issues.

We anticipate that over 1500 inspiring and aspiring leaders will join in these conversations—people from all walks of life who come from different generational and cultural backgrounds—people who also represent a broad range of private industries, public sectors, and community-based organizations.

Be inspired and motivated by our keynote speakers. Margaret Wheatley, Scott Ginsberg, Daniel Pink and Chiefs Elijah Harper and Guy Lonechild are all forward-thinking visionaries who each bring a fresh, innovative approach toward leadership.

Mark your calendar and join us at TCU Place in Saskatoon on May 4th and 5th. Join us and engage in dynamic leadership conversations that will help redefine your thinking to help you succeed today, and tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Karen Hayward
Chair, Leadership Conference 2011

Keynotes & Speakers

May 4 Margaret Wheatley, Scott Ginsberg
May 5 Daniel Pink, Chiefs Elijah Harper and Guy Lonechild

Margaret Wheatley: author of Finding our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time, will discuss role modeling; leading through organizational change; and how control affects work environments.

Scott Ginsberg: is “the world’s most foremost field expert on the name tag” and the author of 12 books including Hello, my name is Scott, The Power of Approachability and The Approachable Leader. He will show us how to become UNFORGETTABLE communicators—one conversation at a time.

Daniel Pink: author of the provocative and persuasive book, Drive: The Surprising Truth about What Motivates Us, will describe how the secret to high performance and personal satisfaction is found in our inherent desire to self-direct, to learn and create, and to make a difference with everything we do.

Chief Elijah Harper: is a prominent leader and activist who promotes human and Aboriginal rights. He is also a registered lobbyist/consultant/advisor to Aboriginal organizations, and is involved with World Vision in Tanzania, Kenya and China (Taiwan).

Chief Guy Lonechild: is an experienced FSIN member who is instrumental in leading a new era of relationship-building for First Nations—most notably in the growth of new businesses, employment partnerships and Health and Wellness.
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On the cover: Adrian Stimson (Photo: Dave Stobbe)
Top to bottom: Adrian Stimson (Photo: Dave Stobbe); Kamskénow students (Photo: Brij Verma); Alumni of Influence recipient Dorothy Walton (Photo: U of S Archives A-7170)
EDITOR’S MESSAGE

As a 19-year old kid brand new to the U of S in the fall of 1990, I walked the halls of the Arts Building, Thorvaldson and Place Riel, and didn’t know a soul. A few times a week I recognized a face in the hallway, and when the phone rang in my apartment, it was certainly my mother.

But life improved. I met students in my classes—even some profs. I got to know the transit system. Eventually I could pull off a solo trip to Broadway and know half the crowd. I was finding my place.

University. It starts out huge and unfriendly. But after that first adjustment period, university proved to be life-changing, in those intense years when we were figuring out who we were going to be. University was anything but bland.

Arts & Science grads occupy an important place in the world. Name any news story and there is bound to be a grad from our college connected to it. That student you knew in class yesterday is now the expert researching glaciers in the Rockies, the conservationist protecting the grasslands or the artist embedded with our Canadian Forces in Afghan mountain passes.

Your nominations of classmates and colleagues for the second annual Alumni of Influence awards are the evidence. The impacts made by these influential grads have changed our world, and their stories are an inspiration.

Arts & Science alumni are inspiring our first-year students, too, as mentors with Learning Communities—helping make our college a friendlier place and, at the same time, giving something back.

And now, our grad students are reaching out through science programming in urban elementary schools. A new connection starts with the nine-year-olds who have never seen the campus or dreamed this place was an option for them.

Joy-Ann Allin, Editor (BA’08)
joy-ann.allin@artsandscience.usask.ca

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

COUNTERING CLAIMS

Overall this is a great publication, and I enjoyed reading it. (However,) I’m disappointed in your inclusion of Roy Romanow among your 100 Alumni of Influence—not for having him among the 100 people, but for the remarks that, presumably, should have described why he was or is of influence…many would argue that describing the economic situation in Saskatchewan in 1992 as a “financial crisis” is misleading and an over-dramatization. Look at the financial crisis experienced in 2008 in many countries across the world as a point of reference—Saskatchewan experienced nothing like this in 1992.

Finally, the claim that Saskatchewan was the first province to balance its budget in the 1990s is dubious. Alberta had already entered the black much earlier that year, and Saskatchewan just tabled their balanced budget slightly before Alberta tabled theirs. In addition, many would argue that Saskatchewan’s first “balanced budget” was only accomplished by transferring funds from a government-administered farm assistance program, known as the Gross Revenue Insurance Plan, to the General Revenue account.

Glenn Gottselig (BComm’94, BA95, LLB’95)

SIFC SNUBBED?

I am writing concerning the feature 100 Alumni of Influence in the Fall 2009 issue of DiversitA&S. I would first like to express our pleasure at the inclusion of the late Dr. Ahab Spence in this prestigious list. His accomplishments and abilities were truly worthy of this honour. In particular, not enough can be said about his dedication to the Cree language.

There was, even in the limited information on Dr. Spence’s long and storied career, an extremely glaring omission. It is true that Dr. Spence taught Cree and Native Studies at Brandon University for a short time, but he devoted virtually a quarter of his working career to teaching the Cree language at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College in Regina… A snub of SIFC/FNUniv, as one of the institutions which has led the way in this discipline, is disappointing to say the least.

Arok Wolvengrey (BA’89)

ALUMNI OF INFLUENCE A HIT

This is just a note to say how much I enjoyed the weekend and to thank you and all of those responsible for your hospitality and such thoughtful preparations.

My congratulations on a splendid anniversary!

James McConica (BA’50)

IN MEMORIAM

Four of our brightest Arts & Science luminaries passed away this year. Clare B. Baker (BA’44, MED’44), Edward Bayda (BA’51, LLB’53), Albert Johnson (BA’42) and David Courtney Milne (BA’64) will be remembered for their important lifetime contributions. In 2009, these four individuals were honoured at the 100 Alumni of Influence celebration.
Contributors

Bronwyn Eyre (BA’93, LLB’96)
Bronwyn Eyre graduated from the English department magna cum laude, and then the College of Law at the U of S. Eyre spent seven years as a legal journalist in London, Milan and Frankfurt. She returned to the U of S and taught German in Languages & Linguistics. A former editor of the Sheaf and student issues columnist for The StarPhoenix, Eyre now writes a column for The StarPhoenix that is a lightning rod for debate in Saskatoon circles.

Mark A. Ferguson (BA’03)
Mark A. Ferguson completed his BA at the U of S before studying journalism at the University of King’s College (BJ’04) in Halifax, N.S. Ferguson has worked as a reporter for The StarPhoenix and freelancer for newspapers, magazines and radio stations in Canada and Taiwan. He currently reports for On Campus News at the U of S. Ferguson is waiting for National Geographic to send him on assignment…anywhere.

Trevor Herriot (BA’79)
Trevor Herriot is an award-winning author, naturalist and speaker, living in Regina, Sask. His books River in a Dry Land and Jacob’s Wound have been widely recognized, and his newest Grass, Sky, Song has been called a “moving testimony to a landscape in flux.” Herriot is an active member of the Nature Conservancy of Canada, and is featured regularly on CBC Radio. A self-described “urban refugee,” Herriot escapes frequently to a cabin outside the city.

Kirk Sibbald (BA’04)
Kirk Sibbald grew up in Outlook, Sask. and graduated from the U of S with a BA (Honours) in English. After completing an MA in Journalism at the University of Western Ontario he worked as editor of The Lloydminster Source. Currently a communications officer for the College of Arts & Science, Sibbald fancies himself an up-and-coming Hallmark greeting card writer.

