

# The Debunker

## Letter from the Editors

Dear History Students,

For those who have been here for years, or at least since Fall Semester, welcome back! If anyone is starting out this January, welcome to UCFV. You may all commence with the worship of this publication.

This issue we have a number of submissions which we hope you will all enjoy. We also hope it will inspire you to submit something of your own. In celebration of the New Year, Professor Molly Ungar has kindly provided an article on the origins and customs of the New Year. This was based on a talk she gave last year at the MSA museum.

Professor Ungar's History 499 class held a large group project in the form of a Trudeau conference. Kim was fortunate to attend the beginning before rushing home to write an essay. Since she wasn't there the entire time an anonymous member of the class has written a short article on the conference and the value of such projects.

We also have a historical movie review of the film *Evita* by Tricia Taylor. This is an excellent way to begin thinking about historical messages in movies and a good idea for any future submissions.

Evidently Kim unintentionally lied and has returned this semester to continue as an editor for the Debunker. Amanda, however, has followed through on her threat to graduate. A tip of the hat to you Amanda, and congratulations! No wag of the finger here. By the next issue the latest editor/writer will have been chosen, so an early welcome to whoever survives boot-camp!

*Amanda and Kim*



Trudeau Conference: A Great Success!  
Anonymous

Last semester history 499I or *The Trudeau Years* put together an end of semester conference for their group project. Students researched the legacy that Pierre Elliott Trudeau has within Canada and around the world. Altogether, ten papers were presented ranging from how his family remembers him to Trudeau's influence in Communist China. Furthermore, students created a formal program, brought in an array of food and drinks and wore single, red rose boutonnieres.

The success of the conference was largely due to the close relationships formed throughout the 13 weeks of the semester. Unlike some upper level history courses at UCFV, this course was conducted in "proper" seminar style. Each week, students sat close together in a circle so everyone could clearly see who was speaking. Then for the entire length of the class, everyone discussed the assigned readings for the week. Also, three students gave small, informal presentations to provide background on the weeks topic. This format ensured that all material presented was thoroughly discussed and therefore learned. History 499I definitely raised the bar for all history courses taught at UCFV!

## Improvements to Your Library Services

By Sheryl Appleby

Were you aware that over the past two semesters, your Association of History Students has been working towards gaining increased library and research services for you and your fellow UCFV students? As history students, our papers often require a high number of sources that are not available in the existing UCFV library, and are not available via inter-library loan because they belong to a rare books collection at SFU or UBC. This past summer we began meeting with the UCFV librarians and history faculty to see what possible solutions we could come up with to improve your experience.

As stated, the main goals of this campaign are to make research materials from other libraries more accessible to UCFV students. In our discussions with faculty, students, and UCFV librarians, the main concerns were the low number of inter-library loans permitted per student and per course and the lack of a reliable transit service to allow vehicularly-challenged students east of Langley with access to the UBC or SFU libraries.

The librarians have been very open-minded and have done what they can to assist us in our goals. As of September 2007, the inter-library loan limits per student have been raised to 100 requests per student per semester, and they are very willing to extend that further in the event of any students requiring more loans. The quest for a shuttle service continues to chug along, and we will keep you updated as we work towards these goals.

## Submit to the Debunker

Send a short article (400 word maximum), comments, questions or anything you would like to see in upcoming issues.

[Hi.stu.new@gmail.com](mailto:Hi.stu.new@gmail.com)

## Movies and History: A Window into the Past

By Tricia Taylor



For the past couple generations, the movie industry has inundated us with films that have historical elements within. Some of these movies are grossly inaccurate, such as "300", "Troy", and to a lesser extent "From Hell", while others give the viewer a much more even and almost accurate telling of the historical event. Case in point is the movie "Evita". Although it is a musical, the story line does follow historical events quite closely, with a few exceptions. For those who have not seen the movie or know the historical event, a short explanation has been given.

Eva Duarte de Peron, also known as Evita by her supporters, was the woman (eventually his wife) behind Juan Peron during his bid for the presidency in Argentina from 1941-the mid 1950`s. The movie "Evita" follows Eva Duarte's rise from the youngest illegitimate daughter of a local middle-class nobleman and her working-class mother to a model, then a radio star, and then, after a long affair, became the wife of Juan Peron. The controversy behind Eva Duarte is how she was able to climb up the social ladder - on her back, so to speak, as she gained her footholds in her different positions from her lovers. This may not seem shocking to our generation, but think of how our grandparents would have viewed it - and then consider the machismo aspects of Latin American society, and the true social ramifications are more easily viewed. Add in Juan Peron's position as a high ranking military officer who gained the Presidency of Argentina through supporting the current military brass in power while collecting his own supporters for his coup, and Eva's deliberate snubbing of the echelons of upper society and their self-imposed rules, Evita had many enemies - almost as many as she had supporters.

