An electric vehicle charging station in use in a residential parkade.

The 2020s will bring about a major transition to electric mobility. B.C.’s Zero Emission Vehicles Act mandates that 10% of vehicle sales must be zero-emission by 2025, 30% by 2030, and 100% by 2040. The economics are increasingly tilting in favour of electric vehicles (EVs). Per kilometer driven, electricity is four times cheaper than gasoline. A household that drives 15,000 kilometers per year can save about $1,500 per year in fuel costs. As the price of batteries continues to fall, EVs are expected to reach price parity with gasoline-powered vehicles by mid-decade. Already, every eighth vehicle purchased in Vancouver during 2020 is a battery-electric or plug-in hybrid-electric vehicle.

But one question looms over every EV purchase: where can I charge it? If you live in a strata complex, charging your EV at home is not as straightforward as when you have your own garage. Many strata buildings have underground parking where electric utility rooms may be a fair distance from your parking spot. Electricity supply for buildings was not designed with EV charging in mind. There can be significant capacity constraints on the available power, and most strata bylaws don’t have provisions for EV charging yet. Only recently, some municipalities have adopted building code changes that require parkades to be EV-ready in new construction.

For new developments on campus, UBC’s Residential Environmental Assessment Program (REAP 3.2) requires a minimum of one Level-2 energized outlet per residential unit in non-rental developments, or 50% of resident parking stalls for rental developments. This still leaves many older buildings with the need to retrofit.
When the pandemic struck in 2020 it also charging if necessary, giving priority to supply. These systems throttle back EV Energy Management Systems for each home’s meter. Burnaby-based Relight Solutions figured out a clever way to use a while until a contractor was found that UBK Faculty and Staff—obtained several carry how much extra load from EV The strata helped obtain a load study, under the constraints of a retrofit. 3.2, but it is the best that can be achieved to either obtain EV charging stations or request installation of EV chargers. Ultimately, 25 out of 61 owners decided to install EV chargers to their own BC Hydro ers expressed a strong preference to hook up EV chargers as intermediaries. At this point, the strata’s AGM in 2019, the bylaws were amended to give owners the right to request installation of EV chargers. Ultimately, 25 out of 61 owners decided to obtain EV charging stations or powered 208-Volt outlets. Either way, this provides for “Level 2” charging up to 5kW—roughly equivalent to 20km of driving for each hour of charging. This is much less than the 12kW per stall mandated for new UBC buildings in REAP 3.2, but it is the best that can be achieved under the constraints of a retrofit. The strata helped obtain a load study, which determined which circuits could carry how much extra load from EV charging. Armed with this information, the group of strata owners—many of them UBC Faculty and Staff—obtained several quotes from vendors offering different solutions and widely different prices. It took a while until a contractor was found that could implement the preferred solution of connecting chargers directly to each home’s meter. Burnaby-based Relight Solutions figured out a clever way to use EV Energy Management Systems for each home to manage the available electricity supply. These systems throttle back EV charging if necessary, giving priority to electricity use within each home. When the pandemic struck in 2020 it also put a dent in the EV charging plans. BC Hydro extended the deadline for the rebate application several times. Work finally took off in October 2020 with the installation of electrical conduits throughout the parkade.

Professor Werner Antweiler

Delays getting components slowed down work yet again, but installation work resumed in February to complete the installation in the nick of time before the current rebate program ended.

Retrofitting is never a cheap option. The installation cost for each owner was determined also by how far each parking spot is away from the electric utility room, as power cables and conduits are expensive. Owners ultimately paid anywhere between $3,500 (for a powered outlet) and $6,500 (for a networked EV charger). The rebates offset a large chunk of this cost, and homes with an EV-enabled parking spot are also likely to fetch a premium in property value.

Which EV charging solution is best for each strata depends much on the technical setup and available capacity on the electric circuits. As EV charging is becoming more widespread, stratas may need to rely on load sharing where several chargers (typically four or eight) share a single power supply that is evenly divided among the vehicles that are charging at the same time. Upgrading the overall power supply to a building is hugely expensive, and therefore managing the available power smartly is almost always the most effective approach. For the Hawthorn Place strata, “multiplexing” will be the preferred option to install additional charging stations.