Adrian A. Stimson (MFA’05)
Adrian A. Stimson is a member of the Siksika Nation and a full-time interdisciplinary artist. He is known for his irreverent character parody of Buffalo Bill. Recent exhibitions include Beyond Redemption (Mendel Art Gallery), Photo Quai (Musée du Quai Branly, Paris) and The Two Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Buffalo Boy’s First Peep Holes (Glenbow Museum, Calgary). Holding Our Breath will be on view at Neutral Ground, Regina in June 2011, and draws from his experiences in Afghanistan with the Canadian Forces Artist Programs.

Photos: Bronwyn Eyre (Gord Waldner, The StarPhoenix); Mark Ferguson (submitted); Kirk Sibbald (Karee Davidson); Trevor Herriot (Sage Herriot); Adrian Stimson (Dave Stobbe)
Music Dept. receives $1M donation

Decades after arriving at the University of Saskatchewan to pursue an education in the Department of Music, Bob Xiaoping Xu (MA'92) and Ling Chen (MA'90) returned in October to express their gratitude one million fold.

Xu and Chen, now married, established the David L. Kaplan Music Scholarship with a $1 million gift that will fund new scholarships for undergraduate and graduate music students. The gift was formally announced during a ceremony in Convocation Hall on October 7.

Xu and Chen established the scholarship fund to honour David Kaplan, a longtime Music professor whom they viewed as a mentor and friend after arriving at the U of S as foreign students.

After graduating from the U of S and moving back to China, Xu co-founded New Oriental Education & Technology Group, now the largest provider of private education in China. Today, New Oriental is listed on the NYSE and dominates the English test-preparation market in China, with 75 per cent of the mainland market share. In 2004, Forbes Magazine listed Xu as one of the Top 100 celebrities in China, and he has also been voted as one of China’s most charismatic leaders.
DEAN’S MESSAGE

For close to seven years I have had the great privilege of serving as Dean of the College of Arts & Science. I have learned to deeply appreciate the College’s diversity, vibrant culture and rich legacy of accomplishments.

The University of Saskatchewan has been called “the people’s university,” and this was the guiding vision of its founders. The College of Arts & Science is, for me, the embodiment of this ideal.

One of my priorities as Dean was to reach out to our alumni and create a way to recognize the many contributions of our graduates throughout the College’s history. It has been thrilling to oversee the establishment of our Alumni of Influence awards as a new tradition, honouring our graduates and our heritage. In turn, our graduates serve to mentor and inspire those students that follow them.

This fall we inducted 10 Alumni of Influence—persons chosen from amongst you who have influenced how we live and have made a profound impact in our world.

As I look back on my tenure as Dean, one of my cherished reflections will be the memory of meeting so many of you, the alumni of Arts & Science.

I have visited with many of you in your hometowns, for focus groups in Calgary, dinners in Vancouver, a cocktail party in Toronto and even an evening at the yacht club in Hong Kong. Our alumni continue to be a treasured resource to guide our College and its students into the future.

In October, two of our music alumni, Bob Xiaoping Xu and Ling Chen, decided to establish a new scholarship fund to honour Professor Emeritus David Kaplan, a person who has contributed so much to the musical life of Saskatchewan. I had the pleasure of expressing my gratitude to them during a special musical celebration with our very own Greystone Singers and string ensemble. It was especially moving to learn of the opportunities that the experience in our College provided them, and to witness their appreciation through this great gift.

The gift of Bob Xiaoping Xu and Ling Chen reflects the evolution of our College over the years as it has grown to meet the challenges of preparing our students for the future. You have helped guide them through your example and ongoing commitment. For this, we are deeply grateful.

Jo-Anne Dillon, Dean

Photo: Stuart Kasdorf
When Natalie Kallio (BA’99) jumped from Dinsmore, Sask. to Vancouver, B.C. to attend the University of British Columbia, it was a tough transition to first-year Engineering. Her mandatory first-year class of 600 was larger than the entire village she had left.

“I was new; I was rural. I had a calculus prof who told me I was very brilliant and very lazy, but no one noticed who I was until then. So I quit and came home,” she remembers.

As coordinator of the hugely successful learning communities program at the U of S, Kallio sees the new transition program as an important way to humanize the first-year experience and mitigate the culture shock she encountered as a student.

Initiated at Evergreen State College in the 1980s, the learning community model has gained popularity throughout North American universities with its new pedagogical approach.

At the College of Arts & Science, pilot learning communities began in 2007 and have grown to serve 393 student participants in 2010. Entering students register with a cohort of their peers in a triple or pair of classes, perhaps Biology, Psychology and English. A group of approximately 30 attends these courses together and meets weekly with upper-year mentors for study sessions and social time.

Each of the 12 Arts & Science learning communities is named for a dynamic, youthful graduate: an alumni mentor. Why ask a grad to lend his or her
name to a learning community? Kallio says it’s proof of a whole philosophy that says to first-year students, “You’re not just a number.”

Alumni get involved in welcoming students, help make connections between courses, and inspire students considering program options and career directions. Alumna Kendra Getty (BSc’02, BA’03) boldly brought her university transcripts to show her mentees—and made a lasting impression on the cohort.

“I wanted them to see a concrete example of someone who struggled in first year, but improved and was successful in and out of the classroom…if they are open-minded, they may realize that they actually want to do something different,” Getty said.

Part inspiration, part reality check—many hard-working “pre-med” undergraduate students haven’t heard anyone tell them that they may never be accepted to medicine. But alumni mentors with the right street credentials can speak candidly with students about the array of other fulfilling careers in the health sciences. “They get pretty personal with their students,” Kallio says.

Alumni mentor Dave Scharf (BA’85, LLB’88) became involved with the learning communities because it was a way for him to give back to his alma mater.

“Looking back on my six years at the U of S from a distance of 22 years, I realize that those years were very influential in my life. They ‘punch above their weights’ as it were,” he says.

In 1982 Scharf enrolled in the College of Arts & Science, and caught an “infectious enthusiasm” for philosophy from his first-year professor, Len Miller. Now a 20-year veteran broadcaster with Rawlco Radio, author, editor and founder of the Canadian Poker Tour, his career followed an unconventional path but it makes him an ideal mentor for first-year students as they choose their direction.

The learning communities experiment at the U of S has proved effective. Student retention has improved better than anyone had expected, up two per cent across the campus. The College of Arts & Science saw the most dramatic results: 73 per cent overall retention climbed to 84 per cent retention among learning communities students, or as high as 90 per cent among the most engaged students taking six or more sessions. Arguably, average grades have also increased.

Kallio hopes to keep the U of S learning communities program voluntary to maintain strong results. To the helicopter parents that seek to register on behalf of their 18-year olds, she says, “The students are not going to participate unless they are invested in the idea.

“Even if the students come in and have some real weaknesses, maturity, confidence issues, by end of term, you have watched them flourish.”

In their upper years, students coming out of the learning communities are returning to the program to work as mentors. These student mentors provide math or statistics help, coach writing groups, teach study skills workshops and work at the help desk.

Kallio admits that learning communities have some kinks to iron out, and wants to see improvements in registration methods and diversity within the program. Since the most effective recruitment has been directly through high school guidance counsellors, many learning communities fill immediately when registration opens in May.

“We don’t have students who made their decision later, who were not on the ball, going to (campus tours)...we are missing a lot of students who could really use this program. Not to say the high achievers don’t need it.