The movie itself included this political tug-of-war between supporters and enemies of Eva through the dialog, body language of the actors, the narration and the events showcased within the movie itself. The political upheaval of socialist takeovers, military coups and the huge gap between the wealthy and poor working classes are all showcased in vivid images including government brutality, 'disappearances' similar to that would happen in Chile under General Pinochet in the 1970's, and the extravagance of the wealthy during their polo matches, dinners, and charity events. Overall, the movie is reasonably accurate in the historical sense and is a decent example of how the movie industry is cashing in on movies based on historical events or figures; however the movie "Evita" can also be hard to follow if the viewer does not know the history behind it.

## What is a Year? When is it New?

by Molly Ungar

What did you do this past New Year's Eve? Did you go to a party, put on a funny hat, wear a costume, make noise, drink champagne, count down the New Year, or kiss someone at midnight? All these festive rituals have specific origins and thousands of variations, but how do we decide when to do them and why do we do them on December 31st?

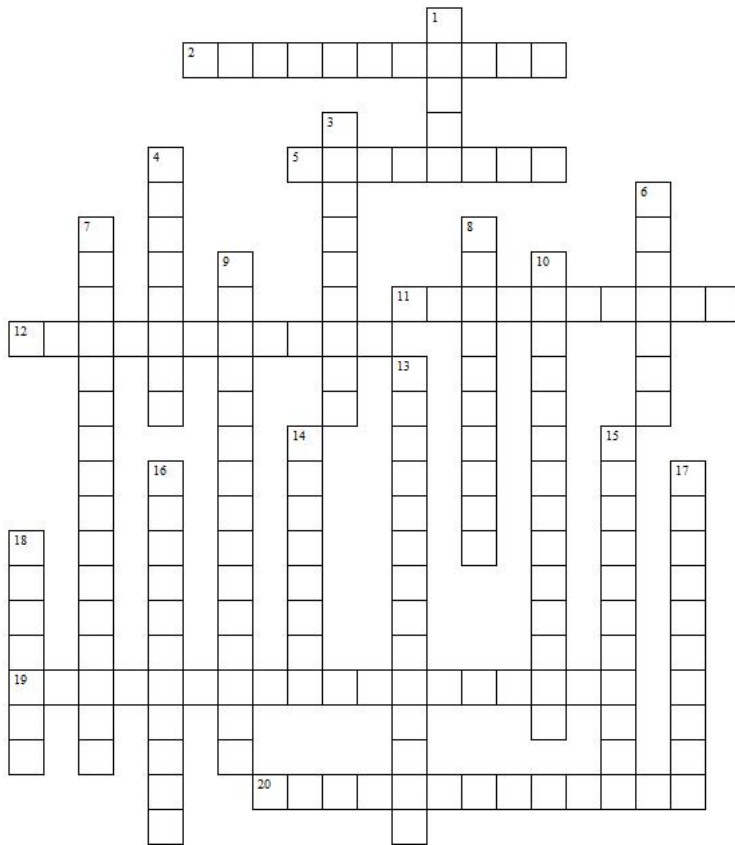
The idea of the passing of time and the making of calendars had to be invented. People began to want to mark the passing of time when time became important to the central activities of their culture. When human cultures moved from hunting and gathering to an agricultural way of life, time - and the seasons -- became central to people's lives. Because everything in agricultural societies revolved around sowing, growing, and harvesting food, the most critical, anxious times came at the change of seasons: spring, when crops were sown, autumn, when crops were harvested, and the most feared time came between harvest and sowing. In the dark winter months, when the days are short and the sun puts in a rare appearance, it became very important to introduce an element of predictability into the efforts to grow food. It became crucial to be assured that the winter would pass, the days would get longer, the sun would shine again, and the earth would renew its promise. This desire for predictability was served by three important human abilities: the ability for observation, the ability to remember recurring events, and the ability to link events. Three very observable, and predictable elements are the sun, the moon and the stars.