Some stratas may find that using an intermediary is the only viable option for EV charging. BC’s Strata Property Regulation has been amended in 2018 to allow stratas to charge “user fees for services”. This enables stratas to recover costs for using strata-owned charging stations. In turn, stratas may delegate management of these user fees to charging networks.

But what can you do if your strata is just not interested in facilitating EV charging, or balks at absorbing common infrastructure costs? British Columbians, unlike Ont-

Catalin Ristea

Professor Werner Antweiler can be reached at wagner.antweiler@ubc.ca.

WEAVING WELLNESS

WEAVING WELLNESS

A MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

Looking after your wellbeing is more important than ever. Weaving Wellness is a new UNA initiative that aims to make mental health resources more accessible to the community.

Full details at myuna.ca/weaving-wellness

LIVING WITH CHANGE & UNCERTAINTY

Instructor: BC Crisis Centre | 7-8 PM | AGES 16+

Learn practical tools that support managing emotions, fostering healthy relationships and coping with the unique stressors of these times.

April 21 - Science for Supporting Well-Being
May 5 - Managing Emotions More Skillfully
May 19 - The Negative Bias and Science of Gratitude

STRONG AT HEART

Instructor: Angela Low | 7-8:15 PM | Wednesdays, June 2-23

Expand your capacity to maintain and promote mental and emotional well-being, and maintain a positive outlook even during difficult times.
Drones Display Cell Phone Potential in Flights Over UBC

Two unmanned aerial vehicles were used in test flights; research was deemed successful.

Canada’s first unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) flights over a 5G cell phone network took place at UBC last week, showcasing some of the future potential applications of 5G-enabled autonomous flight.

Two UAVs—standard quad models fitted with a 5G signal transmitter and receiver—were put through their paces by Rogers as part of a multiyear cooperation with UBC through Campus and Community Planning. And as the next step, control of multiple drones at the same time over the 5G network will expand the use cases again.”

Mr. Watson, a pastor as well as an engineer, presented a specific difficulty that arose in this case. “Sometimes projects like this fail when seemingly insurmountable issues come up. The insurance issue had that potential, but thanks to the perseverance of all involved, as well as good cooperation between UNA and UBC through Campus and Community Planning, we moved past this last obstacle. This cooperation is a good sign and brings hope for our future development as a community.”

As most residents know by now and as Mr. Watson has related, the UNA was recently able to announce that its new set of Bylaws and Constitution had been filed with the Province, and therefore were in effect. A key highlight of the new Bylaws includes provisions for more democratic governance with a fully elected Board of Directors and the transition of UBC appointed Directors to non-voting Observers. At the same time, a separate Agreement was created with the UBC Alma Mater Society (AMS) that allows them to designate an AMS member to attend and participate in Board meetings.

UBC Upgrades Safety of Wesbrook Mall Crosswalk

UNA has long held this crosswalk “problematic”, foot-traffic there is high.

John Tompkins
Editor

A new section of yellow delineators has been installed along the Wesbrook Mall crosswalk in the Wesbrook Commercial Core area adjacent to Norman Mackenzie Square.

Wegland Sit, Operations Manager, University Neighbourhoods Association, said in a report to the UNA Board meeting in April, “The purpose of these new delineators is to prevent drivers from overtaking a stationary bus while the bus is stopped at the bus stop.”

This crosswalk has long been a high foot-traffic area, and the UNA has identified it as a problematic area. In his report, Mr. Sit said, “Historically, residents have reported multiple incidents of vehicles going into the opposite lane just to overtake a stationary bus, and near misses with pedestrians while they are in the crossing.”

This issue is applicable to both north-bound and south-bound traffic.

Yellow delineators along the crosswalk of Wesbrook Mall, adjacent to Norman Mackenzie Square.

 Resident Requests ‘Lights’ Explanation

On Easter Sunday, Christians on campus celebrated Christ’s resurrection.

For others on campus, Easter Sunday was a day for families and friends to get together for a special dinner.

In my case, 4 AM on Easter Sunday morning was when I noticed that the Thunderbird Stadium’s big overhead lights were on. In looking around, I could see that the big lights for the Thunderbird Playing Fields next to East Mall were also on. However, I could see nothing by way of religious or secular importance.

Both sets of overhead lights were shining to the max, using a lot of electricity for no apparent reason. Why?

The lights seemed to have been turned off by 8 AM.