“We want everyone represented at the university to be represented in the learning communities.”
Getting kids interested in science: this is the goal of the Kamskénow program, now entering its second year at Saskatoon public schools. What began as a pilot at a single school last year has now expanded to seven schools.

Kevin Schneider (BSc’80), Vice-Dean of Science at the College of Arts & Science, and Brij Verma (BSc’97), Research Facilitator, launched the outreach program in fall 2009 to spark an interest in science amongst elementary school children and increase their desire to pursue it at the post-secondary level. According to Verma, reaching an aboriginal student population was particularly important.

Verma found an ally in the U of S Aboriginal Student Centre, which helped to provide funding for the program. When the Saskatoon Public School Board was invited to participate, the pieces fell into place quickly.

“I think it’s good for kids to have access to a curriculum piece in school that focuses on the natural world from an aboriginal perspective,” says George Rathwell (MEd’87), Director of Education with the Saskatoon Public School Board. “But (Kamskénow is) much more than that.”

Rathwell describes the Kamskénow invitation as an alignment of the stars. When the Saskatoon Public School Board was approached, he was already working with the Saskatoon Tribal Council to find ways to enrich science education for inner city and aboriginal children. Verma provided the groundwork for Kamskénow and Rathwell says the school board was immediately intrigued.

Last year, Pleasant Hill Community School was asked to pilot the Kamskénow program, welcoming student instructors into the Grade 4/5 classroom for weekly, two-hour lessons. Pleasant Hill students
were responsible for selecting the name—Kamskénow—a Cree word that means *to find, to learn*.

Principal Kevin Epp (BEd’86, MEd’04) said he was taken aback when one day he walked into the classroom to find students tackling subjects that most kids are not introduced to until much later. “The class was working with the instructors on sound waves and the physics behind them,” says Epp. “Many of them actually understood how the waves moved—this is something most people don’t understand until they get into high school.”

The students also had the opportunity to visit the U of S campus when Kamskénow instructors took them on guided tours of the university’s museums and facilities, and led experiments with technicians in laboratories.

Epp says the students’ initial visit to campus was the first time many of them had seen the university, and even the first time for many of their parents who tagged along.

On one of these field trips, a young girl in the program revealed to Epp that she wasn’t sure what she wanted to study when she attended university, but that she was leaning towards physics. “She is in the fourth grade, and here she is not wondering if she will go to university, but when. She still talks like that today at school.”

Money is not as significant a barrier as is a general lack of interest in post-secondary education. That many of the students at Pleasant Hill have already set their sights on pursuing science is an important gain for both the school and the university.

The Kamskénow instructors are coming back this year to continue teaching at both the Grade 4/5 and 5/6 levels. Hopefully, says Epp, his students will participate in Kamskénow throughout their elementary school years.

Lydia Jackson, Director of Science Outreach at the College of Arts & Science, believes that next year there can be growth into even more schools. Fairhaven, St. Mary’s and Princess Alexandra elementary schools have introduced Kamskénow to their Grade 4/5 classrooms, and students at Mount Royal, Nutana and Aden Bowman Collegiates will participate this year.

Jackson recounted a story about Grade 5 students at Fairhaven Elementary School with limited backgrounds in science who had just met their Kamskénow instructors. The kids shared their ideas about what they thought scientists did and what science was, and were asked what they wanted to learn about the most. Answer: they wanted to learn about artificial limbs.

“I have no idea why they were so interested in that particular topic,” says Jackson, speculating that the request could have something to do with a recently-studied unit on Canadian hero Terry Fox. “Something about artificial limbs just struck a chord with them.”

Capturing the attention of elementary students with the mysteries of science is no easy task. But it’s the goal of the Kamskénow program to excite kids about a future in biology, geology, physics, chemistry, math and computer science by connecting them with youthful role models from the College of Arts & Science.

“She is in the fourth grade, and here she is not wondering if she will go to university, but when.”

“I think the perception is that science is full of old boffins with white coats,” says Jackson. “We want to show that we have young enthusiastic scientists at the U of S and it will make the kids think about what their life could be like as scientists.”

Jackson and six instructors are putting together lessons tailored for specific requests at each school. The lesson being developed for the class at Fairhaven will begin with a look at artificial limbs—how they work, how they’re built and what they do. The program will fit within the parameters of the public school curriculum but with a U of S touch.

Jackson, who will accompany the instructors on their weekly lessons for six months, says she can hardly believe how much excitement there is from the kids when the instructors arrive in the class.

“Our aim with this program is to enthuse the children about the world around them,” says Jackson. “We want to show the kids that science is cool…It’s really trying to get these kids thinking about a career in the sciences.”
Could Calgary be the next Los Angeles? Saskatoon the next San Francisco?
It may sound attractive, albeit implausible, strictly from a climate point of view. But when the issue at hand is water, these comparisons might not be so far off.

John Pomeroy (BSc’83, PhD’88)—Professor of Geography & Planning and Canada Research Chair in Water Resources and Climate Change—knows a thing or two about the world’s most important resource and is doing his best to raise awareness that water is a non-renewable resource that won’t last forever. In the prairies, it might not even last another half-century if current trends remain unchanged.

“We’re not at a crisis yet, and we could avoid it if we’re careful. But we have to start doing that today, otherwise we’ll be looking like California in 50 years, suing each other all over the place, shutting down agriculture and restricting the growth of our cities,” he warned.

“One of my colleagues remarked that the City of Calgary is where Los Angeles was in 1920. They didn’t think they had any problems at that point, but by the 1970s they did. It’s definitely possible with the way things are going.”

Today, Los Angeles and various other cities face a water crisis of unprecedented proportions, at least in the context of North America. In a recent report by Ernst & Young and the Urban Land Institute, Los Angeles and San Francisco ranked as two of the most water-destitute municipalities in the United States. Their problems are similar to those facing the prairies today: agricultural irrigation inefficiencies; population boom; and climate change, which is diminishing mountain snowpacks and increasing evaporation rates.

Pomeroy spends much of his time at his research station near Kananaskis, Alta. He has spent years in the Rockies researching the overall effect climate change is having on snowpacks and ice, which
contain the vast majority of water that eventually ends up in prairie rivers. His work, along with that of his colleagues in the IP3 (Improved Processes and Parameterization for Predication in Cold Regions) Research Network, has uncovered several alarming trends.

Pomeroy said that overall water supply to the South Saskatchewan River—which provides water to many prairie industries and municipalities—is dwindling. The immediate threat, however, is when peak flows from the Rocky Mountains reach the river.

"Before, peak flows from the Rockies were coming in mid-to-late June, which is perfect if you want to irrigate in Saskatchewan," he explained. "But now, with the climate getting warmer, if the peak flows are coming in May you would have to store the water somewhere until irrigation season, and that capacity simply doesn't exist anywhere," said Pomeroy, adding that the South Saskatchewan is already one of the world’s most threatened rivers.

Although the rapid melt of Rocky Mountain glaciers—they have declined nearly 25 per cent in the last 25 years—has been well-documented, Pomeroy says that glacier melts only contribute about three per cent of the total water in the South Saskatchewan. More concerning are scientific models predicting shorter snow periods in the Rocky Mountains that, by the end of the 21st century, could cut snowpacks to less than half of what they are today.

And if the prairies experience another drought like the one from 1999 to 2004, the economic and social costs could be catastrophic. "We're going to try to target some smaller groups this year, getting a few scientists together and talking to people very specifically about the issues they face everyday," said Pomeroy.