By observing and recording the positions of these three elements, people invented calendars, began to order time, developed the sense that they had some control over their destiny, and created a repeated opportunity for ritual. With the idea of ordering time came the concept of a day, a month, a year, or a new year. The word "year" in English comes from the ancient Greek word "ora" (season) - so when we say new "year", we acknowledge a new season. So although we live in an urban, industrial society, the New Year that we celebrate is agricultural -- all the stories and rituals associated with the New Year are very old, chthonic, and also connected to those "times of uncertainty" between the seasons.

Our calendar, with January 1st as the beginning of a new year, acknowledges only one of the ancient agricultural new years, and although it may seem that everyone recognizes January 1st as the first day of the New Year, this is quite a new idea.

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# Amanda's Final Crossword



## ACROSS

- 2 The old-timey name for Quebec.
- 5 Quick, name that famous bomb-dropping plane!
- 11 This city still has its original walls.
- 12 The head of the Chinese Communist Party when it rose to power.
- 19 This was muy hurty for a lot of heretics on the Iberian peninsula.
- 20 This term describes the route of the slave trade in the Americas.

## DOWN

- 1 This was the "jewel in the crown" of the British Empire.
- 3 Arguably the most famous diarist ever to live in an annex.
- 4 This cool katze unified Germany (the first time.)
- 6 These were the first explorers to reach Canada.
- 7 This term describes an era when the Chinese government sought to modernize the country.
- 8 The Quebec flag features this French symbol.
- 9 The battle of the \_\_\_\_\_ was the deciding moment of the Seven Years War in North America.
- 10 Crippled by reparations, this German government never really had a chance.
- 13 Not only is this the name of a so-so band, it's also the name of everyone's favourite arch-duke.
- 14 Everyone's favourite populist Argentine leader.
- 15 The old-timey name for Ontario.
- 16 This era in American history kick-started the career of many a gangster.
- 17 Build one of these cool machines and you'll be committing regicide left and right!
- 18 Castro rose to power after deposing this man.

## Historical Films Matchup



Goodbye Lenin



Joyeux Noël



Gunga Din



Best Years of Our Lives



Sophie Scholl



Zulu

1. \_\_\_\_\_ A 1964 film set in 1879 about British soldiers at Natal. Follows a contingent of Welsh who are located at a hospital and supply station. Concentrates on the 12 hour battle that ensued and was a victory for the British.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ British film about the British in India in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Very loosely based on a Kipling poem. Filmed in 1939 it is politically incorrect at best but a fine piece of propaganda. The pro-military aspect is not coincidental given the outbreak of war the same year.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Set during the First World War. Filmed in German, French and English it covers Christmas and Christmas Eve in 1914 and one occurrence of an unauthorized and temporary armistice.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ A film about the reunification of Germany. Main character is from the German Democratic Republic (East Germany). Covers the period from 1989-1990.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ A 1946 film about soldier homecoming. Follows three men and their experiences after the end of World War II. Deals with the difficulty veterans had in adapting to civilian life.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ A German film about the "White Rose" movement in Nazi Germany. A current film set in 1943 it follows one of the student activists for 6 days.

## Submissions!

Questions, Comments, Suggestions, or Issues you would like us to address

Send us an article: 400 word Maximum

Choose your topic!

Publication in a Student Newsletter looks great on a resume

Email: [hi.stu.new@gmail.com](mailto:hi.stu.new@gmail.com)

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In ancient Egypt, the new year was celebrated just before planting season in June or July, marked by a holiday and gift-giving, and the winter solstice (December 21) was marked by rituals of rebirth and restoration. Up to about 400 years ago, the Julian calendar of 304 days and 10 months was used in all of Europe, and the New Year was celebrated in spring. Then why do we now almost universally consider January 1<sup>st</sup> to be the beginning of the year? Well, in 1582 Pope Gregory said "That's it - from now on, we will have a calendar of 12 months - 30 days hath September, April, June and November; all the rest have 31, except for February, which has 28, except for every 4 years, when it has 29 - and by the way, New Year starts on January 1".

The Gregorian calendar was immediately adopted by Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, and Luxembourg. However, England and its colonies hung on to the Julian calendar until 1752, Japan until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and Greece, for instance, did not change over until 1924. This made for occasionally interesting anomalies, as when the U.S. team almost missed the opening of the 1896 Olympics, because the Julian and the Gregorian calendars are different by 13 days.

