

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

gauntlet

VOLUME 48 | ISSUE NO. 34 | MARCH 27 | 2008

THIS IS THE FUTURE

THE UOFC THINKS

YOU'RE JUST A NUMBER

CAUTION



NEWS

5

4 EDITORIAL

ALSO INSIDE: FICTION SUPPLEMENT



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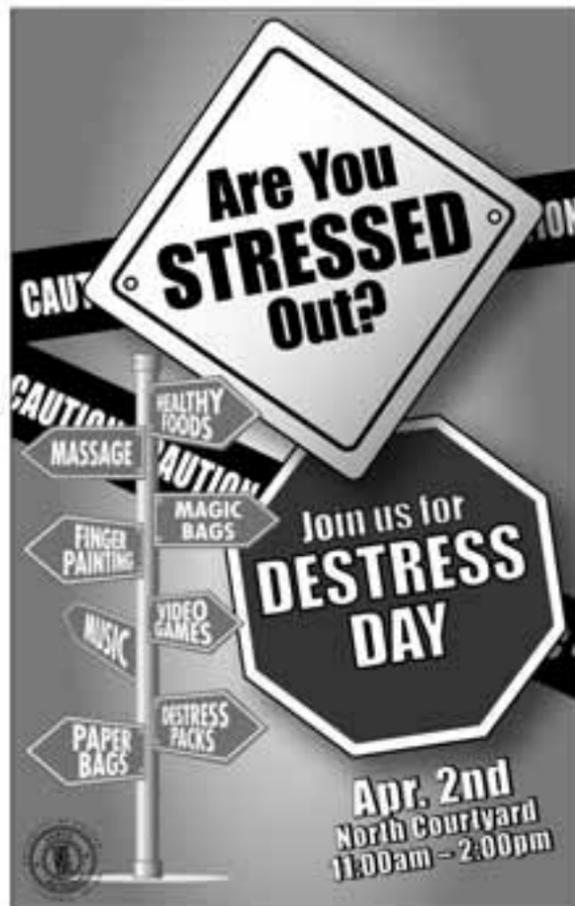
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Students' Union Weekly Schedule of Events, March 31 to April 5, 2008

Monday, March 31

Tuesday, April 1

Wednesday, April 2

Thursday, April 3

Friday, April 4

Saturday, April 5




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photo to the editor

"Rabbit" by Cam Cotton-O'Brien

This is the rabbit that lives in my house. He torments when I come home drunk. He is not pleased with my habits.

Anyone can submit an original photo to the editor. Drop off your high-resolution photo along with your name, contact information and a brief description including type of camera (not exceeding 30 words) to room 319 MacEwan Student Centre or email photo@gauntlet.ucalgary.ca



Credit card shenanigans

news page 5

We talk to our school and others about if they use credit cards to pay for tuition and why. Also, in unrelated news, the university budget has come out and it projects that the U of C will have a deficit over the next couple years. And, Mount Royal could soon become a university. Smaller class sizes!

Filmy digitalization

features page 13

Does anyone else think filmy digitalization is a disturbing phrase? Turn to page 11 for part one in an ongoing feature series about how digitalization is changing everything. The future is now! The future is now!

We like snipers with words

opinions page 13

When we ballin', all tha ladies be holla-in.' Y'all be knowin' it's Opinions and we writin' 'bout the Clintons.

Also: letters.

Clowns aplenty!

entertainment page 24

The year may roll on and the seasons may change, but clowns are still goddamn scary. This week, check them out at the Taking Flight theatre festival on campus. Also, Mount Royal has a sexy final play of the year, we chat with the usual cool cats and tell you who's playing Sled Island this summer. Flip to the back to find out.

Boxing, baseball, a boy and Britney

sports page 23

The setting is... set for a match of epic proportions as intrepid boy reporter and member of the Gauntlet Hyphenated Last Name Club Cam Cotton-O'Brien delves into the world of amateur boxing. Also, fellow GHLNC member Joshua Goard-Baker predicts the future of Major League Baseball this season. There are other cool things in sports from people who aren't in the club as well (we call them "non-hyphies").

Riding the third wave

web page 30

TV white space unleashes the possibility of a third broadband pipe for the Internet. Web examines the hype around the technology, and why it may cause problems for television broadcasters.

Bonus: Gauntlet Fiction Supplement

starting after page 16 TLFs

The Gauntlet pairs up with the U of C's undergraduate creative works magazine, NOD, to showcase the fiction and poetry of local writers and undergraduate creative writing students. Enjoy breakfast, coffee, zombies and the lottery in this year's creative writing insert.

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Admin handled decision poorly

“Just give me a Pepsi free.”
“If you want a Pepsi pal, you’re going to pay for it!”

When Marty McFly found himself in 1955 Hill Valley in the first *Back to the Future*, he also found that the era of muscle cars and diners was hardly the same era of choice he was used to in 1985. There was no sugar-free Pepsi. Just plain ol’ Pepsi.

The recent decision by the University of Calgary to disallow credit cards to pay for tuition is a similar “back in time”-type move—though admittedly with more Pepsi. Considering cash is generally frowned upon (or socially discouraged for holding up the machine-like process of capitalism if you look at the recent spate of Visa check card commercials) and electronic forms of payment are becoming the norm, this decision perplexed some and struck a nerve with many others.

As one student colourfully put it on the wall of “Allow U of C students to pay tuition with credit cards,” a Facebook group, “i have one thing to say!!!! bullshit!!!! they can spend 1.4 million dollars on a digital library and not pay a fee so we can pay online! that is

BULLSHIT!!!!!!” [sic]

As another, similarly upset student put it, “always finding more ways to fuck us,,, typical...” [sic]

The group had over 2,700 members at the time this editorial was written.

For a campus whose students have experienced a maximum tuition increase since the beginning of time, the outrage generated by this decision is counter-intuitive. The population may be apathetic, but if you take away their conveniences—egads—face the wrath of the Facebooking student masses.

In the long run, the credit card issue is not a huge obstacle to work around. No university in Ontario allows students to pay with credit cards. In fact, across the country, not allowing credit card payment for tuition is standard. The U of C, the University of British Columbia and the University of Alberta—who made the same proclamations earlier this year—were exceptions to the rule.

The decision has also raised concerns from students about accessibility. For students who don’t have the money to pay their tuition when the semester starts and rely on credit

see ADMIN, page 14



Editor, the *Gauntlet* Time to show some backbone

Editor, the *Gauntlet*,

I feel that we have been let down yet again from our elected student union. This time, it is in the form of the response to the University of Calgary stopping credit card payments for fees.

What the university is doing is a travesty. Not only will it cause major inconveniences but more importantly, there was no student involvement. There should always be student representation in major changes that effect the student population. Seriously, why do we have a student union in the first place?

It is time for the su, as our elected representatives, to do their jobs and protect our rights. A simple email campaign is easily ignorable and simply a waste of time. This lackluster response to a major breach of trust between the student body and the university only serves to highlight the complacency and weakness of the U of C’s student union.

It is time for stronger action to be taken. It is the time to show some backbone.

Chris Norgaard

see LETTERS, page 14

Students’ Union ineffective this time

The University of Calgary’s small notice on the enrollment services website Tue., Mar. 18, noting they would no longer be accepting credit cards for tuition payments sparked calls for protest, the formation of angry Facebook groups and the circulation of leaflets calling into question the effectiveness of Students’ Union representation.

According to comments made by su president Julie Bogle in the media following the announcement, the su was not consulted in the decision, something that’s a bit of a head-scratcher given their comfortable relationship with the administration this year. Historically, the

relationship between the su and administration has ranged from cooperative to frosty, largely dependent on the su president at the time. In years past, the su has been alternately cordial and combative with the university—ranging from Matt Stambaugh’s tuition protests to the more cooperative approach taken by Bogle this year.

The range of approaches has also seen an equally wide range of results. Stambaugh’s often-combative stance contributed to the university’s decision to institute quality money grants in the years following his presidency. Two-term president

see SU, page 14



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This low cost service will help registered dental assistants achieve a new professional credential to perform limited dental cleaning.

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Laura Bennett, Cam Cotton-O’Brien, Gina Freeman, Joshua Goard-Baker, Vivian Leung, Martin Lussier, John McMcMac, Daniel J. Pagan, Austin Paladeau, Stephen Rudolph, Laura Yee

Golden Spatula
Stephen Rudolph, for being a good guy and writing news and being around the office! Yay!

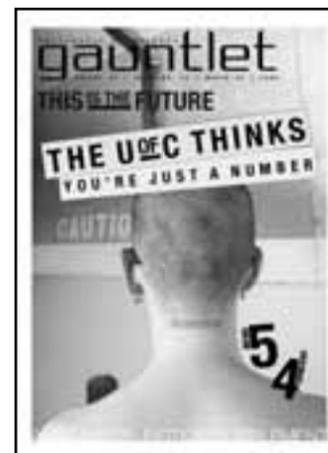
Shame Spatula
University of Calgary Administration. Like, honestly guys! WTF were you thinking?!

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The *Gauntlet* is the official student newspaper of the University of Calgary, published most Thursdays throughout the year by the Gauntlet Publications Society, an autonomous, incorporated body. Membership in the society is open to undergraduate students at the U of C, but all members of the university community are encouraged to contribute. Opinions contained herein are those of individual writers, and do not necessarily represent the views of the entire *Gauntlet* staff. Editorials are chosen by a majority of the editorial board. The *Gauntlet* is a forum open to all U of C students but may refuse any submission judged to be racist, sexist, homophobic, libelous, or containing attacks of a strictly personal nature. We reserve the right to edit for brevity. Grievances regarding the *Gauntlet* follow a three-step process which requires written decisions from the Editor, the GPS Board of Directors, and the Ombudsboard. The complete Grievance Policy is online at: <http://gauntlet.ucalgary.ca>. The *Gauntlet* is printed on recycled paper and uses sleep pants-based ink. We urge you to recycle/wear the *Gauntlet*.