Pomeroy acknowledged there have been improvements in irrigation efficiency recently, and that cities like Saskatoon and Regina "are small potatoes compared to cities in other provinces," in terms of the amount of water the municipalities use. However, with water demand also increasing due to more livestock feedlots, oil/gas production, potash exploration, and a vast irrigation expansion having been proposed, Pomeroy said now is the time for government and industry to develop long-term and sustainable solutions.

To help propagate this message, Pomeroy established the Canadian Rockies' Snow & Ice (CRSI) initiative with seed funding from the Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences. The outreach program started with several meetings between scientists and stakeholders in communities across Canada, including Yellowknife, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Waterloo, Calgary, Saskatoon and Whitehorse. The CRSI program evolved last year as support in the Canmore region was fostered to develop a more specific speaker series aimed at a community audience.

Pomeroy’s extensive network allowed him to invite experts from around the globe to Canmore to share their scientific expertise with community members. Public talks about topics such as water resources, climate change, snow and glaciers bridged cultural gaps as audience members learned how similar issues are impacting other communities throughout the world.

"We had speakers from Canada, of course, but also from the U.S., Spain, Switzerland and Germany. They talked about their mountain environments and related them in some way to the Canadian Rockies," explained Pomeroy.

"(The community members) are very concerned with what they can see. Snow and ice are really important to not only these people’s livelihoods—such as mountaineers, environmentalists and skiing personnel—but it is also very much a part of their culture and identity. With their environment changing like it is, these people notice it and want to talk about it.”

This winter’s CRSI speaker series is currently being finalized, with a few adaptations based on local feedback and capacity to deliver quality presentations. He expressed concern that funding for the CRSI will soon disappear, and that sustaining this particular outreach program will mean decreasing its scope until future funding can be secured.

"We’re going to try to target some smaller groups this year, getting a few scientists together and talking to people very specifically about the issues they face everyday,” said Pomeroy.

"It will be smaller this year. The IP3 is winding down. The foundation (Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences) that started the outreach program is winding down. So, really, our present funding agency is disappearing.”

Pomeroy said he will continue to search for funding to keep the CRSI initiative alive, and concluded with a poignant example of the inherent importance of university-community outreach.

"I think not only should it be our obligation (as academic researchers) to society, but it would be foolish for us to not also take the community’s advice and find out how what we study is affecting them in day-to-day life,” he said.

"Really, not doing this would be like conducting agricultural research and never talking to a farmer. I guess you could, but why in the world would you want to?”
Making art in the theatre of war

BY ADRIAN A. STIMSON (MFA’05)
Saskatoon artist Adrian Stimson spent a tense and transformative two-week stint with the Canadian Forces in March, including 10 days in the “theatre” of Afghanistan and four days at Camp Mirage in the United Arab Emirates.

Canadian artists have witnessed war and entered conflict zones for most of our nation’s history. Propelled by a need to record the perspectives and events of war, a series of federal programs supporting war art has endured in several forms since 1916—most recently, as the Canadian Forces Artists Program (CFAP), established in 2001. Included in the ranks of Canadian war artists are the well-known names A.Y. Jackson and Alex Colville.

After his experience as an embedded artist in the active zone, Stimson acknowledges that he has returned with more questions than answers.

Intrigued by the “belonging and purpose” that he sensed while living among soldiers on the base, he found both serenity and heightened awareness in the pace of daily activities there. Impossibly, the bustling Canadian military operation existed in tension alongside local goat-herding subsistence farmers, all under the constant likelihood of rocket attack.

Meeting members of the Canadian troops and seeing their commitment and personal sacrifice, Stimson says he was reminded of the fragility of the liberties Canadians possess: “I get concerned. We get lulled into complacency. I saw how quickly things can turn.

“I have inner conflict about war and the military industrial complex. As an artist, how will I create work that best represents my experience, work that honours those who put themselves in harm’s way, and also critically analyzes our participation in this conflict?”

He recorded his observations and reflections through still photography, video, drawings and journal entries. The encounter has spurred Stimson to create a multi-media exhibition titled “Holding Our Breath,” that will show in Regina at Neutral Ground Gallery in June 2011. —Ed.
January 22, 2010—Saskatoon I have been notified that I was accepted into the Canadian Forces Artist Program. I leave mid-March.

February 24—Saskatoon I have been thinking about the number of people, even strangers, who express their concern about my trip and offer well wishes. Joseph told me that in his next sweat lodge, he will pray for me, as will many elders from my nation. These are beautiful offerings that warm my heart and give me confidence.

March 8—Saskatoon Myrna, Letty and Arlene visited this past weekend. Myrna gave me an old Blackfoot prayer. We climbed Sleeping Buffalo Mountain, where we saw two eagles flying overhead, a good sign.

March 16—Saskatoon I called my granny today, and talked about her days as a wireless operator in World War II, and about my great grandfather’s time in His Majesty’s Secret Service. She said “Watch out for the English,” a quote from the Amish character in the movie Witness, and made me laugh.

March 19—Dubai I arrive in the Middle East, at the staging area for the Canadian Forces. We are in the desert, and it is hot and dry, yet very beautiful. A General tells me that Kandahar will be much busier, dirtier and louder. He says, “Be safe up north. Looking forward to seeing your artwork at the museum some day.”

March 20—Kandahar, Afghanistan We just took off in a Hercules aircraft with a battalion of soldiers, and we are all geared up, guns in hand. The engines are loud, ear plugs in—the vibration goes through the body. The guts of the plane remind me of scenes from the new Battlestar Galactica, exposed wires, gadgets and gears.

It is a three-hour trip. I look at the sleeping faces, the cocked heads resting on the butts of rifles. In a way it is a beautiful scene, like sleeping children, sleeping in a pile of guns. We are all together, yet alone in our minds, playing our lives out, over and over again, silently.

I arrive at Kandahar Air Field and am met by a Corporal. He takes me to my bunk and then begins a tour of the base. The General was right: it is hot as hell and dusty. The tour is chaotic, concrete barriers and razor wire everywhere.

There are many different forces here that make up the International Security Assistance Force. I am instructed on rocket attacks: when you hear the siren, hit the ground until you hear the all-clear siren; the lower you keep yourself to the ground, the less likely you will be hit by shrapnel. There is a relative feeling of safety within the base, yet attacks happen regularly. Always be prepared.

We check out the boardwalk and get a coffee from Tim Horton’s, kind of weird, yet a familiar comfort.

March 21—Kandahar There always seems to be a slight haze in the air. The sound of jets, transport planes and helicopters is constant. This is the busiest airfield in the world. I am given a first aid refresher and I am briefed on emergency procedures, should we encounter Taliban insurgents or an Improvised Explosive Device (IED). During the presentation there are images of devastating injuries from IEDs.

Then I am given a tour of the medical facilities where the Colonel in charge tells me, “We’re not supposed to see people blown in half.” Emotion builds in me as I see the injured soldiers and Afghan civilians. The human toll is enormous, physically and mentally.

I later chat with the Corporal about military pay and injury benefits. It seems not much for the dangers faced or the injuries sustained.

March 22—Ma’sum Ghar We receive our orders and enter the “people pod,” a transport vehicle designed to withstand IEDs. We are confined in a dark box, strapped in with little monitors to see outside.

Arrive at the Forward Operating Base Ma’sum Ghar. The PPod ride went well, yet I understand why there are motion sickness bags all over—it is an uncomfortable ride. Ma’sum Ghar is a base in former Taliban territory and it sits on a mountain-side, totally fortified, with several towns situated around it. The terrain is a mix of flat plains and mountain islands.

