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HIGHLIGHTS OF UBC MEDIA COVERAGE IN MAY 2004

Compiled by Brian Lin

TROY GOOD FOR THE CLASSICS

Commenting on the recent blockbuster epic film *Troy*, starring Brad Pitt as Achilles, Shirley Sullivan, head of the classics department at UBC, said most of her colleagues are willing to overlook the film's faults for the interest it will spark in the ancient world.

"Anything that broadens the person's perspective, that takes them into the past and makes them see a wider range of history, can't but do good. Even if it's a distortion," Sullivan told Canadian Press.

Sullivan said other epic movies have boosted the study of the antiquities, including *Gladiator*, starring Russell Crowe and movie classic *Ben Hur*.

JELLY FISH FOR LUNCH?

Kicking off the World Fisheries Congress in front of 1,500 fisheries scientists from around the globe, UBC fisheries professor Daniel Pauly, one of the world's leading fisheries researchers, showed how people's growing appetite for seafood has driven fishing boats from industrialized countries ever farther into Southern Hemisphere seas controlled by Third World nations.

In the wake of the disastrous crash of the North Atlantic's cod stocks, the Newfoundland government is encouraging fishermen to go after jellyfish, said Pauly, who in November was chosen by *Scientific American* as one of the top 50 fisheries scientists in the world, reports *The Seattle Post Intelligencer*.

BELL GIVES UBC \$1.25 MILLION FOR TECH RESEARCH

Bell Canada recently announced a \$1.25-million commitment to UBC to support technology research. The five-year commitment is the first in Western Canada for the Bell University Laboratories program, reports *The Globe and Mail*.

Bell is exploring a number of potential projects with UBC researchers. Projects will focus on wireless technology and social computing.

THE TRUTH ABOUT ECHINACEA

Commenting on a new U.S. study that says echinacea doesn't help prevent colds, UBC alternative therapy researcher Lloyd Oppel told *Global National* that "echinacea is not delivering on the promise that it's held out to have. So this study is very much in keeping with that."

PLACEBO EFFECT REVEALED

Experiments conducted by Italy's University of Turin Medical School have revealed the action of the placebo effect in Parkinson's disease patients.

"The research provides further evidence for a physiological underpinning for the placebo effect," UBC neurologist Jon Stoessl told New Scientist.

His team demonstrated in 2001 that placebos can relieve symptoms by raising brain levels of dopamine, a beneficial neurotransmitter.

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