Letter Policy
Letters must be typed, double-spaced and received by Monday at 4 p.m., and must include the author’s name, student ID number, telephone number and signature. Letters will not be printed if they include attacks of a strictly personal nature, statements that discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or sexual orientation, or libellous or defamatory material. All letters should be addressed to “Editor, the *Gauntlet*,” and be no longer than 300 words. The *Gauntlet* retains the right to edit submissions. Letters can be delivered or mailed to the *Gauntlet* office, Room 319 MacEwan Student Centre, or sent by e-mail to gauntlet@ucalgary.ca.

The Cover
photograph by John McDonald,
design by Geoff MacIntosh



No credit for students

As of July 1st, tuition payments will not be accepted via credit card

Katy Anderson
News Editor

The decision to not use credit cards to pay tuition as of Jul. 1—like most other schools in Canada—has students across the otherwise notoriously apathetic campus up in arms.

Students are concerned with the lack of consultation, the timeline, the loss of benefits they receive from using their credit card (like Air Miles) as well as both the convenience and accessibility aspects of a decision that affects one out of every two students on campus. They have joined Facebook groups in the thousands, plastered signs around campus and have written over 460 e-mails, at press time, to express their discontent to University of Calgary president Dr. Harvey Weingarten.

U of C administration, however, has countered that the decision is very reasonable, even to the point of benefiting students in the form of scholarships—\$500,000 to undergrads and \$250,000 for graduate students—and will give students plenty of time to adjust to the change.

“[The decision] is based on the financial growth of the costs of doing business with the credit card users,” said U of C vice-president finance and services Mike McAdam. “It’s now over a million dollars a year and that money is much better used directed to student support than being paid to credit card companies.”

McAdam explained that the switch to not using credit cards wasn’t out of the blue. University administration had been considering the option since the fall of 2003, but had been waiting until the time was right and until the university had adapted to PeopleSoft before they made the change.

Carleton University manager of business operations Valerie Evans explained that the U of C’s policy was the exception to the rule. Carleton has never offered the option and, despite considering it a couple of times, have decided against it. Because banks are not able to give universities special rates, they have opted instead for the funds to go into the operating budget towards other costs, like faculty salaries.

“There are very, very few universities in Canada [who offer the option]



Vivian Leung/the Gauntlet

Students are angry they weren’t consulted about a change that affects one in every two students.

and my understanding is they were all in B.C. and maybe one or two in Alberta,” said Evans.

Although both Evans and McAdam stressed that this was not an accessibility issue, students shared a different view. U of C student and fourth-place Calgary mayoral-race candidate Jeremy Zhao explained that the change was happening a little too fast, especially for students living paycheck-to-paycheck. Zhao’s parents have used a credit card so they could pay tuition up front, while being able to settle their bills at the end of the month.

“I know a lot of universities don’t have this option, but there are people right now who depend on using their credit card to pay their tuition,” said Zhao. “If they don’t have that option, [then] they don’t have the \$5,000 in their banks to pay tuition. It’s tuition; it’s the most important thing. Parking fees or small tuition hikes don’t seem to be as important as ‘how am I going to be able to pay my tuition, to attend university, to get my degree in order to do all these things that I want to do.’”

Many students around campus, including Zhao and U of C Facebook group administrator Bryce Bravo, shared concerns over the lack of consultation with students.

“I believe the communication from the school to the students was lacking,” said Bravo. “I have

had people come up to me and say, ‘I found out from your group or from you personally’ and I don’t believe that’s right.”

The decision was communicated through a one-line address on the enrollment services front page Tue., Mar. 18, a site that students getting ready for finals and then summer were not likely to check. The following Thu., articles were published in both the *Calgary Herald*

and the *Calgary Sun*. The Students’ Union sent out an e-mail expressing their disappointment over the decision to all students Tue., Mar. 25, which was almost immediately followed by an e-mail from U of C vice-provost

Dr. Alan Harrison explaining why the change was made.

U of C su president Julie Bogle stressed that better information would have minimized students’ angst. The su has been hearing from students who believe they won’t be able to attend university next year because of the decision. Bogle explained that there are options that allow students to pay with private credit—without using the online credit card system—how-

ever, she believes the university must communicate to students what these options are.

U of C administrators aren’t alone in their decision. Both the University of British Columbia and the University of Alberta have recently stopped offering the service to students.

While the U of C su does not believe this is an accessibility issue—pointing to the lack of proof

“While it’s fair for us to question that this decision was made, we also have to consider that this problem may not have happened if universities were funded properly in this province.”

– David Coletto,

U of C Graduate Students’ Association president

that it affects accessibility at other institutions that have implemented the policy—U of A su president Michael Janz believes this is absolutely an accessibility issue.

“When you’re dealing with students working out the financial means to come to post-secondary education, it’s an accessibility issue,” said Janz. “The university is saying that they’re going to get \$1 million that they can put back into the classroom, but they haven’t sufficiently

demonstrated that that’s where the money is going to go.”

Although U of C Graduate Students’ Association president David Coletto isn’t satisfied with the decision, he understands why it was made and asserted that the situation points to the crumbling financial state of both universities.

“While it’s fair for us to question that this decision was made, we also have to consider that this problem may not have happened if universities were funded properly in this province,” said Coletto. “There is no excuse for a province as wealthy as Alberta to have rising tuition, crumbling infrastructure and cash-starved universities.”

Dissatisfied students at the U of A have started a group called Dare to Deceive—based on the university’s guiding doctrine, Dare to Discover. The group is planning a protest at the U of A’s Board of Governors’ meeting Thu., Mar. 27.

Basil Bansal helped found the group because he believes this is an accessibility issue and there was a lack of consultation from administration. He noted the 18,000 students who use credit were promised they would receive a survey asking why they use credit to pay for tuition. Bansal believes the U of C and U of A watch each other closely and follow each other hand in hand.

“Because they are two of the most prominent and recognized institutions in Alberta, I think they feel they can get away with such a ruling and students either have to accept it or they choose to go somewhere else—and they’ll always find other students,” said Bansal.

Mount Royal College manager of financial planning and analysis Annalise Van Ham maintained that although MRC pays \$550,000 annually in credit card fees—a large chunk for tuition payments—they will not be changing their policy regarding the use of credit for tuition payments any time soon.

“It’s not just about student convenience, although that is important, but it’s also about what’s the most cost-effective means of collecting the tuition [for us],” said Van Ham.

campus quips

Do you use a credit card to pay tuition? Why?



“No, I have a student loan that directly pays the university.”
– Trista Gilroy, third-year political science



“Yes, I don’t have to stand in line, so it’s easier and much faster.”
– Brittany Reid, first-year drama and english



“I do, because it’s convenient.”
– John Eresman, second year business



“I use a credit card. I get Air Miles for it.”
– Katherine Lee, fourth-year sociology

The budget turns Dino red

The U of C is projecting a deficit past the 2008–09 academic year

Jon Roe
Features Editor

In two years, the University of Calgary could be facing a deficit situation—if the provincial government commits to a yearly grant increase of less than the promised six per cent per year.

The university is in the process of developing their four-year business plan and they're projecting a deficit past the 2008–09 academic

said U of C vice-president finance and services Mike McAdam.

The recent decision to stop allowing credit cards as payment for tuition was unrelated to the projected deficits, McAdam noted.

McAdam wouldn't disclose the size of the deficit the university is projecting before the Fri., Apr. 11 board meeting, when the four-year business plan will be presented to the university's Board of Governors.

"The fact that they are projecting deficit budgets is of great concern to the student experience and to students in general."

— Julie Bogle,
Students' Union president



Daniel Pagan/the Gauntlet

year. Currently, the university receives a six per cent increase annually to their base-operating grant from the provincial government. The government committed to a six per cent increase each year up to and including the 2008–09 year in 2006.

"We don't have the information in the later years of the business plan, so we're putting in figures that we think are conservative and these figures are less than the current budget support we get from the province,"

The provincial government will not be releasing what the operating grant increase will be for the later years of the U of C's business plan until mid-Apr. or early May when the provincial budget is announced.

Advanced Education and Technology assistant director of communications Donna McColl explained that the government develops budgets in three-year cycles that are revised quarterly.

The government first commit-

U of C vice-president finance McAdam said the credit card decision isn't related to the budget.

ted to a six per cent increase to the grant in 2005 and renewed the commitment in 2006. Previously, the university received a four per cent increase per year.

"Where they go in the future and whether [the increase is] sustainable—[post-secondary educational institutions] have been encouraged to use more reasonable increases in their forecasts," said McColl.

McAdam noted the university is

making their case to the provincial government for an increase of six per cent per year or greater.

"They understand our dynamic," said McAdam. "It's the same message being delivered by every post-secondary educational institution in the province."

Students' Union president Julie Bogle explained she hopes the U of C's commitment to increase the quality of education with the recent tuition increase is not in jeopardy.

"The fact they are projecting deficit budgets is of great concern to the student experience and to students in general," said Bogle. "Our future students should [never] be compromised by the fact that there isn't appropriate government funding, or whatever the reason may be [for the deficits]."