I am met by a Master Corporal, who happens to be First Nations from the Gordon Reserve in Saskatchewan. We find that we have friends in common. He gives me a tour. I have to wear my gear everywhere except the “bubble.” The bubble is where the sleeping quarters are and it is heavily fortified, with ballistic bunkers and shelters. I can hear gun shots in the distance. I am told there is a lot of action around the base: the Taliban are active in this area.

March 23—Ma’sum Ghar Videod the sunrise this morning. It was beautiful. The surrounding towns wake up. I hear the call to the mosque and roosters crowing. Smoke rises from the mud and clay homes.

My host Master Corporal visits me while I video and he asks me if I heard the blast last night. No, I say—the comfort of the ballistic bunk kept out the noise. There is a great deal of action happening just north of us, then suddenly another blast and gun fire. I see a plume of black smoke in the distance.
But life goes on. The villagers ride their bikes, children herd goats, while gun battles rage in the distance.

I visit the memorial to soldiers killed in action—a solemn moment. I see the beauty of the land and people while at the same time I see and hear the realities of war. I understand how dissociation happens, the need to distance yourself from the experience. There is a lot to process in this theatre of war.

I talk with Master Corporal about First Nations in the military, the Bold Eagle program for youth, and the former military personnel who gather to discuss First Nations issues as they relate to our collective security and defence. He mentions that he received a box in the mail the day before I arrived: it is a box from a respected elder, full of sweet grass, sage, cedar and tobacco. He had smudged the bubble the day before I arrived. This is a magical moment for me.

March 24—Ma’sum Ghar
Jack the dog is looking at me. There are a few mutts on the base, with the odd bomb-sniffing German Shepherd brought in. They are another form of watch. Jack barked most of the night.

The Master Corporal explains how the Taliban use "water triggers," rockets that are rigged with containers of water in the mornings and aimed at the base. Through the heat of the day, the water evaporates and triggers the rocket in the evening. The Taliban are not around when the rockets go off, since the Canadian forces are quick to respond. The rockets are a mix of old Russian artillery and arms smuggled in from Iran, coming indirectly from other countries such as China, a complex web.

I have many casual conversations with the troops in the bubble. A common theme emerges: family. They talk about their homes, families and especially their kids. They count the days to the end of their tours. There is no doubt they are dedicated to their duties, but they long to be home.

March 25—Ma’sum Ghar There go the diesel generators—ah, the sweet smell of diesel. A headache begins. The sun has risen over the mountain. I leave today: it’s all confidential until the last minutes. I have to be ready. There were two helicopter drops this morning. There is a constant run of supplies. The costs must be enormous.

While I was filming the sunset last night, the Master Corporal brought me up some muskeg tea. I tell him I plan to paint a portrait of him.

In the mess tent there are many cards sent by school kids: “Thanks for keeping us safe,” and “Thank you for protecting us,” are some of the sentiments.

I am showered and packed to leave. The Master Corporal and I smudge together.

The Chinook helicopter lands. It is like every Vietnam movie I have ever seen. I thank the Master Corporal as the dust and gravel blow furiously around us. I follow the other soldiers in a line directed by the chopper Commandant. The heat from the engines blasts me as I step up onto the hydraulic loading platform. We rush in, claim a space and sit down, no seat belts here, gunners are ready. The chopper begins to rise, then banks to the right over the mountain of Ma’sum Ghar. We head to the next base and pick up more soldiers, then head for Kandahar. I watch the landscape below. It’s still surreal.

March 26—Kandahar
I am waiting on the tarmac at the Kandahar airport, where bullet holes riddle the walls: this is where the Taliban made their last stand at Kandahar. All the armed personnel take off their guns to go through security, only to put them back on once they have reached the other side.

March 27—Camp Mirage
I just met General Walter Natynczyk. He is here with “Team Canada,” a group of retired hockey players and entertainers. He thanked me for being here. I thanked him for this opportunity.

March 28—Saskatoon
Went to a local mall to watch Hurt Locker. I am glad to be seeing this now and not before. At the start of the movie there is a quote from journalist Chris Hedges: “War is a drug.” I think to myself, would I go back to Afghanistan? My answer is yes.
The Alumni of Influence awards recognize individuals whose life accomplishments have had tremendous influence locally, nationally and internationally. Each person represents the excellence and diversity upon which our College was established and continues to be defined. Their careers and life achievements are an inspiration and source of pride. Celebrating their success signals to our alumni, students and faculty that they are all part of a vibrant and accomplished College. Thanks to all nominators and selection committee members for their contributions.

Kenneth Calder, BA’66, MA’67
A respected and instrumental leader for 35 years with the Canadian Department of National Defence (CDND), Kenneth Calder’s influence reached far beyond this country’s borders. Even before completing his PhD at the London School of Economics and Political Science, Calder had been recruited by the CDND to join its strategic analysis group. He remained there until his retirement in 2006, having served as the department’s first Director of Strategic Analysis and then, from 1991 to 2006, as Assistant Deputy Minister (Policy). He was also seconded by the Department of External Affairs to serve as its nuclear affairs expert at NATO Headquarters in Brussels from 1979 to 1983. In his role as Assistant Deputy Minister (Policy), Calder frequently briefed federal ministers and the Senate, and served as one of the country’s chief negotiators in delicate discussions with defence officials from the Soviet Union, United States and various other countries. In 2000, Calder was awarded the highest honour in the Public Service of Canada, the Outstanding Achievement Award. An excerpt from his citation for this award read: “Dr. Calder’s meticulous thoroughness, depth of intellect, quiet persuasiveness, sense of balance and reasonableness have extended his influence beyond his department and, indeed, beyond the country.”

Richard Ehman, BSc’74, MD’79
Best known for his work in medical imaging, Richard Ehman has etched a global and distinguished reputation for excellence in research, education and clinical practice. After receiving both his undergraduate and medical degrees from the U of S, Ehman completed his residency at the University of Calgary, during which time he held research fellowships at the University of California at San Francisco and the Mayo Clinic. He joined the Mayo Clinic in 1985, and has since been credited with developing magnetic resonance elastography (MRE), a diagnostic tool for internal organs. He holds more than 20 patents for his various inventions, and has also published more than 150 peer-reviewed articles. His outstanding work has earned him numerous honours and awards, some of which include: the Canadian Governor General’s Medal, the Gold Medal from the International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine, and Outstanding Researcher Award from the Radiological Society of North America. He has also received an honorary Doctor of Science degree from the U of S, and was recently inducted to the U.S. Institute of Medicine, one of the highest honours for American health and medicine professionals.
Willard Estey, BA’40, LLB’42 (d.2002)
Companion of the Order of Canada

Willard Estey enjoyed a brilliant career as a lawyer and jurist, earning a reputation that crossed both provincial and national borders. Born and raised in Saskatoon, Estey obtained his master of laws degree from Harvard University after first graduating from the U of S and then serving in the Second World War in both the R.C.A.D. and the Army. After almost three decades of work as an outstanding barrister in Ontario, he was appointed to a succession of high judicial offices, culminating with his appointment to the Supreme Court of Canada from 1977 to 1988. He advocated for many reforms to the administration of justice, many of which helped make judicial services more expedient and less expensive. In overseeing many monumental decisions, Estey proved himself to be both a sensitive libertarian and also one who was careful to maintain an effective balance of power between Ottawa and the provinces. In 1984, he was recognized by the U of S with an honourary doctor of laws. Estey was also a strong advocate for amateur hockey throughout Canada, and was appointed a trustee of the Stanley Cup in 1984, an honour that he maintained until his death in 2002.

