



# UBC REPORTS

- 2 UBC IN THE NEWS
- 3 WINE DEFECTS
- 4 SIM MAN
- 5 GINAS, THUGS AND GANGSTAS
- 7 RETIREES AND POVERTY

## IN THE NEWS

Highlights of UBC Media Coverage in September 2006. COMPILED BY BASIL WAUGH



PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

UBC fisheries expert Daniel Pauly says overfishing is causing global fishers to target prey lower down the food chain.

fishing boats now have to pursue smaller prey, often lower on the food chain.  
“We are eating bait and moving on to jellyfish and plankton,” says Pauly. **R**

**UBC Prof. Exposes U.S. Congress ‘Misinformation’**  
Research by UBC political scientist **Paul Quirk** has U.S. media outlets questioning the truthfulness of some U.S. Congress members.

*Associated Press, Washington Post, Chicago Tribune*, and the *Des Moines Register* all cited Quirk’s new book *Deliberative Choices: Debating Public Policy in Congress*, which says U.S. Congress members tell the truth only about a quarter of the time when debating major legislation in the House and Senate.

Using debate transcripts, Quirk and a Temple University colleague found claims made in only 11 of 43 major debates between 1995-2000 were largely substantiated by facts. They characterized 16 claims as unsubstantiated, and another 16 as an artful mix of fact and fiction.

“Dumb or dishonest?” one editorial board wrote in response to Quirk’s findings. “Either way, it’s unsettling that Congress apparently runs the country on misinformation.”

**Sex is Good for Evolution: UBC Researcher**  
Most major Canadian dailies, including the *National Post*, *Vancouver Sun*, *Calgary Herald*

and the *Halifax Daily News*, reported that UBC Zoology Prof. **Sarah Otto** has determined scientifically what most people have discovered through trial and error – that by and large sex is good for us.

Previous evolutionary theories – typically based on the assumption of an infinite population – have failed to find a clear role for sexual reproduction in evolution.

In a research paper published in the journal *Nature*, Otto and a co-author from the University of Edinburgh explain that in real populations – which are never infinitely large – reproduction through sex breaks apart harmful mutations and creates new gene combinations, giving species better adaptability.

**Jellyfish Sandwiches?**  
**Daniel Pauly**, a UBC professor and one of the world’s leading fisheries conservation researchers, comments in an article in the *L.A. Times* and the *Edmonton Journal* on the state of global fish stocks.

Pauly’s research shows that annual global fish catches have been declining since the late 1980s, and the number of big fish, such as tuna, swordfish and cod, has dropped 90 per cent over the last 50 years. He says