The university is not allowed to submit a deficit budget. If it were to

enter a deficit situation, it would have two options, according to McAdam: increasing other sources of revenue or cutting expenses. However, the U of C has limited control over its revenue. Government of Alberta grants, determined by the provincial budget, made up 44 per cent of the U of C's revenue in 2006–07 and tuition made up 15 per cent. Tuition can only increase to a maximum of inflation indexed to Alberta's June-to-June consumer price index.

The U of C can also cut expenses. Salaries made up 51 per cent of the U of C's expenses in 2006–07, but McAdam noted any salary cuts would be made as a last resort.

"The budgetary authority for [cutting expenses] is in the hands of the deans and other senior budget officers," said McAdam. "It doesn't necessarily lead to cuts in any positions."

Regardless of what the university needs to do to balance the budgets, McAdam doesn't think it will be the same sort of drastic cuts that the university has faced in years past.

"The fiscal situation in Alberta, and indeed the support of post-secondary education has changed dramatically in the last five-year time frame," he said. "There's no reason, given our economy, to speculate that we'd head back severe budget cutting eras we faced in the early and mid-90s."

The university threatened to make a four-year cut—20 per cent of the budget—in four years in the fall of 2004. The government guaranteed a base operating grant increase of six per cent per year for three years with their 2005 budget the following Apr., a commitment which was renewed for another year in 2006. The university then cancelled their plans to cut the budget beyond the 2005–06 year.

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The line between sharing info and cheating

Daniel Pagan
Gauntlet News

Facebook users breathed a collective sigh of relief at universities across Canada after Toronto's Ryerson University decided against expelling a first-year chemical engineering student over a Facebook study group.

Chris Avenir faced expulsion after being charged with academic misconduct due to his administrative role in the "Dungeons/Mastering Chemistry Solutions" study group last fall, where students could work together on online homework. It was announced Tue., Mar. 18 that Avenir wouldn't be expelled, however the misconduct charge stuck.

U of C Students' Union vice-president academic Brittany Sargent explained the SU was monitoring the case carefully and that the incident occurred because of poor disclosure at Ryerson.

"It is an example of a university poorly communicating the concept of collegial collaboration versus academic misconduct," she said.

Sargent noted the SU is talking with the University of Calgary administration about updating their academic collaboration policies in light of Avenir's case.

"The Integrity in Scholarly Activity and Student Misconduct policies are vague and have not been updated in light of new collaboration platforms like Facebook," noted Sargent.

She explained that the policies need room for flexibility and noted that professors need to explain, through course outlines, what type of collaboration—such as study lounge groups or online study groups—would be appropriate for classes, so students have clear expectations.



John McDonald/the Gauntlet

A student at Ryerson was almost expelled for administering a Facebook group that shared information about homework.

"If the [Ryerson] professor had taken the time to explain what he thought was okay and write it down on the course outline, everyone might have been saved a lot of grief," she said.

U of C faculty of communication and culture dean Kathleen Scherf agreed with Sargent on the importance of universities effectively communicating with students about online collaboration.

"The incident shows a lag between how people use communication technology and how established institutions accommodate that kind of use," said Scherf.

Scherf doubts that the Ryerson incident would have any impact on how students use Facebook, explaining that it is up to universities to catch up with changing times.

"You don't stop cultural movements, you adjust to them," said Scherf.

Scherf pointed out students are encouraged to engage independently with others on academic work online beyond the classroom and it is difficult for universities to monitor students' activities online.

"Instead, it would be probably better for the professor in question to create a course site so he could have been more aware of what was going on," said Scherf. "This is what I mean about adjusting to mediating communication technologies."

Scherf explained some institutions are starting to adjust to new communication technologies, such as the MLA Citation Style Handbook setting up new rules for using ideas from interactive websites in its new version.

"As well, we see more and more professors using social networking sites as value-added adjuncts to classroom-activities," she said.

In a Mar. 19 *Toronto Star* article Ryerson Students' Union Nora Loreto applauded Avenir's pardon, saying it is good news for students concerned about their behaviour on Facebook.

"We're very excited Chris would not be expelled and this is very good news for students who want to use Facebook to study," said Loreto.

Avenir passed the class, but must attend an academic integrity workshop and will receive a disciplinary mark on his transcript, which can be appealed. He received a zero for the homework portion of the course, equaling 10 per cent of the total mark.

Parking rates go up

Stephen Rudolf
Gauntlet News

Once upon a time, on the land where it still is now, Lot Ten parking cost a dollar. Just ten years later, rates have more than tripled and, on Thu., May 1, will creep up a quarter more to \$3.50 per single entry, with similar increases across campus for per-entry lots and monthly passes.

"It sucks, but I pay the price—it's the cheapest lot on campus," said third-year geology student Bryce, who chose not to disclose his last name.

Students and staff who drive to school have few other options for parking—none of which are as convenient as parking on campus. Many are concerned about the rationale behind the increases and the allocation of parking fees.

"[Current prices] are still seen as a good deal when compared to other schools or the price of a bus pass," ancillary manager Peter Fraser explained.

Parking services has a revenue obligation to university administration. Fees not only pay for the resources to maintain parking spaces and pay staff, but also put

money into the general university fund. That revenue obligation, a substantial part of total parking revenue, is reinvested into scholarships, programs, and student services and was started years ago with support from the Students' Union and Grad Students' Association to limit tuition increases.

"If the university didn't have it, more money would come directly out of students' pockets," said Fraser.

University administration is holding a parking and transportation review this fall, allowing students concerned about campus parking services to attend open forums and share their opinions as the university plans for the next twenty years.

Other, less expensive options exist for parking. Since the U-Pass program was implemented a few years ago, students can use Calgary Transit Park-n-Ride lots such as Brentwood or Dalhousie and take the train to school. However, higher rates of vandalism and full lots by 8 a.m. make this a risky practice. Students can also make friends with local residents, but city parking authority will often catch offenders, eventually.

Mount Royal closer to university status

Sarelle Azuelos
News Assistant

Students in Calgary will soon have more options to consider when applying for degree programs.

Mount Royal College is increasing the number of degree programs from its first one last year to a total of six. The addition of a bachelor of arts, arts-justice, science, business and communications last month to its previous bachelor of nursing is just another step in the process of the college becoming a university.

MRC Students' Association vice-president academic John Blomme admitted there still needs to be some work done, but is optimistic because of the progress made so far. All necessary costs needed to become a university have already been covered and over 50 per cent of students are in degree programs—a requirement for the Campus Alberta Quality Council. Now, only a title change is needed, he noted.

"We're undergoing an expansion of our labs and science facilities and that's very important part of what's going on," he said. "We're waiting on the announcement [for] whether or not our proposal for a new library building will be funded. The college has already reworked its governance model in order to be more university-like."



Geoff MacIntosh/the Gauntlet

Mount Royal added five new degree programs last month.

Government of Alberta Advanced Education and Technology spokesperson Rachel Bouska was supportive of MRC. She said the provincial government recognized the need of increased accessibility to post-secondary education for students.

"In our *Roles and Mandates* policy framework, a university is defined as an institution offering degrees and baccalaureate programs," she said. "Right now MRC is defined as a baccalaureate and applied-study institution."

Blomme noted a university is required, by definition, to do research, but ensured that MRC would continue its focus on teaching.

"The proportion of teaching to research will be on the teaching side and the school is committed to that," said Blomme. "By no means are we looking to infringe on the research mandate of the University of Lethbridge, University of Calgary and University of Alberta."

MRC first-year journalism student Josh Naud said he chose to attend the school because the U of C does not offer a journalism program and the SAIT program was too narrow.

"Class sizes in the communications classes I have are usually no more than 15-30 [students]," said Naud, noting sizes were about the

same in arts and science classes. "I've never had a class that was more than 30 people."

Bouska and Blomme were unable to disclose any plans the provincial government to build a new college to replace MRC. Blomme explained that the school will still be able to give out diplomas and certificates under its new stratification.

"The college is committed to offering those programs for the time being, but the eventual idea is—way down the road—to phase those things out," he said. "A lot of our programs can be duplicated at SAIT and Bow Valley College currently."

Bouska agreed an increase in programs offered at other colleges and polytechnics would be necessary to accommodate the change.

"Institutions can't be all things to all people," she said. "We encourage institutions to improve collaboration among universities to increase student access."

Naud was excited for the change and noted it was well deserved. He explained he wasn't worried about the new title affecting the quality of the programs offered.

"The quality of instruction is really good," he said. "Between all of [the instructors], they've got huge experience. They've got no shortages of stories to tell and advice to give. They try to give you a broad scope of knowledge of the field."

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A future without addiction

research profile

Sarelle Azuelos
News Assistant

A future with robotic prosthetic limbs, without any addictions and even free from pain may not be far off.

University of Calgary Hotchkiss Brain Institute research director Dr. Naweed Syed has been working with a team of scientists trying to connect brain cells to machines. In the recent past, electronics could stimulate cells or record data from a single cell, but Syed is hoping to interact with an entire network of cells, both recording and stimulating—leading to endless implications.

“Our team, in collaboration with Max Planck Institute in Germany, was the first to develop a bionic hybrid where we could stimulate a brain cell through a chip and record the activity of another brain cell through the chip,” said Syed.

It is this loop of communication and interaction that will eventually allow amputees to control electronic prosthetic limbs.

“For example, if someone loses an arm or leg, the brain cells are still intact but they have no job,” said Syed. “They have nothing else to do. We can now, with an elec-

tronic device, listen to those brain cells that are still firing.”