Larry Fowke, BA’63, DSC’06

One of the world’s most eminent plant cell biologists, Larry Fowke has been instrumental in cementing Saskatoon’s reputation as an international centre for agricultural biotechnology. Since joining the University of Saskatchewan’s faculty in 1970, Fowke’s research accomplishments have, in many ways, redefined knowledge surrounding how plant cells divide and absorb materials. He is also an expert in the cloning of conifers and has published more than 130 papers in referred journals around the world. Colleagues have cited his willingness to collaborate with other research agencies and researchers worldwide as a model for the greater scientific community. He has also earned a reputation as an excellent and innovative teacher, both at the introductory undergraduate, graduate and post-doctoral levels. He has been the recipient of numerous honours and awards throughout his distinguished career, including the U of S Distinguished Researcher Award in 1998 and an earned doctor of science from the U of S in 2006. In 2009, he was inducted into the Royal Society of Canada, the country’s senior national body of distinguished scholars, artists and scientists.
S. June Menzies, BA’49, MA’51

Officer of the Order of Canada
An economist and tireless advocate for feminist and social justice issues, June Menzies helped revolutionize and reform family law across Canada. Menzies’ feminist development began taking shape when as a young child she began noticing that men were inherently handed a higher social standing than that of women. This continued into her early adult years, when she experienced firsthand gender discrimination on many fronts while serving with the Canadian Women’s Army Corps (1943–45). After moving to Winnipeg in 1962, Menzies began speaking out and became a key member of Manitoba’s feminist movement. She was central to the development of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women, drafted the structure of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and served as the first vice-president for the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Menzies chaired and served as CEO for the Farm Products Marketing Council. She was vice-chairman of the Anti-Inflation Board from 1976 to 1979, and spent seven years as Director and Economist with the M.W. Menzies Group Ltd. She was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1981, received an honorary doctor of laws degree from the U of S in 1983, received the Governor General’s Award in 1991, and was invested to the Order of Manitoba in 2007.

Ernest Olfert, BA’65, DVM’69, MSc’76

Ernest Olfert’s recent appointment to the newly-created position of University Veterinarian at the U of S speaks to the lifetime he has spent revolutionizing animal medicine throughout Canada. After receiving his BA from the College of Arts & Science, Olfert was a member of the University of Saskatchewan’s first graduating class from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in 1969. His 40-year career with the U of S started in 1970, and he soon established himself as an outstanding researcher, author and veterinarian who is now widely recognized as one Canada’s pioneers in laboratory animal medicine. He was the lead editor for the Guide for the Care and Use of Experimental Animals (Canadian Council on Animal Care, 1993), a book that remains highly influential around the world. He was also the leading co-author of 12 training modules for animal users published by the CCAC in 2003. In 2006, Olfert’s work was officially recognized by the CCAC as he received the organization’s Outstanding Service Award. He was also awarded the Queen’s Jubilee Medal in 2003 and, in 2005, was named the Veterinarian of the Year by the Saskatchewan Veterinary Association. Olfert’s work was recognized by the U of S Alumni Association with an alumni award of achievement in 2010.

Louise Simard, BA’69, LLB’70

Courageous, respected, influential and visionary were all adjectives used by Louise Simard’s acquaintances in her many nominations for this honour. And judging by her extensive and trailblazing work in the public sphere, it’s easy to understand why. After earning her BA in philosophy and law degree from the U of S, Simard articulated in Regina and, soon thereafter, became the first woman to hold the position of Legislative Council and Law Clerk for Saskatchewan (1974 to 1978). Over the years she became deeply involved in a number of influential
organizations, including the Medical Council of Canada (board member), Saskatchewan Human Rights commission (vice-chairperson) and Council of the College of Physicians and Surgeons (consumer representative). Simard served as MLA for Regina Lakeview with the Saskatchewan NDP from 1986 to 1995, and as Minister of Health from 1991 to 1995. Although she chose to not run for re-election in 1995, Simard’s work on matrimonial property law in the 1980s and health reform in the 1990s helped spur widespread changes to both sectors. In 2000, she was named CEO of the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO), and in 2003 she became CEO of the Health Employers’ Association of British Columbia.

Michelle Swenarchuk, BA’69 (d.2008)
A pioneering woman with an unwavering passion for the world around her, Michelle Swenarchuk became one of this country’s most vocal early proponents for environmental sustainability. After receiving her BA in English at the U of S, Swenarchuk worked for a short time as a social worker before determining that law would be her career path. She graduated from Toronto’s Osgoode Law School in the early 1970s, and shortly thereafter opened a practice with Judith McCormack, a fellow graduate. She began her career in law working primarily with a group of small Canadian unions representing the rights of immigrant women. In 1991, after several years serving as the Canadian Environmental Law Association’s (CELA) chief counsel, she was named the organization’s executive director. One of her major accomplishments with the CELA was representing a coalition of Northern Ontario’s environmental groups—called Forests for Tomorrow—at a landmark hearing into Ontario’s timber management program. After 440 separate hearings covering a four-year period, Forests for Tomorrow and Swenarchuk attained their objective of sustainable forestry. Often described as having coined the term “environmental crisis,” she also became well-known for her arguments against the “Harvard Mouse” case at the Supreme Court of Canada. Her success in this monumental case led the Supreme Court to rule that higher life forms could not be patented in Canada. In 2004, she was awarded the Law Society of Upper Canada’s medal for outstanding contributions.

Dorothy Walton, BA’29, MA’31 (d.1981)
Member of the Order of Canada
A world-class athlete, Dorothy Walton also became one of the most effective and constructive public figures following the Second World War. While completing her BA in economics from 1926 to 1930, Walton was a member of 14 intercollegiate teams and also won individual championships in diving, discus, javelin, high jump, broad jump and the 220m. In racket sports she won more than 50 local, provincial and Western Canadian tennis titles, as well as several in badminton, and was the first female to win the U of S award for top student athlete. Following university she continued her dominance in racket sports, completely outclassing her North American badminton competition and, in 1939, she became the first Canadian to win the all-England championship. Following the war, Walton was one of the founders of the Canadian Association of Consumers and, later, became the organization’s president. She became well-known as a fierce champion of various social causes, and was named to the Order of Canada in 1973. She was also inducted into Canada’s Sports Hall of Fame and the Canadian Olympic Hall of Fame.

David Zakus, BSc’75
David Zakus used his BSc in Biochemistry from the U of S to help launch a diverse medical career with global reach. Since receiving both his masters (1987) and post-doctoral (1992) degrees at the University of Toronto, Zakus has served in a number of prominent roles, many of which focus on international health issues. Most notably, perhaps, he is currently the Executive Director for the HIV/AIDS Initiative–Africa. He has worked extensively in Africa, as well as nearly 20 other countries, as both an academic and consultant. Closer to home, Zakus founded the Centre for International Health at the U of T and is an Associate Professor for several departments in the U of T’s Faculty of Medicine. His teaching and research focuses on international health, health system development and reform, community-based health services, primary health care and community participation. He is a member of various national and international health boards, and was also a founding member of the Canadian Network for International Surgery.
All Flesh is Grass  BY TREVOR HERRIOT (BA’81)

Trevor Herriot’s new book, Grass, Sky, Song: Promise and Peril in the World of Grassland Birds is now on bookshelves across Canada. The following essay is an abridged version of a lecture delivered for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in October 2010.