Bob Hoye
UBC Resident
Empowering Seniors through Digital Literacy

Qiuning Wang
Assistant Recreation Manager, UNA

This Fall, the UNA will be launching a project called Bridging Digital Literacy and Healthy Ageing. This new project builds upon the Healthy Seniors, Resilient Community project and will continue to build seniors’ digital capacity and increase their confidence in using technology and virtual applications. It will also explore opportunities both traditional and digital to enhance seniors’ physical and mental health, and social connections.

Sam Shahin, who was hired last July as a computer specialist for seniors for the Healthy Seniors, Resilient Community project, has worked with over 50 seniors through one-on-one computer assistance and group sessions. The services he provided included training on the basics of computer hardware and operating systems, the use of video conferencing software (Zoom), online security of data and devices, and how to avoid online scams. Some of the most rewarding parts of his work has been seeing his students reconnect with their friends and family members virtually, seeing them successfully change a printer cartridge. In general, it seems, seniors who have participated in Sam’s training sessions are more confident and less fearful of using their computers.

According to Sam, the type of support that members of our community can be classified into two categories:

Those who have a basic level of knowledge need a continuous learning process that combines theoretical and practical learning. Weekly classes where they can come on a regular basis to learn, take notes and practice might best serve their needs.

Those who are intermediate users come to Sam when they have specific technology problems. One-on-one help best serves their needs. In the past eight months, Sam has worked with UBC staff and faculty, retired residents and immigrant seniors. But seniors have not been the only group that has benefitted from the Healthy Seniors, Resilient Community project. A more digitally fluent audience means that staff have also greatly benefited from having the opportunity to develop virtual programs. This outcome has not only been limited to creating virtual programs that support seniors’ immediate needs during the pandemic, but is also expanding the UNA’s virtual program offerings in general. Currently, our virtual programs have expanded from language and computer literacy to physical activities, arts, and social events, accounting for 20% of our regular programs.

Despite the increased online engagement, seniors still miss the physical space of community centres and prefer in-person activities and face-to-face interactions with others. The Bridging Digital Literacy and Healthy Ageing project will explore creative and safe ways to provide both opportunities that accommodate seniors with different needs, health conditions and mobility levels. Additionally, UNA staff would like to gain more understanding of how in-person and virtual programs impact the quality of life of seniors and how the two can dovetail to improve seniors’ social connections.

We will begin the planning process for a new project in May. The UNA would love to receive suggestions and feedback from the community. Please email us at programs@myuna.ca.

Notes received from participants:

“I have been busy teaching ESL virtually and have been enjoying it immensely!! The technology is still interesting/challenging. Thank goodness you assisted me so much when I was just beginning this whole new virtual challenge! I really appreciated your kind, generous, thoughtful help!”

“I am so thankful for all programs available to us. We are so privileged, making this COVID era so much lighter to endure.”

“He (Sam) conveys patience, knowledge and understanding in his teaching. It is an excellent community service which I commend the UNA for providing to me and the community. I recommend Sam and his service in the highest regard.”

“[Osteofit] is a wonderful class and much appreciated!”

“I found the [Fabric art: Shibori and Printing] class to be an enjoyable and invaluable learning experience. In particular, Mariana is an excellent art instructor and is to be commended for going ‘above and beyond’ in delivering the course on Zoom.”

UNA Appoints Members of New Committee

Committee is charged with finding ways to improve the quality of life at UBC; the committee is a diverse group

The UNA has announced who are the eight members of its new Community Engagement Advisory Committee (CEAC).

The members are: Alice Bradley; Susan Edie; David Hahn; Eileen Le Gallais; Ran Keren; Michelle Niu; Nidhi Raina; Lee Weinstein.

As well, Jane Kang will chair the CEAC and Glenda Ollero will provide UNA staff support. Ms Kang said the Board was happy to see a lot of interest from the community to join the CEAC.

A total of 16 applications were received, and the Board would like to thank everyone who submitted. The Board voted on the members based on resumes and cover letters that were submitted, and did their best to select a diverse group.

Appointments of Committee members are for two-year terms.
Dear friends and neighbours,

It is just over a year since the global COVID-19 pandemic forced UBC to pivot to online learning, reduced research on campus and remote work. Now, with the guidance of Provincial Health Officer, Dr Bonnie Henry, we are planning for a safe return to in-person activity on campus in September.