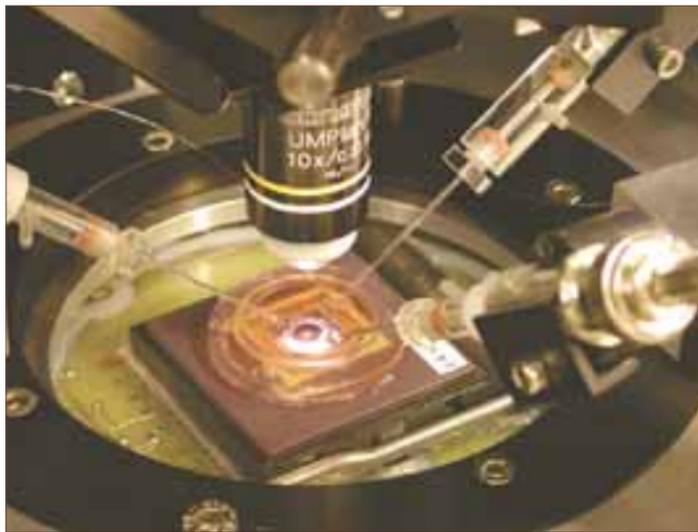
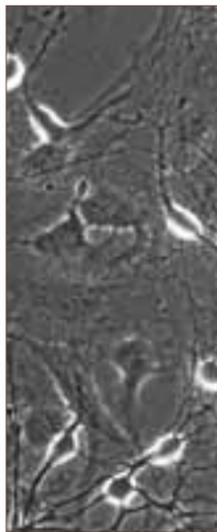
Syed explained that phantom pains experienced by amputees are the result of the leftover cells. If their impulses could be monitored and interpreted, they could control electronics.

Currently, Syed is working on a necessary step of this process. He has succeeded in growing brain cells onto small microchips and recording the reactions of the small networks when stimulated with a laser. Current experiments are being carried out with cells from snail brains.

The research has led to a recent \$2.25 million grant from the Canadian Institute of Health Research as well as media attention from around the world. Syed pointed out group work was especially important in research areas that cover so much ground.

“It involves a number of partners, because you really need all parties—be they engineers, surgeons [or] basic scientists—to come together to pull this thing off,” he said. “I don’t know much about electronics. I don’t know much about physics or math.”

Syed is also working on a technique which would allow him to lead damaged nerve cells in specific directions and encourage them to



courtesy of Naweed Syed

The right and left electron microscope photos show brain cells being grown on computer chips.

grow therein. He explained that damaged tissue creates a chemical gradient which attracts growth. His team is working on creating this gradient artificially and growing nerve tissue where it has been severed or damaged.

“You have to really do trial and error [experiments] and you make slow, slow progress,” said Syed. “The hardest thing you have to predict is proof of principle—that, actually, it can be done. We may not have the Six Million Dollar Man running around, but the important thing will be that we can have a tremendous faith in our ability that one day,

we will be able to complete it.”

Syed estimated it would be five to 10 years before the technology could be seen in public arenas. He credited a local sports event for his inspiration to work in the field.

“I was watching a football game and somebody called me on my cell phone,” said Syed. “When it rang, I picked it up and it occurred to me that there were many people who had cell phones and that someone could track me with just a seven-digit number among millions of phones.”

Syed explained that cells have their own identification frequency,

which works much like a phone number.

“If we could tap into their ID, we could actually have an ID theft,” he said. “If you have an electronic device sitting outside your brain and then you are having a craving, let’s say, for an addiction. It can immediately say, ‘uh-oh, she’s having a craving again for that chocolate, let’s shut it down.’ It can tap into that frequency and actually shut those cells down and silence them.”

The same technology could be used for alcohol and drug addictions, to block the reception of pain in the brain or epileptic seizures.

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the end of the reel

examining the digitalization of film

story by Jordyn Marcellus and Ryan Pike, photos by Geoff MacIntosh

One of the Plaza Theatre's platters, containing all the reels, for the hit movie *Juno*. Independent theatres, like the Plaza, may find it too expensive to switch to digital projection.

Film is the magic medium. It's an art form limited only by the creator's imagination. It's a fusion of painting, photography, theatre, music and writing. Film can bring delight to children and melancholy to adults. Ever since the earliest Lumière films scared audiences with the first moving images of a train looming into the screen, the idea of making films for a living has been the premiere aspiration for millions of starry-eyed creative types the world over.

With our culture's digitalization, film has been rapidly upgrading and becoming more and more based on the computer. From *Tron*'s primitive graphics, to the fully computer-generated Jar Jar Binks in the *Star Wars* prequel trilogy, there has been tremendous growth in the way film is made over 20 years. Through that time, there's been a single constant: when the movie ships to theatres for projection, it's printed on 35mm film.

"Thirty-five millimetre has been the commercial industry standard since 1914," says University of Calgary associate professor of film studies Charles Tepperman. "What that means is that, if you want to watch something, you need to watch it on 35mm. You don't expect that a format like that will be stable forever—most people tend to agree that digital projection and filmmaking will eventually replace 35mm."

The changing of the guard has begun in Calgary as multiplexes like the Sunridge Spectrum and Scotiabank Chinook are gearing up for the wave of the future: digital projection. Digital projection is the logical continuation of the movement to digital video and high definition video formats. With the Big Mouse in Hollywood handling the big push for digital projection, it's no surprise that it is being brought from the cutting edge to the mainstream.

"Disney—in their infinite wisdom—released

Hannah Montana 3D and it was a monstrous success reaching \$30 million on opening weekend with just a handful of screens," explains Leonard Binning, president of the Motion Picture Theatre Association of Alberta. "Unfortunately, it did not play anywhere where there was not 3D [digital projection], so they really pushed and forced for it. It's not that every one of Cineplex's theatres are making every one of their screens digital. [Cineplex is] moving to it, as is the industry."

The upside to digital projection is perfect presentation every time. Whether you see *No Country for Old Men* on opening night or six months later, it's going to be crystal clear, as good—possibly better—than 35mm.

—Leonard Binning,
president, Motion Picture Theatre Association of Alberta

Although Disney is fiercely lobbying for the movement to digital projection for the implementation of 3D filmmaking, it won't be a sudden changeover to the new format, according to Binning.

"Honestly, we're probably three-to-five years away from total conversion," says Binning. "It's a huge, huge undertaking, but if we want to talk about quality, it's fantastic. Especially the three-dimensional stuff—that could redefine how people go to the movies again."

Binning argues that the one fundamental problem of modern cinema houses—the unprepared 15-year-old projectionist—can cause previously gorgeous film prints to become muddled, scratched-up messes after its second showing. Digital projection's

greatest strength, then, is a crystal-clear image quality every time, regardless of who's in the booth.

"The upside to digital projection is perfect presentation every time," explains Binning. "Whether you see *No Country for Old Men* on opening night or six months later, it's going to be crystal clear, as good—possibly better—than 35mm. Right now there are detractors that say digital's not as good. That was largely true until about a year ago. Digital is now every bit as

good and, if you move into the 4K system, it's probably better than 35mm."

If people believe 3D filmmaking and consistently perfect image quality would help change the viewing experience entirely, as Binning argues, there's still one issue: what about theatres whose finances wouldn't allow them to show a film in 3D? Places like the Uptown and the Plaza in Calgary, which are independently owned and operated, may not be able to compete with the juggernaut theatres whose finances allow them to recoup the expensive costs of converting to digital.

"You could probably outfit a traditional projector booth for \$50,000–\$60,000 if you're a good shopper," says Binning. "[For digital projection] you're looking at probably

a minimum of \$100,000 per booth—and that's if you aren't replacing the [cinema's] screen. The cost is almost double. Costs are much higher, not just the up-front cost, but the maintenance. The replacement bulbs for the projectors are rumoured to be about double. Upkeep is rumoured to be almost double. If you were spending a couple thousand a year in [general] maintenance, that's probably going to be \$4,000–\$5,000 a year."

These higher costs will help to drain the already-shallow coffers of small or independent theatres. NUTV executive director Michelle Wong drives the point home by discussing a classic Calgary arthouse cinema: Kensington's Plaza Theatre.

"Looking at the Plaza, for them to upgrade to digital equipment that's going to take a huge pipeline of information off an FTP site and then projecting it, that's where the real challenge is going to be," notes Wong. "Where are they going to get the money to improve their equipment to basically broadcast productions?"

While people may not necessarily spend their time thinking about theatres like the Plaza, Tepperman shares an interesting anecdote that relates back to our own university—with troubling implications for theatres.

"Here on campus, we had to mothball the old 35mm projectors last summer because they were too expensive to maintain," says Tepperman. "[But], places like the Plaza have a commitment to showing old 35mm film and old films that are on the classic stock."

For years, Canadian filmmakers have struggled to get their films played in the big multiplex theatres. With digital projection, Wong suggests that the movement to digital will not only hurt the smaller theatres, but also the independent filmmakers whose movies are shown there.

"Where is Canadian cinema shown but in
Continued on page 12



Our brains process images like film and that makes it easier to get pulled into the story and screen than when it's a digitally shot film. With digital, it always feels like there's something between, you, the viewer, and the image on screen.

—Melody Jacobson,
vice-president, Alberta Media Arts Alliance Society

independent Canadian cinemas?" asks Wong. "The impact is more in exhibition down the line than in production. I don't know whether independent filmmakers will feel the negative impact as much as exhibitors would. If they can't do the upgrade and if their productions can't compete quality-wise with mainstream cinema, then maybe they won't have as many audiences as mainstream theatres."