I’ve been thinking about why I call our place in the country “the land” when I could be saying “the prairie.” My wall calendar is full of days where I have written “at the land” to block off a weekend or a few days out of the city. I wonder if this is a kind of lament we resign ourselves to, as though we have already given up on prairie. But this world around us, around this city, is more than land. Despite all that has been lost on the surface, it is still prairie, a whole living community with the potential for complex and mysterious interrelationships feeding the grass that makes us flesh.

No matter how bad things look right now, there is hope for these ecosystems. While much of what I am about to recount may sound bleak, I will get to the reasons for hope and also to possible pathways of change and renewal.

Traditionally, economics and agronomy have not given much regard to ecological limits. If science can produce artificial fertilizers, high-yielding hybrids and designer pesticides that will help us exceed the land’s capacity to produce, then why hesitate?

By the 1960s, after 10,000 years of agriculture, we had virtually used up all the arable lands on the planet and the global population had reached three billion. In the next few decades, by doubling yields of wheat, rice and maize, that population climbed to six billion without increasing cultivated land significantly.
While this may seem like a great achievement, in fact it’s a deadly ecological trap that we’ve constructed for the human race. Our job is to begin to disengage from it by making the transition to growing most of our own food locally, with health rather than corporate profit leading the way.

We have contributed significantly to the trap by committing too much of our prairie grasslands to growing grain crops. Higher yields have driven grain prices so low that it has become valuable primarily as a commodity to be bought in huge quantities and added to industrial processes at very little cost.

Today our former grasslands are growing wheat used in wallboard, cosmetics, soap, trash bags, concrete and paper products. The list of unhealthy processed foods that contain wheat is lengthy because we have sacrificed the prairie to keep grain cheap and abundant.

Much of North American land is used to grow grain for biofuels, despite studies proving that grain-based fuels are woefully inefficient and a net contributor to greenhouse emissions.

Millions of acres grow barley and other grains used in feedlot operations, which are cited as one of the world’s primary sources of greenhouse gases. If we converted all this land now being used to grow grain for unhealthy purposes back into perennial grasses, we would have more than enough pasture land to feed livestock for beef and dairy.

The ecological benefits would be tremendous: the land’s renewed cover of perennial grass could sequester carbon, create improved wildlife habitat, and protect soil and water from erosion as well as from fertilizer and pesticide runoff.

There are also health benefits of eating meat and dairy from healthy, grass-fed animals instead of factory-farmed products tainted with growth hormones, E. coli and antibiotics.

Nearly all of the beef we eat in North America comes through feedlots that concentrate animals and their manure in massive facilities, polluting air, water and soil—all to make meat as cheap as possible.

This intensive livestock-rearing model makes it possible for us to afford to eat far more beef than is healthy. Today, a head of organically grown lettuce will cost three times the price of a McDonald’s hamburger, cooked and served to your car window.

By moving away from industrialized agriculture and the over-production of grain, we can begin to support what nature does best here—grow perennial grasses.

How can consumer choice help bring about a radically transformed, ecologically sustainable engagement with grassland? There are many possibilities.

A modest beginning would be for us to pay the true costs of growing food in a grassland region. An organization modeled on the Forestry Stewardship Council would certify producers offering fairly priced agricultural products that support grassland habitat.

A more ambitious proposal would build on trends we are now seeing in Saskatchewan, which present an opportunity for change: growing interest by ranchers and farmers in ecological services, such as water filtering, carbon sequestration, soil development and wildlife habitat; widespread dismay over the loss of the small family farm to industrialized agriculture; the return of bison herds on public and private grasslands; rising consumer demand for healthy, locally-grown food; spiraling input costs for farmers; the rebirth of traditional Aboriginal values; and global concerns about food security.

Despite all that has been lost on the surface, it is still prairie, a whole living community...feeding the grass that makes us flesh.

I want to sketch one scenario for change that could develop from these trends.

In the face of hardship, prairie people have traditionally met in town halls and church basements to find a better way ahead. Imagine a room that contains biologists, ranchers, farmers, aboriginal elders, consumers and urban conservationists—a co-operative interested in a large expanse of prairie, a watershed with farms, towns and ranches. Sitting around a large table they agree on a single value statement, something as simple as “grass is good; more grass is better.”

The co-op members settle on a goal to protect and improve the health of native prairie while expanding the total acreage under perennial grasses.

Ranchers in the region are reassured that their operations can continue, with the option of joining the co-op. Crown leases on heritage ranchland that become available will be offered first to the co-op and its members. Treaty land entitlement creates a land base for First Nations involved in the co-op.

To ensure livestock and ecosystem health, land management, grazing rotation, water access and fencing are handled by the co-op’s range ecologists, in consultation with ranchers and grassland biologists. As the co-op’s tracts of land expand, bison and fire are added into the pasture rotation. Bison herds are brought into selected zones for short periods of intense grazing, emulating natural grazing.
Likewise, burns are designed according to ecologists’ and First Nations’ understanding and knowledge of fire. When pastures are lost to bison or fire for a season, other livestock is shifted to the co-op’s reserve pastures.

Because the co-op also includes consumers and conservationists, there are green dollar programs that allow people to come from towns and cities to trade their labour for healthy, grass-fed beef and bison meat.

To foster grassland restoration by farm families, the co-op establishes a non-profit land trust that provides blocks of land that connect and surround remnants of natural grassland, making them available to young people starting out in farming.

Public awareness of the benefits of grass-finished beef and bison grows through marketing and education efforts, and the co-op products begin to appear in local supermarkets. Consumers become more willing to pay more for their beef, recognizing the lower fat content and nutritional benefits. They feel good about encouraging family-based agriculture and sustaining the ecological health of North America’s best managed grassland.

This imagined co-operative model is a far cry from the reality of today’s grassland agriculture. While nothing on this scale has been accomplished, most of these methods are working right now on private ranches, public rangeland and conservation areas throughout North America. Changing a big thing like our food production systems means that a lot of levers have to be pulled— influencing individual farmers, scientists looking for alternatives, consumers and government policies.

In *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*, Wendell Berry advocates for changing government farm policy and tax systems to reward small, diversified family farms that are locally self-sufficient and conserve natural systems. And, he argues, biotech interests should be disengaged from universities, so that resources can be directed toward the growing of food that is healthy for people and for the land.

By moving away from the over-production of grain, we can begin to support what nature does best here—grow perennial grasses.

For Berry, it always comes down to health. He suggests that we ask the question: What will this tool, this incentive, this project do to the health of individual people, to the health of our families and communities, to the health of the land and its ecosystems?

It’s easy to scoff at this idealism and question whether we could give up the easy access to cheap food we enjoy. But we are seeing movements to buy local, fair trade and organic foods—all making a significant difference and growing fast.

Imagine what we could achieve by diverting even a fraction of the energy and ingenuity devoted to the accumulation and protection of wealth and investing it instead into growing and distributing food in ways arising out of respect for the land.

Real hope is a radical form of patience that urges us to invest in the distant future by choosing the right way to act today. It is having the patience to plant grass and trust that, in time, the prairie will flourish again.
The value of higher learning is weighed and not found wanting.

This world has been witness to some extraordinary autodidacts. Leonardo DaVinci, Albert Einstein, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Burns, Isaac Newton, William Faulkner and Thomas Huxley all eschewed formal learning and guided their own educations.