We are watching the course of the pandemic carefully and working closely with public health officials at provincial and regional levels. With accelerating progress on immunization and continued adherence to public health measures, I look forward to the Fall when our campuses are once again thriving places of teaching, learning, research and community.

The events of the past year have put into focus the important role UBC plays in addressing the major challenges facing our region and our country. Throughout the pandemic, UBC faculty continued their research across a breadth of disciplines. UBC researchers have also played an important role in understanding the virus, preventing its spread and helping the community cope with its effects. Students continued to receive high quality teaching and learning as faculty and staff moved over 11,000 courses online, while other dedicated faculty and staff remained on campus to provide essential instruction and services.

The university has also taken important steps to address issues of equity, diversity and inclusion and to move forward on meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. This, alongside our work to address climate change through the Climate Action Plan, all contribute to creating a welcoming, equitable and resilient university and surrounding community.

UBC is looking to the future and the role the university plays locally and globally. This includes improving transit connectivity between the university and the region. Better transit access to the Vancouver campus will enhance mobility, affordability, sustainability and access to education for people living throughout Metro Vancouver. And, it will help realize UBC’s full potential as a regional contributor by connecting the university to research, health, innovation, employment and housing destinations across the Lower Mainland.

The extension of SkyTrain to UBC is an important regional project which has strong support from residents from across Metro Vancouver. UBC has partnered with Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations and the City of Vancouver to jointly advocate for the line. Our aim is to help ensure the project be built as a seamless continuation of the Broadway Subway Project, which is now under construction and will terminate at Arbutus Street. If we are successful, we could see a station at UBC by 2030. Right now, TransLink is seeking input from the public to shape future planning for the project. Visit engagetranslink.ca/millennium-line-ubc-extension to share your thoughts.

There are many reasons people support the project. SkyTrain to UBC will get more cars off the road, reduce congestion and lower greenhouse gas emissions. For those of us who live on campus, better public transportation in our community can improve quality of life by allowing people to drive less and walk, cycle and take transit more and enhance connections to the rest of the region. UBC’s transit challenges are acute and bus service to the campus is at capacity. SkyTrain is the solution we need to handle the massive volume of UBC-bound commuters and make life better for people living across the region.

Preparing for a SkyTrain line that terminates at UBC is interrelated with planning for the future of the campus. Planning for the arrival of SkyTrain will be nested an upcoming comprehensive campus planning process that will address academic growth, sustainability, affordability, livability and connectivity. Through Campus Vision 2050, set to launch in early-2022, the university will plan for Skytrain’s arrival in a way that reflects residents’ needs and is sensitive to what makes UBC a great place to live. There will be opportunities for engagement and input for the entire UBC community throughout the two-and-a-half-year planning process.

UBC is exploring a financial contribution to support the regional share of project costs and financial planning is underway. As a public university, UBC is committed to its research and learning mandate and will not divert any funding from its academic mission. That means funding will not be derived from the provincial operating grant, current endowments, research funding nor student tuition. We are currently exploring what forms a contribution may include, such as land for stations and charges collected from developers.

Over the last year, TransLink has been undertaking technical planning work to evaluate potential route options and station locations for a SkyTrain connection to campus, and is now seeking input from the community to shape future planning for the project. Now is an important opportunity for you to make your voice heard on this once-in-a-generation infrastructure project. Visit engagetranslink.ca/millennium-line-ubc-extension to share your thoughts.

Best wishes,

Santa J. Ono
President and Vice-Chancellor

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Professor Santa J. Ono.
Photo credit Paul Joseph, UBC.

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Building a Better Future For All

Spring Has Sprung on UBC Campus
B.C.’s COVID-19 Immunization Plan is designed to save lives and stop the spread of COVID-19. This information is taken from gov.bc.ca/env/content/covid-19/vaccine/plan and bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/monitoring-vaccine-uptake-safety-and-effectiveness and is updated frequently. It is subject to change, based on vaccine availability and the latest COVID-19 data. Last updated April 21, 2021.

**Immunization Phases**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
<th>Phase 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2020 - Feb 2021</td>
<td>Feb - April 2021</td>
<td>April - May 2021</td>
<td>May - June 2021</td>
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**Get Vaccinated**

All COVID-19 vaccines in Canada are effective and safe. The best vaccine is the one available to you first. Provincial Health Officer (PHO) orders and guidelines remain in place for everyone, even if they have received the vaccine.