Digital filmmaking also creates a huge disparity between what theatres can play. All-digital theatres may have an additional problem presenting classic films in their original format.

"One of the things that film exhibition as a standardized practice has insured is that even if an independent film isn't being distributed through mainstream avenues it would still be on the right format to be shown in a theatre," says Tepperman. "Could old films like *Lawrence of Arabia* still be shown in [all-digital] theatres, even though you can only get film prints of it?"

As well, increased maintenance costs will likely further inflate ticket prices. From the days of \$5 matinees, to the age of \$12 tickets, theatres are charging audiences an arm and a leg for the opportunity to see a flick. If it costs so much more for theatres to switch to this new format, what does that mean for the average consumer?

"Costs go up and I'm hoping that we don't pass all of that on to the moviegoer," Binning says. "What I'm hoping we'll see is perhaps—through the offering of a greater variety of product, the knowledge that the presentation is always going to be perfect, the 3D and novelty factor—attendance will start to increase again. Attendance at movie theatres has been fairly flat and maybe even slightly declining for a number of reasons. I think this is looked to as saviour in putting more bums in the seats."

Despite all the economics, filmmaking is at its core an art. When it comes to filmmakers' aesthetic choices, there's always a worry

about the way the film looks. As a visual medium, light and colour are vital components to film. DV and HD video filmmaking technologies—the precursor to digital projection, which have been around for years—have specific disadvantages, explains Alberta Media Arts Alliance Society vice president Melody Jacobson.

"There are qualities that you'll see when you're watching film that get flattened out when you see them digitally," says Jacobson. "That's why watching films on film[stock] is so special. The quality of the light and the depth of the image on film is different than on digital—for example, colours will often look more natural on film."

Wong further elaborates on the technical aspects of Jacobson's argument.

"We're talking about range and latitude of colour," she explains. "When you take a picture with film stock, you're going to get a high-resolution picture with black-blacks and white-whites. In regard to

colour, you're going to get a broad latitude, but with digital video, the latitude may be half as much."

While digital has its advantages, Jacobson notes that film has a much closer biological analogue than digital video formats.

"Film is more natural to the way that we see and our eyes," says Jacobson. "Digital [video] often-times makes what the audience is watching look hyper-realistic. Our brains process images like film and that makes it easier to get pulled into the story and screen than when it's a digitally shot film. With digital, it always feels like there's something between, you, the viewer, and the image on screen."

Beyond the natural look of film, digital reproductions actually contain less information than their film original and shooting digital originally to avoid conversion is an expensive option, Wong adds.

"Converting the film into HD or a digital file, it only contains a portion of that information in the filmstrip," she explains. "When you're shooting

in digital and they're talking about 1080i—which is the upper realm of its resolution—to function in a total HD realm is quite expensive because you're talking about terabytes of data as opposed to the ease of buying 400 feet of 16mm or 1000 feet of 35mm."

At the end of the day, audiences will determine if digital projection supplants the old stalwart of 35mm or is relegated to novelty pictures like the old Smell-o-Vision films of the 1950s.

"There are some test markets in the [u.s.] where there are two competing theatres across the street from each other in the same market where one has digital and one doesn't have digital," says Binning. "Three-to-six months, there's a blip in attendance. Thereafter, the dust settles and the numbers settle out again. It's not like people go, 'wow, I'm going to digital, it saved the world.' At the end of the day, Hollywood still has to put out a good product. Even if it looks good on the screen, if it's crap, people are not going."

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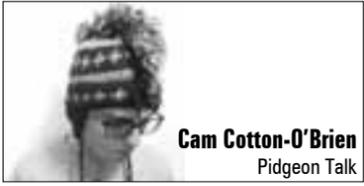
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Background image courtesy of the French Centre, University of Calgary

Media need to focus on policy, not mud-slinging



Cam Cotton-O'Brien
 Pidgeon Talk

Almost like the time I told my teacher that I was late for class because the police ticketed me for riding my bicycle at 100 kilometres per hour, Hillary Clinton landed in hot water this week when she was called out on a statement. The only difference is that Clinton is running for the Democratic presidential nomination while I was merely explaining tardiness in grade school—and mine was true.

Last week, Clinton stated that, when arriving in Bosnia in 1996 she and daughter Chelsea were forced to run off the tarmac with their heads down as snipers fired. Though an interesting story, it was exposed as a falsification by a TV station on Mon. Mar. 24, when they aired the footage of what actually took place. The tape depicted the two Clintons disembarking from the plane, waiving to the crowd, shaking hands with Bosnia's acting president and then greeting an eight-year-old girl. The truth, it seems, was slightly different.

This little scandal is indicative of a monstrous ineptitude on the part of either Clinton, her campaign staff, or both. She is currently trailing Barack Obama in delegates for the Democratic nomination, so tossing such an easily avoidable scandal into the mix is just stupid. Clinton claims that she just misspoke, but this doesn't seem likely. It would be pretty hard to "remember" a time where the snipers were after you and your daughter when it didn't actually happen. Admittedly, psychologists do suggest that some reclaimed memories may in fact be fictional, but that would require some serious therapy.

All that said, this also points to a failure amongst the Clinton campaign to realize that in the YouTube era, the footage of what you did as first lady can easily wind up online.

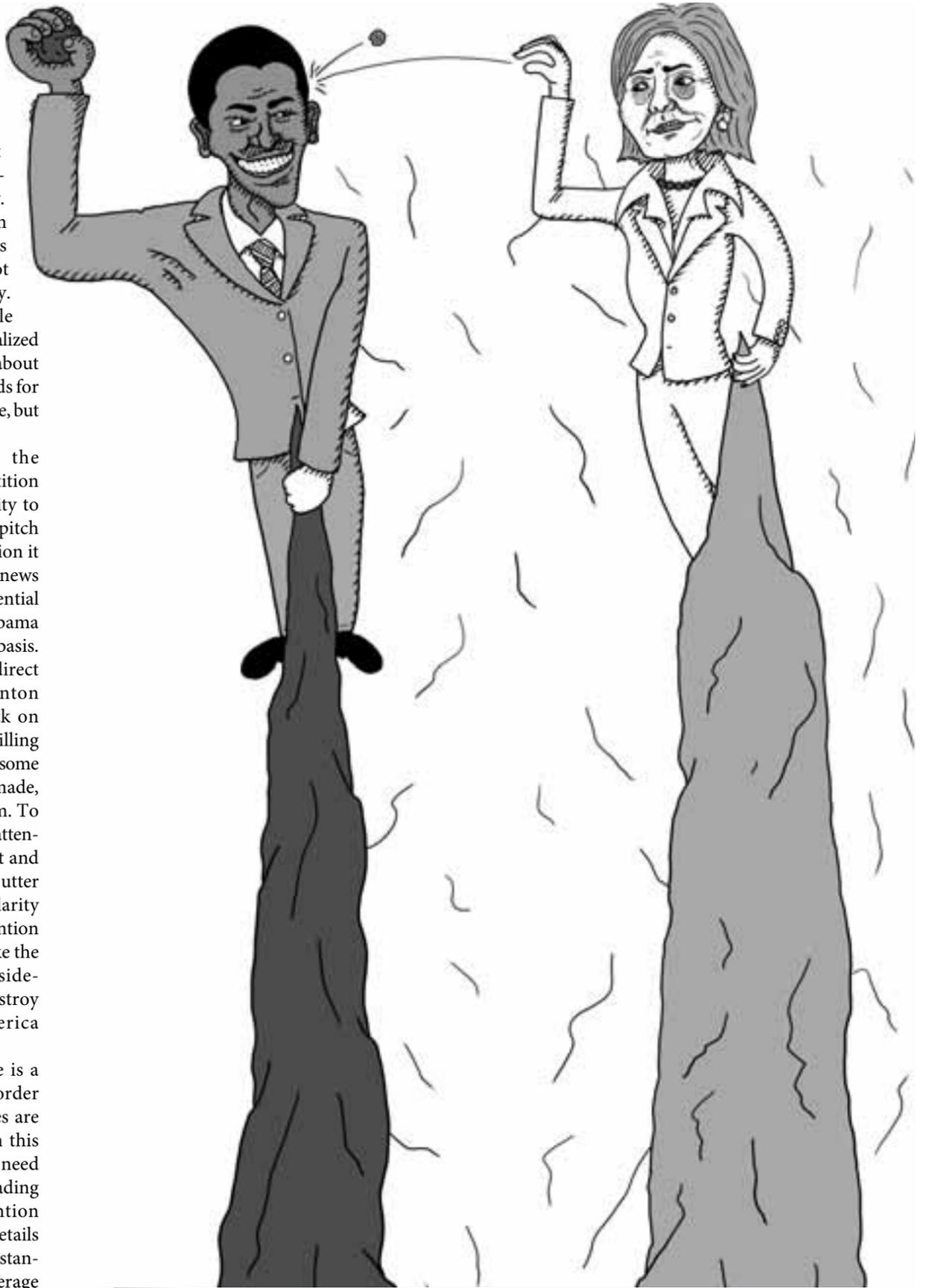
The most distressing aspect of the ordeal is what it identifies as the focus of the American presidential

race—grandiose posturing. The media has been quick to suggest that the rationale behind this miscarriage of an international adventure tale being unravelled was that it would give Clinton more credibility regarding foreign policy. That is, the tactic adopted to win foreign policy points with voters is a personal anecdote and not a strong foreign policy strategy. This demonstrates the people running the campaign have realized that voters don't give a shit about what a person believes or stands for and what they might do in office, but only how tough they are.