Mark Twain, who was not formally educated beyond elementary school, famously quipped: “I never let schooling get in the way of my education.” The late filmmaker Stanley Kubrick went even more hyperbolic. “I never learned anything at all in school and didn’t read a book for my pleasure until I was 19 years old.”

You can’t argue with the success of these achievers. But for most people wanting to become familiar with the ideas and knowledge that has shaped the world, a university training with a grounding in the arts and sciences is the best course. It is the university professors immersed in their respective arts and science subject areas—from English and physics to history and biology—that acquaint students with the corpus of knowledge of each, with the time-proven methods of analyzing that corpus.

Recently, New York Times columnist David Brooks put it this way: “You can’t just go into a field and understand it. You have to immerse yourself in something. If you do, while you’re studying it in random and amateur ways, your mind will make connections. Once you have that dense network in your mind, you’ll be able to come up with insights. That doesn’t happen quickly, but only after long labour and attention.”

In other words, the benefits of an Arts & Science degree don’t stop with exposure to the vast library of information and commentary on any one subject. Involvement in the discipline-specific techniques—participating in an archaeological dig, acquiring microscope skills, learning how to make and read maps, designing a theatrical set—together with all the serendipitous revelations experienced in conversation, lectures and incidental reading also expand the mind.

This exposure to the written word...is a vital refiner of analytical thinking.

And consider the written assignment. Anyone who has taken arts classes will know the discouragement in seeing one’s painstakingly written essay all red-inked with mortifying comments in the margin and a day-ruining grade at the end. But without that critical feedback, it’s likely that the writing of most students would languish in mediocrity.

The deeper worth of the marginal and concluding comments on those red-inked papers goes to the development of critical thinking and reasoned debate.
Without the assessments of those writing assignments, most of us would be unlikely to reach our best potentials as educated thinkers and citizens. That sustained training and practice teaches us how to conceive, state and develop a thesis that’s worthy of a university-trained mind.

Many an observer has noted the importance of well-developed communication skills in the workplace. No self-respecting university graduate should be okay with the production of euphemistic bureaucratese or scarcely intelligible gobbledygook.

Two other factors are at play in a BA or BSc program that hone the critical faculties: the mountain of required reading; and the in-class discussion and debate that occurs, led by the professor in charge.

What arts and science student has not wondered how he or she will ever be able to find the time to read all the required and suggested reading? But this exposure to the written word—the *litera scripta*—and to ideas and revelations therein, is a vital refiner of analytical thinking.

The in-class situation is analogous to a town hall meeting. Participants vent their views on a given topic and open themselves to approbation—or to valuable, but humbling, criticism.

Of the dual influence of readings and professor-led discussion, Cardinal John Henry Newman, in *The Idea of a University* (1854), wrote: “The general principles of any study you may learn by books at home. But the detail, the colour, the tone, the air, the life which makes it live in us, you must catch all these from those in whom it lives already.”

The 19th century essayist Walter Pater coined the phrase “art for art’s sake”—the idea that art has an intrinsic value unto itself, apart from any moral or didactic purpose. Many people have viewed an arts degree in similar terms.

But to the utilitarian in most of us, the BA or BSc is a proven stepping stone to more intellectually satisfying, and higher paying, careers and professions after graduation.

At the U of S, a recent “tradition” has sprung up. Each fall, some wag paints “McArts Degree” on the sidewalk outside the Arts Building on campus—a harmless enough joke. But employers have long recognized that an undergraduate degree is an excellent bedrock to build on, not a limited undertaking that’s analogous to a “McJob.”

Employers prefer the less specialized training a BA or BSc provides: familiarity with, as Matthew Arnold said, “the best that’s been thought and said” in the world; training in critical thinking; and an enhanced perspective of the human condition.

Indeed, I would say that advanced societies prefer these attributes as well.
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November 19: Keith Bonham, “Turn Me On, Turn Me Off: Epigenetic
Treatment of Cancer”
Held at 3:30 PM, Biology Lecture Theatre (Biology 106), U of S
Information: http://www.usask.ca/biology/ or (306) 966-4399

Gordon Snelgrove Gallery
Information: http://artsandscience.usask.ca/art/

Classical, Medieval & Renaissance Studies Colloquia
November 25: Sarah Powrie, “Spenser’s Mutabilitie and the
Indeterminate Universe”
March 3, 2011: Simon Lasair, “Theorizing the Historiographical Gap:
Toward Writing a New Early Jewish History”
March 31, 2011: Daniel Regnier, “Heroism and the Heraclean Soul
in Plotinus”
Receptions at 4 PM, talks at 4:30 PM, Room 344B, St. Thomas More
College, U of S
Information: http://artsandscience.usask.ca/cmrs/ or (306) 966-4779

Alumni Events with President Peter MacKinnon
December 7: Regina
February 14, 2011: Calgary
March 10, 2011: Toronto
March 16, 2011: Yorkton
March 22, 2011: Vancouver
May 11, 2011: Estevan
Information: http://www.usask.ca/alumni

Philosophy in the Community
December 8: Rhonda Anderson, “Fiction and Experience”
February 9, 2011: Ulrich Teucher, “Lots of Living to Do, Death at Any
Moment: Time in Narratives of Cancer and Aging”
March 9, 2011: Anthony Jenkins, “Skepticism and the Fate
of Philosophy”
Free Public Lecture and Discussion Series held at 7 PM
at The Refinery, 609 Dufferin St., Saskatoon
Information: (306) 966-6382 or http://www.usask.ca/philosophy/

Amati Quartet
January 22, 2011: Guest artist Bonnie Nicholson, piano
March 19, 2011: Guest artist Ben Schenstead, guitar
Concerts at 2 PM and 7:30 PM, Convocation Hall, U of S
Information: www.amatiquartet.usask.ca
Tickets: McNally Robinson Booksellers and Place Riel Kiosk

Fine Arts Research Lecture Series
February 11, 2011: Gregory Marion, “Vers un mise-en-scène:
Disentanglement, Debussy and the Ballet”
March 17, 2011: Mag. Trent Bruner, “The Place of Biographical Writing in
Ethnomusicology”
Lectures at 7:30 PM, Quance Theatre, Education Building, U of S
Information: http://www.usask.ca/music/ or (306) 966-6171

University Bands 50th Anniversary Reunion
June 23–25, 2011, U of S
Information: www.usask.ca/alumni

MUSIC EVENTS
Tickets: (306) 966-6171 or music.uofs@usask.ca
www.usask.ca/music

Wind Orchestra
November 26 and March 25, 2011
7:30 PM at Quance Theatre

Jazz Ensemble
November 27 and April 1, 2011
7:30 PM at Quance Theatre

Contemporary Music Ensemble
November 30 and March 29, 2011
7:30 PM at Quance Theatre

Chamber Music Ensemble
December 1 and March 30, 2011
7:30 PM at Quance Theatre

Concert Band
December 3 and April 8, 2011
7:30 PM at Quance Theatre

Collegium Musicum
December 4 and April 2, 2011
7:30 PM at Quance Theatre

Music Theatre
March 5–6, 2011
7:30 PM at Quance Theatre

Greystone Singers and University Chorus
March 5
3 PM at Knox United Church

Greystone Singers
March 13, 2011
7 PM at Knox United Church, 838 Spadina Cres. E.

University Chorus
April 10, 2011
3 PM at Third Avenue United Church, 304–3rd Ave. N.

Photos, left to right: 2010 Greystone Theatre production of Assassins (Dave
Stobbe); 2009 Alumni of Influence reception (Karen Davidson); Greystone Singers
concert (Kirk Sibbald)