Second doses are given about 16 weeks after the first dose. You will get an email, text or phone call to let you know when you are eligible to book an appointment to get a second dose.

**General Population - Register to Get Vaccinated**

Everyone living B.C. will have the opportunity to get the vaccine for free in 2021.

**Monitoring Vaccine Uptake, Safety and Effectiveness**

COVID-19 immunization will be carefully documented. B.C. will closely monitor vaccine safety, uptake and effectiveness.

You can find the latest information on how many COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered in B.C. on the British Columbia COVID-19 Dashboard. Refer to the “Vaccine Information” tab on the bottom to see number of doses administered and number of doses distributed.

**Ongoing monitoring of Vaccine Safety**

Once a vaccine is approved and begins to be used, vaccine safety is continuously monitored to identify any serious adverse events. If these events happen, authorities investigate to identify whether the vaccine is directly responsible for the adverse effect. If required, a vaccine can be withdrawn from the market and not used. Adverse events following immunization are reported to the Public Health Agency of Canada and global safety surveillance systems.

**Get Vaccinated**

Your vaccine appointment will be scheduled when you are eligible, based on your age. Register at www2.gov.bc.ca/env/content/covid-19/vaccine/register.

**Priority Neighbourhoods**

People born in 1981 or earlier (40+) who live in high-transmission neighbourhoods can register and get contacted to book their vaccine appointment on the same day.

**Pharmacy program**

People born in 1981 and earlier (40+) can get the AstraZeneca vaccine at eligible pharmacies in the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island, the Interior and Northern B.C.

**Monitoring Vaccine Uptake, Safety and Effectiveness**

COVID-19 immunization will be carefully documented. B.C. will closely monitor vaccine safety, uptake and effectiveness.

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**Age-based use of AstraZeneca and COVISHIELD vaccines**

Following reports of rare but serious blood clots and/or bleeding in people who have received the AstraZeneca or COVISHIELD vaccine, B.C. changed the age recommendation for the use of these vaccines.

B.C. will be using the AstraZeneca and COVISHIELD vaccines in people over the age of 40. This change in recommendation shows how B.C. and Canada’s vaccine safety monitoring system works.

The blood clots and/or bleeding events are called vaccine-induced immune thrombotic thrombocytopenia (VITT). Overall, these blood clotting events are very rare, occurring in 1 to 10 cases in 1 million vaccine recipients. Cases have been reported in Canada and other parts of the world including Europe.

Health Canada and provincial health systems continue to monitor adverse events very closely. Health Canada can take immediate action and withdraw a vaccine if there is concern of harm. It can also issue warnings about specific risks in order to inform individuals.

The risk of these blood clots and/or bleeding events is lower than the risk of serious illness from COVID-19. B.C. public health recommends you to take the first vaccine available to you to reduce your risk of COVID-19.

If you have already received a COVISHIELD vaccine and have questions about the signs and symptoms of VITT, please refer to Vaccination Aftercare.
In an exchange of emails with The Campus Resident, Mr. Miller said, “With consideration of community feedback and consultation with the UNA, UBC staff recommended a replacement court be developed on a portion of the TEF 3 parking lot at the corner of Health Sciences Mall and Thunderbird Boulevard. UBC Staff shared the recommendation and analysis with the UNA in advance of a Site Selection Committee meeting at which the site was approved. A development permit application for the court design on the TEF 3 parking lot will be submitted in the coming weeks. The Development Permit process will include an opportunity for community feedback and a virtual Open House in May. There is a commitment for no disruption to basketball court access, and it is expected for the new court to be built quickly and is expected to be available for use late this summer.”

Four UBC projects will share (old) space vacated by basketball players:

- A solar array to be installed at the rooftop of the existing Thunderbird parkade, it intensifies the use of this existing infrastructure turning it into the testbed’s source for renewable energy. The size and structure of the parkade allows for the generation of a significant amount of energy.

- Parking space for the advanced EV Chargers providing more opportunity for access to high demand charging points

- Sufficient space for the hydrogen station in a location that can accommodate buses and other large vehicles and is close to the campus main access roads.

- Allows for future research goals development given the proximity to the Campus Energy Centre and Substation.