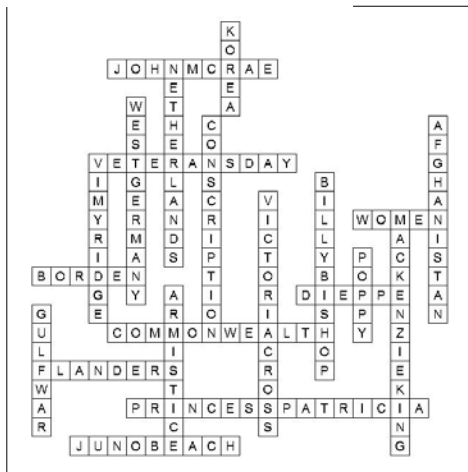
Calendars may change, but the customs associated with the New Year are a continuation of the remnants of the "natural" New Year in spring, and the ancient Winter Solstice customs, both of which signaled anxious times in agricultural societies. Common themes associated with the coming of the New Year are Chaos and Disorder, Divination, and Community. If, on December 31st you wore a costume, made noise, or lit candles, you were acknowledging and warding off disorder and darkness. If you made a resolution, or wished for prosperity in coming months, or kissed someone, you were partaking of the desire to see into the future, or to bring regeneration. If you partied, ate special food with friends and family, you were expressing the hope for continuity and the re-affirmation of community.

We have kept many manifestations of the ancient marking of the Winter solstice - at New Year, we still observe the agricultural origins of human society, and the seasonal understanding of the world.

Answers for the Remembrance Day Crossword:

Remembrance Day Matchup:

1. Adolphe Pegoud
2. Snoopy
3. Manfred Richthofen
4. Raymond Collishaw
5. William Avery Bishop



## Upcoming Events

- UCFV International Education is offering a series of **FREE** community forums. For more information, and to register, visit <http://www.ucfv.ca/international/CIDA> or email [ahseea.ahmed@ucfv.ca](mailto:ahseea.ahmed@ucfv.ca)

### ➤ "Children of War and Peace"

How do wars affect children? What is done for the orphaned, imprisoned and traumatized children and child-soldiers? What are Canadians doing abroad to address these complex issues?

The battlefield of the twenty-first century is very different from the past. Around the world, young children are being forcibly recruited by both armed forces and armed opposition groups, and exploited as combatants. More than 300,000 children under the age of 18 are believed to be fighting in conflicts.

Join us for a thought-provoking afternoon that will challenge your notion of what contemporary warfare looks like today in Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Bosnia/Herzegovina. We will examine the impact of armed conflict on children, explore ethical issues surrounding the imprisonment of child soldiers and learn about the possibility of developing peace curriculum as part of the educational system in post-conflict societies.

When: February 1 2008, 2 pm to 5 pm

Where: B101, UCFV, Abbotsford Campus

### Guest Speakers:

Mr. Brad Whittaker: MC (Director of Research, UCFV)

Ms. Wendy van Tongeren Harvey (BC Crown Counsel)

Mr. Jean de Dieu Hakizimana (Neighborhood Care International)

Ms. Naghmeh Sobhani (Director, Education for Peace Balkans office)

Ms. Stacey Makortoff (Education for Peace)

### ➤ "Sexual Exploitation of Children: Global Phenomenon, Local Implications"

When: February 25, 2008, 6pm to 8pm

Where: Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies, University House, UCFV (Abbotsford)

(Free)

### ➤ Stephen Lewis and Hugh Brody

When: March 8, 2008, UCFV, Time to be announced

(\$15 for adults and \$7 for students)

### ➤ "Cities for Children and Youth: Child Friendly Development in Canada and Globally"

When: March 11, 2008, 9am to early afternoon

Where: Matsqui Centennial Auditorium

(Free)

- The Abbotsford Collegiate is also hosting a speaker series. Roberta Bondar on February 18<sup>th</sup> 2008 and Romeo Dallaire on April 28<sup>th</sup> 2008. For information call 604-843-3367. To buy tickets their address is 2329 Crescent Way. It's \$25 for each single talk (with student ID) or \$35 if you aren't a student. Tickets are also available at 6:30PM the evening of the event at the Abby Arts Centre Box Office.
- Just a reminder that you can download back issues of the Debunker off the Association of History Students website [ucfv.ca/history/ahs](http://ucfv.ca/history/ahs)