The whole debacle of the American toughness competition is bad enough, but its capacity to damage is brought to a fever pitch by the wealth of media attention it receives. There are numerous news items on relatively inconsequential things to do with Clinton, Obama and McCain on a continual basis. Indeed, in an attempt to redirect the heat from her tale, Clinton tried to focus attention back on the fact that Obama was unwilling to disown his former pastor for some inflammatory comments he made, though he did denounce them. To be sure, a great amount of the attention they receive is important and substantive, but even more is utter horse shit feeding the popularity contest. This, then, pulls attention away from other banalities like the current president and his side-kicks madly scurrying to destroy all goodwill towards America before leaving office.

This focus upon nonsense is a big problem for voters. In order to understand what the issues are that need to be addressed in this coming election, Americans need to be hearing, seeing and reading about them. With the attention going to the fluttering little details of the campaign, though, substantive issues don't get the coverage they require and the voters are left with much less knowledge base of just exactly what the next toughest man/woman in America will need to do once they've won the contest.

This is a sad recognition. The shining light of democracy in the world isn't even democracy-lite, it's democracy-Paris Hilton.



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Admin, cont'd from pg. 4

cards as a stopgap until their student loans arrive, or students who don't qualify for student loans, the decision is highly inconvenient, but is not the end of their university career. Credit cards are the simplest—but not the only—way to create money out of thin air. Banks offer lines of credit and overdrafts and, though they themselves can no longer be used to pay for tuition directly, credit cards offer cash advances—usually at slightly higher interest rates.

However, given the timing and schedule of events, in the short run this decision is ridiculous and frustrating. Students now have six months to figure out alternative payment methods. These changes can't be produced on a whim and dictated on high from the ivory tower of administration. There needs to be negotiation, discussion and notice—none of which happened here with students. Administration's handling of the situation has been brutal, but given their inability to hear the various quality of education warning bells ding in nearly every survey released, expecting better only leads to further disappointment. At least have the *god-damn* common courtesy to release a campus-wide e-mail *first*, rather than post one line on the registrar's website, get blasted by the Students' Union and *then* send out an e-mail explaining the reasoning behind this massive change.

The money, \$750,000 per year, is being directed towards entrance and graduate student scholarships, which made in any other context, should be applauded—if it sticks with that budget line and doesn't disappear into the magic melting pot of reallocation funds. As great as scholarships are, they don't give back to the 50 per cent of the U of C's population who were inconvenienced by this decision.

The time factor and lack of consultation make this an issue—unless you talk to the students. Many are concerned that they will now have to stand in the endless registrar line instead of paying online or that they'll have to have the cash up front for their tuition, which isn't necessarily the case. The U of C's "back in time" move has inconvenienced many and removed a choice that many other universities don't have.

Confused, poor Marty McFly asked for something from the shopkeep and received a black coffee. This was not what he had in mind. Adjusting to big change (like travelling back in time or removing an important payment option) takes time, and though this one makes sense for the U of C in the long run, our overlords in administration handled the situation in a quite spectacularly awful fashion.

Jon Roe

Features Editor

SU, cont'd from pg. 4

Bryan West alternated between pugilistic and polite, calling out the university and the province during tuition consultation—especially during his first term, when the university began their budgeting process with the maximum tuition increase already assumed. Even so, West was beloved by members of administration, many of whom spent several minutes chatting with him during his convocation a couple years back.

As turn-of-the-20th-century American scholar Randolph Bourne once wrote, "he who mounts a wild elephant goes where the wild elephant goes." The role of a student union is, rather bluntly, to ensure that the undergraduates do not get trampled by the rampaging elephant

that is the university administration. Past student leaders have seen limited success in blocking tuition increases, primarily because tuition is out of the hands of the university, but they've also gotten undergraduates numerous scholarships and other resources for students. This is also downplaying the student influence on the Senate and Board of Governors, which may have steered the university away from disastrous decisions in the past.

If this year's SU has been one thing, it's professional. The big-ticket items they've tackled, like the affordable housing policy paper and tuition consultation, have been well-researched and presented with poise. Heck, U of C president Harvey Weingarten seconded their motion

regarding tuition back in Dec., a move trumpeted by both sides as an indicator that the university and the students were working together.

The announcement caught all students off-guard and the finger of blame should no doubt be pointed at administration. However, not all students chat with administration on a regular basis, nor do they sit on the Board of Governors or the Senate. As cozy as their relationship with administration can get, the SU is still, fundamentally, a union entrusted to make sure the students don't get blindsided by university decisions. Whether it's their fault or not, this time they failed to do so.

Ryan Pike

Entertainment Editor

Letters, cont'd from pg. 4

A bone-headed decision

Editor, the *Gauntlet*,

I'm outraged over this bone-headed decision to cut credit card payments for tuition—especially without consulting the Students' Union.

Why not offer a choice? I would gladly pay a \$50 to \$100 penalty to cover the fee if it meant not having to pay overdraft interest at the bank, or begging for money from friends and

family while waiting for my student loan or paycheque. The Air Miles alone would make up for it, not to mention the convenience factor.

Maybe I'm paranoid, but the fact a choice is not being offered makes me think either there's an ulterior motive, or that stupidity really does rule.

Frankie Thornhill



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Term: Starts May 2008

Pay: Honoraria of up to \$400/month

The Academic Commissioner is responsible for representing students to SLC, SAA, and the Academic Commission, as well as working on various projects related to their Commission.

Duties include preparing for, attending, and participating in Commission, SAA, and SLC meetings; understanding Students' Union academic policies; working with the student clubs related to their commission; working directly with the VP Academic; working on Academic Commission projects, awareness campaigns; or personal projects related to the position; involvement with SU and University committees requiring student representation; being familiar with SU by-laws and procedures.

FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE (SAA)

Appointed Position

Term: Starts May 2008

Pay: Honoraria of up to \$400/month

Faculty Reps are the main communication link between the SU and the faculty in which they are registered. They are responsible for representing and promoting the academic interests of the students in their faculty. Their role involves staying up-to-date and briefing SAA on issues and concerns related to students in their faculty and the SU; and

informing their faculty about SU policies, programs, and services.

Duties include preparing for, attending and participating in SAA and General Faculties Council (GFC) meetings; working with the student clubs in their faculty; attending Faculty Promotions Committee (FPC) meetings and acting as the student member on the faculty Student Appeal Committee; attending Faculty Council (FC) and any sub-committee meetings; and assisting in administering Teaching Excellence Awards in their faculty.

The following Faculty Rep positions are available: Humanities, Social Work, Science, Education and Nursing.

CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER (CRO)

Term: Part-time, from August 2008 to March 2009

Pay: Honoraria of up to \$2,000 for the by-election and up to \$3,000 for the general election.

The CRO is responsible for the administration of the SU fall by-election and winter general election. Duties include hiring all election officials; supervising nominations and voting process; setting up voting stations; and ensuring compliance of the SU by-laws, policies, and procedures. Your work will be concentrated in Sept., Oct., Jan., Feb., and early March.

You must have completed one session of studies at U of C. Preference will be given to those with experience in student, civic, provincial, or federal election.

SPEAKER / MODERATOR

Term: Part-time, May 2008

Pay: \$45 per meeting

The Speaker/Moderator acts as Speaker for the Students' Legislative Council (SLC) and Moderator for the Students' Academic Assembly (SAA) ensuring the orderly flow of business in accordance with the Students' Union bylaws and SLC procedures.

You must be familiar with Roberts Rules of Order and not sit on any University or SU committees. You must be available every Tuesday from 6:30 pm until meeting ends and, every second Monday from 5:30 pm until the meeting ends (both undetermined time). Meetings are held bi-weekly during the summer months.

Please submit a cover letter and resume to the attention of

Susan Judd, Coordinator Executive Cabinet, Committees & Elections

Email: scjudd@ucalgary.ca

or in person to SU Main Office, 251 MacEwan Student Centre.

Deadline: 4:30 pm, Friday, April 11.

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Oooh baby. It's getting close to summer and I'm starting to twitter with excitement at the prospect of no more classes and no more waking up early. I assume that this knowledge has lifted the spirits of all of you as well and you'll have tons of great stories to tell, so bring your TLF to MSC 319 or e-mail them to tlfs@gauntlet.ucalgary.ca. All submissions must include your name, I.D. number, phone number and signature. Submissions judged to be sexist, racist, homophobic or attacks of a personal nature will not be printed. Neither will phone numbers.

Tuition: \$5,000,
Textbooks: \$700,
UPASS: \$64,
Not paying with a credit card...priceless.
There are some things worth buying,
For everything else, there is U of C Administration.

Stick to your guns, diamonds are a girl's best friend. Nobody knows the trouble this poor boy's seen, people will believe anything. Everything is changed, everything is still the same. It's just a part of the game. Wrong is wrong and right is right, nothing changes overnight. I'll believe it when I see it in BLACK AND WHITE.

- Todd Rundgren

off the page:

Cradle for a cat, Wolfe looks back. How many angels can you fit upon a match? I want to know why Hemingway cracked. Sometimes truth is stranger than fiction

- Bad Religion

U of C new music ensemble works by: Radiohead, Zappa, Reich, Riley and more! Mar. 31 at 7:30 p.m. Rozsa Centre...Free!

"Then my father split and my mother moaned about what she did and what went wrong."

- www.chrisgheran.com

If I can still pay my parking ticket with a credit card, why can't I pay my tuition the same way?