As a condition of this project’s approval, a replacement basketball court that is like-for-like must be provided by the Project. Campus and Community Planning has committed to the UNA the following additional principles:

- Ensure that construction of the hydrogen station will not commence until a relocated court is in place and that there is no disruption to basketball court access;

- Ensure the replacement court provides a like for like outcome;

- Work with the UNA on this process including site selection;

- Ensure that the development permit for the replacement court will include public engagement.

With consideration of community feedback received through participation in a virtual open house (February 25, 2021) and online comments, Mr. Miller said UBC staff completed a review of potential relocation sites for the basketball court and tested them for technical viability.

The staff review resulted in a recommendation that a replacement court be developed on a portion of the TEF 3 parking lot at the corner of Health Sciences Mall and Thunderbird Boulevard generally as indicated below:

- The site supports like for like replacement with equivalent court size, function and locational attributes. The site is located on academic land within the campus core, with good proximity to adjacent neighbourhood communities, student housing, and academic buildings.

The location would continue to provide synergies with the nearby athletics and recreation facilities and the skate park. The site is visible along Thunderbird Boulevard and can be easily accessed by pedestrians and cyclists along Thunderbird Boulevard and Agronomy Road.

According to Mr. Miller, staff shared the recommendation and analysis with the UNA for information ahead of a Site Selection Committee meeting at which the site was approved with the following conditions: “Recognizing that both the current site and the relocated site are on land designated for academic use in the Vancouver Campus Plan, the Site Selection Committee reiterated conditions of the existing court development.

This is, should the site be needed for an academic supportive use, the basketball court be relocated in collaboration with the UNA. While there are no immediate plans to develop the TEF 3 parking lot, in acknowledgment of the growth of the campus, C+CP will lead an exploration of potential long-term future locations for the basketball facility in collaboration with the UNA.

Next steps are:

- UBC Staff report site approval to UNA Board Meeting (complete: April 20)
- The Hydrogen Project team to develop plans for the replacement court and submit a Development Permit (late April)
- Development Permit review for the replacement court which will include opportunity for community feedback including a virtual Open House (May)
- Construction of replacement basketball court (TBD)
- Construction of Hydrogen Fueling Station (TBD).

The Hydrogen Project team will lead an exploration of potential long-term future locations for the basketball facility.

University RCMP Posts Details of Attack on Asian Woman

Woman was taking out garbage when she was attacked; suspect had on dark face mask

University RCMP are investigating the alleged unprovoked assault on an Asian woman. Police are asking anyone with information, or anyone who was a witness, to come forward.

On March 27 at around 8:10 p.m., a woman was taking out garbage in the alley behind the 5700 block of University Boulevard when an unknown man approached her. He used a racial term and then punched her in the head and stomach before running in an unknown direction. The victim hid and called 911. She was taken to hospital for treatment of non-life threatening injuries and has since been released.

The suspect in this incident is described as male, medium build, tall, wearing a hoodie, sweat pants, runners and had on a dark face mask.

This investigation is in the early stages, and police are not ruling out any motives, including that this crime had an element of bias or hate involved.

Anyone with information is asked to call the University RCMP, Crime Stoppers, or Const. Christina Martin, RCMP Media Relations: 236-330-3376, cell: 604 499 0064.

Released by Const. Christina Martin.
Why Names of Diseases Matter

Heidi Tworek, Associate Professor of International History and Public Policy at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, contributed this article to The Globe and Mail.

Anti-Asian racism is on the rise throughout North America. On March 16, 2021, a shooter killed eight victims in Atlanta, Georgia, most of whom were East Asian Americans. The shooting appears to have been motivated by a combination of sexism and racism. In Canada, Anti-Asian hate crime skyrocketed in Vancouver from 12 reported incidents in 2019 to 98 in 2020, and the prevalence of anti-Asian racism is higher in Canada than south of the border. Much of this rise on both sides of the border seems attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic and then extrapolating to stigmatize all East Asians.

Racism is rising despite our knowledge that “pandemics may arise anywhere,” as historian Mark Harrison has put it. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) arose in the United Kingdom, for example, but did not lead to stigmatization of British people. When former US president Donald Trump called COVID-19 “the Chinese virus” or “kung flu,” he was only the latest to attribute pandemics to Asia.

What steps can Canadians take to combat this racism?

To start, it is necessary to recall that, sadly, the rise of anti-Asian racism over the course of this pandemic is only the latest manifestation of scapegoating “outsiders” that draws on a long-standing narrative during epidemics. Jews were blamed in Europe for spreading diseases like the Black Death, resulting in violent anti-Semitic attacks that destroyed over 200 Jewish communities from 1348 to 1351. Muslims were blamed for a purportedly fatalistic tolerance of disease that enabled epidemics to spread.

Disease-naming has long been politicized according to where someone lives. For example, depending on where you lived in Europe, syphilis was called a French, Neapolitan, German, Polish, or Spanish disease. The Ottomans called it the “Christian disease,” while Muslims and Hindus in India blamed each other and Europeans.

By the nineteenth century, European imperialism heightened some of the anxieties about the supposed origins of infectious disease and transposed these anxieties onto Africa and Asia. When cholera epidemics started to occur in Europe and the United States from the 1830s, the disease came to be known as “Asiatic cholera” because many believed that the disease’s origins lay in India.

Of the four large flu pandemics since 1889, three received monikers implying that the disease originated in Asia, though more often East Asia: the Asian flu of 1889-90, the Asiatic flu of 1957-58, and the Hong Kong flu of 1968-69. The Spanish flu of 1918-20 was the exception that proved the rule. The name does not appear to have provoked outbursts against Spaniards.

Research suggests that there are ways to pre-empt and combat stigmatization. The most obvious is to avoid the use of place-based monikers to describe disease. The World Health Organization (WHO) has long advised against calling a disease after a location. In 2009, for instance, Dr. Mirta Roses, director of the Pan American Health Organization, advocated to ensure that H1N1 would not be named after the country (Mexico), state (Vermont), or town (La Gloria) where the disease was first identified.

A second lesson reminds us of the centrality of leadership. For example, when public officials in Taiwan learned that some boys in school were being bullied for wearing pink masks, the officials showed up at their press conference the next day in pink masks to push back against gender stereotypes.

After a COVID-19 outbreak at a gay nightclub in Seoul, South Korean officials deliberately described this as an issue of “clubgoers” and enabled anonymized COVID-19 tests. This allowed people not to be outing getting tested and avoided scapegoating the LGBTQ community.

Finally, it is up to all of us to promote the evidence, science and data demonstrating the fundamental falsity of racist claims. For example, Richmond, British Columbia, has continually experienced one of the lowest rates of COVID-19 in Canada. Richmond also has the highest proportion of residents identifying as Asian of any city in North America; more than half of its residents identify as Chinese. The Chinese community adopted measures such as mask-wearing and self-isolation early, which some infectious disease specialists believe contributed to lower infection rates.

The naming of diseases can seem to be an abstract question, but attention to history and rising racism are evidence that words matter.

The UNA Old Barn Children’s Garden is located off the patio of Bean Around the World, which is next to the Old Barn Community Centre. Our vision is to create a multi-cultural community by learning together, sharing in the garden work, and sharing in the harvest. We are the only communal (cooperative) garden in the UNA. Because we are a communal garden all the beds belong to everyone who volunteers. Sometimes someone might focus on one bed or area for a while, but we are all welcome anywhere in the garden. We also appreciate volunteers taking initiative because of our loose-knit organizational structure. And we are happy to help you get started. Check out the back of the Old Barn Children’s Garden sign for educational materials, and the blackboard for tasks to do. Email Charles Menzies (charles.menzies@ubc.ca) to be added to the garden email list for news and updates. Email Olivia Fermi (catalyst@fermi.ca) to get a garden orientation. Our blog can be found at https://una.ca/2014-wordpress.com/.

We look forward to seeing you in the garden!

2021 Garden Committee: Veronica Ignas, Andrea McCaughan, Laila Said, and Olivia Fermi.

COVID-SAFE. Please respect physical distancing in the garden. If the garden is crowded please come back another time. You can find hand sanitizing supplies in the shed.


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Anti-Asian racism is on the rise throughout North America. On March 16, 2021, a shooter killed eight victims in Atlanta, Georgia, most of whom were East Asian Americans. The shooting appears to have been motivated by a combination of sexism and racism. In Canada, Anti-Asian hate crime skyrocketed in Vancouver from 12 reported incidents in 2019 to 98 in 2020, and the prevalence of anti-Asian racism is higher in Canada than south of the border. Much of this rise on both sides of the border seems attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic and then extrapolating to stigmatize all East Asians.