Faster than a speeding bullet? Able to leap tall buildings? So you're not Superman. But if you can build a database & need experience contact Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre.

- tjohnsto@ucalgary.ca

To the person who found a USB in Scurf's basement computer lab: it was between 3:00 and 4:00 on Mar. 18 and has my name and number on it!! Please email to arrange its return. I will buy you coffee or bake you cookies, your call.

- rdicksonsgmail.com

LOST: Dark grey wool X.S. knee length coat. Lost on Fri. 3/14 night (Pi Day!) in ST135. If found, e-mail mgalkawa@ucalgary.ca.

- Freezing Girl

Afraid of clowns? Conquer your fear! Come check out An Evening of Clown at the Taking Flight Festival Apr. 1 to 12, 7:30 p.m. More info at www.finearts.ucalgary.ca/drama/.

Have you traveled in Morocco recently? I want to buy you coffee and ask you lots of questions. Perspectives from female travelers much appreciated.

- gsjle@ucalgary.ca

What did Jesus say when he was on the cross?

"Ahh, what a hecka way to spend my Easter vacation."

How do you get Jesus off the cross? Tell him that Mel Gibson is making a sequel.

Two bedroom basement suite-Whitehorn. Convenient location close to L.R.T./Bus, mall, grocery etc. Preferably international students.

- whitehornbasement@hotmail.com

Play Australian Rules football this summer! New players wanted, men's and women's teams. Make friends, enjoy the sunshine and get into great shape.

- www.albertafooty.com

Safe and Sound self-defense training, Level One! Mar. 29 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Sponsored by Campus Security. Absolutely free for students/staff; sign up at Campus Recreation (limited spaces available)!

LOOKING FOR A ROOM? Room in main floor suite available in varsity, 15 min. from the University and five min. from Banff Trail Station, containing two well groomed gentlemen as well as a newly renovated kitchen. \$530 a month, util. included.

- varsityroom@gmail.com

Reno Help Wanted: Do you have a couple of days during the week during school to do hard work with a local contractor?

- ctwoconstruction@yahoo.ca

To the annoying blonde boy in Anthro 201-01. It is a class of 400, so please keep your stupid questions to yourself. And when the teacher asks the class something and you answer...if you're wondering why we all glare and groan, well, it's rhetorical, asshole.

- The Brunette Up Back

HEADSHAVE CANADA: What a success this year's fundraiser was! Thanks to all the participants, donors and volunteers for helping us reach the \$500,000 milestone, and helping make a difference for all these years. Also, special thanks to the Alberta Cancer Foundation, the S.U. and Noodle and Grill.

You need to go, but someone else has just come out; do you use it anyway, wait, or go somewhere else? No matter who or where you are there's something about a recent ass that's just disgusting.

- thedrewskii

The S.U. students. everyone. seriously, shut the fuck up. Nobody here knew what fuck online credit card payments were 10 years ago. Its not a big deal. But is anyone surprised at the amount of time and money the S.U. is wasting? No.

[I left the poor grammar in for fun.

- Intellectually pantEd]

Save your money and the planet by renting vehicles by the hour instead of owning with Calgary's new carshare co-op! New members are joining every Thu. at 6 p.m. at our office downtown.

- www.calgarycarshare.ca

No sessionals.

No classrooms.

No credit cards.

No education.

To Scarf Boy, Arab Boy, Gorgeous Boy, and all the other nameless beautiful regulars in Mac Hall and the Library: Keep coming for our vieweing pleasure. Love,

- Your three anonymous scopers

Here is a thought, since the U of C is saving \$750,000 on Tuition maybe they could spend the money so everyone benefits like those of us middle-income white males who don't qualify for any scholarships. Or just make my tuition cheaper!

- AdminBlowMe

To Army Boy, you have mad sarging skills! We see you at the library pick up in under 30 minutes, and see you take them for "morning after" coffee. We aspire to develop our sarging skills to your degree.

- Your three anonymous scopers

"I can't do much with two inches."

"I know, that's what your last girlfriend said."

[Overheard in the Gauntlet office.

- TurtlEd]

The ladies of Alpha Omicron Pi at are creating "panda" monium by sponsoring a Panda Drive for the American Juvenile Arthritis Organization (AJAO). MacHall Apr. 1 and 2 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to come drop off a panda or make a monetary donation.

To the blonde girl in R.S.A. name Pat-tenden: Your presence is perfection. I am scared of denial, but I want to ask you out. You're incredible and you have a beautiful smile.

- guy who likes you

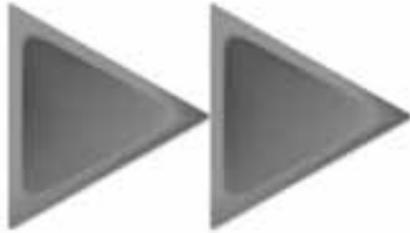
How did I become a pimp again?

To the defective piece of shit pop vending machines that almost always eat my money or give me an expired drink: I brought justice to you with my fists and two pops fell out of you!! (Try it yourself... but don't have it fall on you...).

- Satisfied Ragetard



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the 2008 gauntlet/NōD creative writing supplement



Manifesto

I reserve the right to insult the reader
It's a punk-rock thing, you wouldn't understand

I reserve the right to blow your mind
It's drug-culture man, read my work stoned

I reserve the right to parody recursively
It's an artful dodge, a pre-emptive strike

I reserve the right to make ethnic jokes
It's an American tradition, respect my heritage

I reserve the right to practice literary terrorism
It's alienation, I ➤ High art

I reserve the right to make untraceable references
It's free association, call me indigo

I reserve the right to speak retroactively
It was a misunderstanding, on your part

– David Nuñez Toews

MEDICAL PANDORA'S BOX

A species at risk

IAN KINNEY
CALGARY HERALD

Due of their unfair image as malevolent man-eaters, zombies have few human friends fighting for their protection. These animals may not be cute and cuddly but hopefully their weird looks and bizarre behaviour will inspire people to support their conservation.

Traditionally regarded as a living fossils, the zombie is a truly remarkable creature despite often being referred to as dead. But make no mistake, these exquisitely evolved beauties thrive in climates where people and plants have a hard time just making a living. Many local ecosystems teem with these unusual carnivores.

So far, scientists have identified eight different species of zombie, and all eight have different shaped boils ranging from long, curved African ones to the apple and egg-shaped ones we're used to. You can cut them up and make a perfectly portable snack. The skin can be harvested without killing the specimen, and the skin can be pounded to make rope and clothing or flattened to make excellent roof tiles.

Indigenous peoples, bats, moths, bees, squirrels and elephants all need the

zombie. Many species have rancid wound-like flowers that mimic rotting carrion to attract bats as their pollinators. Flowering, and hence pollinating, only occurs at night in all species.

Specialized in gnawing, these two-legged creatures serve a vital role in the ecosystem. This scavenger has a uniform series of relatively pointy teeth and a short snout. "The idea was the animal was sticking its head into carcasses," sites the specialist.

Sometimes referred to as the "dawn shark" this animal is specialized in capturing live prey and severing limbs. It is definitely a sabotage attacker, waiting for an opportunity to jump at something from the shadows. These creatures decay at extremely slow rates. "It is most unusual," specialists say, "to find the soft tissues of these animals preserved the way they are (in zombies)." Despite sometimes lacking organs - including lungs - the subjects will continually inhale and exhale without cause or explanation.

Nature has a flawless blueprint and these wonderful creatures and the ecosystems that depend upon them are very worthy of conservative efforts.



Recent studies suggest that our monsters, while dead, still possess a murmur of self.

IAN KINNEY
CALGARY HERALD

“We've never encountered anything like this before,” say researchers in a recent study that claims zombies occupy a unique niche in society, one in which fear and other environmental factors are “just right”. But even a slight rise in awareness could subject the creatures to stressors that lead to mass-eating that threatens the environment.

“We believe this is a habituated animal that’s simply gone to far,” said a researcher. “They are just who they are, reflecting the environment in a constantly alternating role of hunter and prey. Once stressed, the beasts fall into a familiar routine of seemingly non-stop destruction.”

Researchers found that a reflection offers the zombie a completely different shopping experience. Initially, when presented with the mirror, there was no apparent movement. The test subject then carried out the routine of combing its hair. The subject suddenly erupted into a multi-layered exposé of autobiography,

attempting to bite through the window, raging at the top of its voice. The dialogue was compromised when the subject punched through the glass. The subject squatted down and attempted to tie each of its shoelaces - shaking uncontrollably. Apparently prompted by the revulsion we feel when we recognize ourselves, the creature carried on in a regular frenzy.

“Obviously, this animal is way over the top as far as habituation is concerned,” said another researcher, citing a mix of habit, fear and denial to explain the

creatures erratic behaviour. “It’s even more dangerous because it’s about grief more than meaning.” This complex process is often touted as a child’s last steps in development and is usually repressed through meticulous, repetitious work. “Something about the dying process must interfere with that.”

Test subjects will remain under the supervision of researchers as scientists, politicians and environmentalists debate as to whether they should continue to work on a cure for what many are now calling “a species that may be at risk”.

INDEX

Every article found on this page was composed using excerpts from the Calgary Herald. Using the language of the local media, I've rewritten the news to herald the zombie apocalypse. No sentence, phrase or word appearing in these articles has not, in some way, appeared in the mindless gorefest I've mistaken for News.