Racism is rising despite our knowledge that “pandemics may arise anywhere,” as historian Mark Harrison has put it. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) arose in the United Kingdom, for example, but did not lead to stigmatization of British people. When former US president Donald Trump called COVID-19 “the Chinese virus” or “kung flu,” he was only the latest to attribute pandemics to Asia.

What steps can Canadians take to combat this racism?

To start, it is necessary to recall that, sadly, the rise of anti-Asian racism over the course of this pandemic is only the latest manifestation of scapegoating “outsiders” that draws on a long-standing narrative during epidemics. Jews were blamed in Europe for spreading diseases like the Black Death, resulting in violent anti-Semitic attacks that destroyed over 200 Jewish communities from 1348 to 1351. Muslims were blamed for a purportedly fatalistic tolerance of disease that enabled epidemics to spread.

Disease-naming has long been politicized according to where someone lives. For example, depending on where you lived in Europe, syphilis was called a French, Neapolitan, German, Polish, or Spanish disease. The Ottomans called it the “Christian disease,” while Muslims and Hindus in India blamed each other and Europeans.

By the nineteenth century, European imperialism heightened some of the anxieties about the supposed origins of infectious disease and transposed these anxieties onto Africa and Asia. When cholera epidemics started to occur in Europe and the United States from the 1830s, the disease came to be known as “Asiatic cholera” because many believed that the disease’s origins lay in India.

Of the four large flu pandemics since 1889, three received monikers implying that the disease originated in Asia, though more often East Asia: the Asian flu of 1889-90, the Asiatic flu of 1957-58, and the Hong Kong flu of 1968-69. The Spanish flu of 1918-20 was the exception that proved the rule. The name does not appear to have provoked outbursts against Spaniards.

Research suggests that there are ways to pre-empt and combat stigmatization. The most obvious is to avoid the use of place-based monikers to describe disease. The World Health Organization (WHO) has long advised against calling a disease after a location. In 2009, for instance, Dr. Mirta Roses, director of the Pan American Health Organization, advocated to ensure that H1N1 would not be named after the country (Mexico), state (Vermont), or town (La Gloria) where the disease was first identified.

A second lesson reminds us of the centrality of leadership. For example, when public officials in Taiwan learned that some boys in school were being bullied for wearing pink masks, the officials showed up at their press conference the next day in pink masks to push back against gender stereotypes.

After a COVID-19 outbreak at a gay nightclub in Seoul, South Korean officials deliberately described this as an issue of “clubgoers” and enabled anonymized COVID-19 tests. This allowed people not to be outing getting tested and avoided scapegoating the LGBTQ community.

Finally, it is up to all of us to promote the evidence, science and data demonstrating the fundamental falsity of racist claims. For example, Richmond, British Columbia, has continually experienced one of the lowest rates of COVID-19 in Canada. Richmond also has the highest proportion of residents identifying as Asian of any city in North America; more than half of its residents identify as Chinese. The Chinese community adopted measures such as mask-wearing and self-isolation early, which some infectious disease specialists believe contributed to lower infection rates.

The naming of diseases can seem to be an abstract question, but attention to history and rising racism are evidence that words matter.

The UNA Old Barn Children’s Garden is located off the patio of Bean Around the World, which is next to the Old Barn Community Centre. Our vision is to create a multi-cultural community by learning together, sharing in the garden work, and sharing in the harvest. We are the only communal (cooperative) garden in the UNA. Because we are a communal garden all the beds belong to everyone who volunteers. Sometimes someone might focus on one bed or area for a while, but we are all welcome anywhere in the garden. We also appreciate volunteers taking initiative because of our loose-knit organizational structure. And we are happy to help you get started. Check out the back of the Old Barn Children’s Garden sign for educational materials, and the blackboard for tasks to do. Email Charles Menzies (charles.menzies@ubc.ca) to be added to the garden email list for news and updates. Email Olivia Fermi (catalyst@fermi.ca) to get a garden orientation. Our blog can be found at https://una.ca/2014-wordpress.com/.

We look forward to seeing you in the garden!

2021 Garden Committee: Veronica Ignas, Andrea McCaughan, Laila Said, and Olivia Fermi.

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