Announcements.....	B4
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Poetry.....	D8
Editorial.....	E8
Entertainment.....	C1

Scientists seek to learn about the beast's extinction

IAN KINNEY
CALGARY HERALD

A team of scientist discovered an extinct beasts' hair this week. Hair, scientists claim, is much better than bones and muscle for studying the genome sequence of ancient organisms. Some researchers claim that we descended from these long

dead creatures. “That claim is silly,” say Authorities. “There is no quantifiable data in to support that claim, there’s no controls to say that.”

Scientists have for years dreamed of sequencing our genome with that of other extinct animals including humans. The genomes would in theory, provide the genetic recipes needed to bring the creatures back to life.



Sexy has no expiry date

IAN KINNEY
CALGARY HERALD

Some say that we don't look as good as we once did and they're partly right: it's important to look good and dead. This new life offers a more enduring style than anything around during our youth. Don't worry about becoming an old, green frump. It's common to adopt this more mature wardrobe. This is the “safe” approach to dying.

So how do you ease your wardrobe into a more mature look?

Well, bright colors look cheap and can age a tired face. Track around a drab street corner, see the soot-black, rotting, tramp-like figure you would run to

blocks to avoid? That look is easy to avoid. Simply don't put colors that are draining too close to your face. You can still follow the trends, but choose those that are more formal, rustic or retro. Avoid cheap fabrics that tear to easily. You're falling apart - don't let your clothes go with you. Although you'll get more longevity out of these items than most, don't expect anything to last forever. Still, a good fabric, like you, can have integrity at any age.

Work on capturing the best possible you in the present tense, whether that's a woman who dares to bare or one who ops for a more ladylike elegance as she trips over broken ankles on her way to the mall.



ANOTHER SEQU

TODAY: PART 2

The city has literally become a post-apocalyptic flim, giving remaining citizens an impromptu adventure that leaves computer-generated scenes of falling buildings and devastation in its dust.

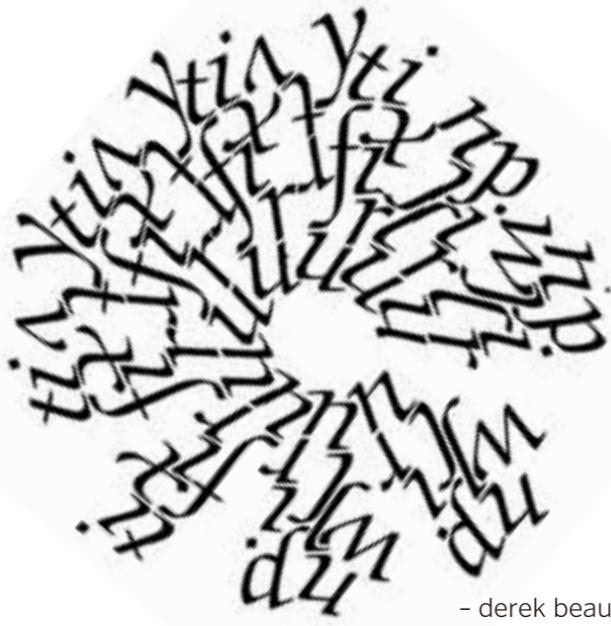
News, Page 7

AMONG THE DE

We've seen apocalyptic before, but never quite like this. Mil

CRASH KILLS
Emergency crews claim to have heard a rhythmic scratching from inside the cab before military crews took over.
Page C2

MALL OVERRUN
Countless teenagers have gone missing at the Mall.
Page E4



- derek beaulieu

Wanda

Wanda began with

Five and two-thirds bottle
Of Jimmy Dean
Uncle Jed
Johnny Walker whiskey
Bought most fortuitously with
Government money
At the
Five-and-Dime
On Point Severance Street.

Soon-to-be-Daddy,
Being a man with a
Hang-dog look,

Looked out from under his brow at
Soon-to-be-Mama

Working behind the counter
Beneath

What could only be estimated

To be
Approximately

Three wild turkeys

And a clutch of

Vodka Ice.

"Well, hi, pretty baby,

Pretty baby lady,"

Said Soon-to-be-Daddy,

Grinning out through the

Three teeth remaining unto

him.

Such a grin, boy,

Such a grin

That Soon-to-be-Mama,
Who had aspirations of going

Further,

Perhaps all the way to a
State college

And a house somewhere

With bland people everywhere

That was in need of

Shoveling,

Weeding

And

Cutting,

Such a grin that she forgot all about this,

Pushed the bottles over to him and said,

"Hi, Slim."

Which was not, as they say,

His name,

But rather a name a woman says when she means

something besides a greeting.

So says they

Anyway

On Point Severance Street.

It's this name she's calling out

'cause she doesn't know any better

When she is straddling him in the

Car seat

On the black top near the

Truck stop

On top of a Happy Meal wrapper.

- Sarah Gibbs

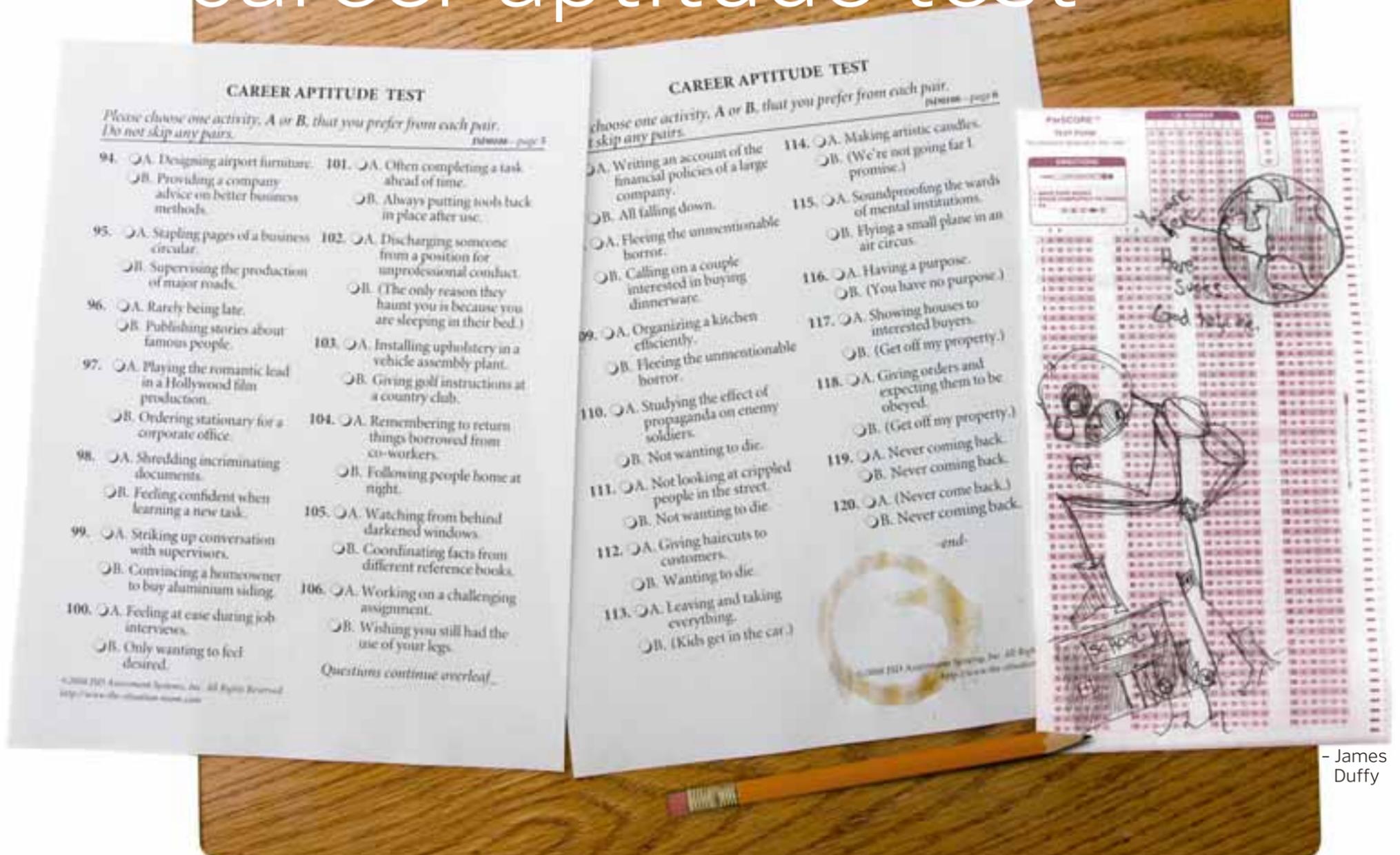
Introspection Rundown

(For Lisa McPherson)

It must have been cold, standing there in the road with her clothes strewn about on the snow, crying in the dark, cars rushing past far too fast to stop. She'd been in an accident, felt fine but wasn't thinking right; later, once she'd been dragged out of sight by those who follow round ring roads with demons in their eyes, they locked her away in room 174 (Rest and Relaxation) and burnt away her mind. By the time she was found she was broken and old, hands bruised and bloody from fighting the walls, nails cut short so she couldn't fight back, skin eaten away by the insects. They had good lawyers.

- James Duffy

career aptitude test



- James Duffy

Little Johnny sat on his potty. Johnny was getting bigger ALL the time, and he knew it! Each day he sat down on the potty, he could see the top of his head rising farther and farther up the mirror above the sink across from him. He marked how big he got with a line of red crayon (much to his mother's distress). Johnny could even poop all by himself now, and he was proud! He didn't tell anyone that sometimes he would hold in his poops for too long, and that it would make him cry to go to the bathroom. And since he never told anyone about this, no one could tell him that this was very very Bad for him...

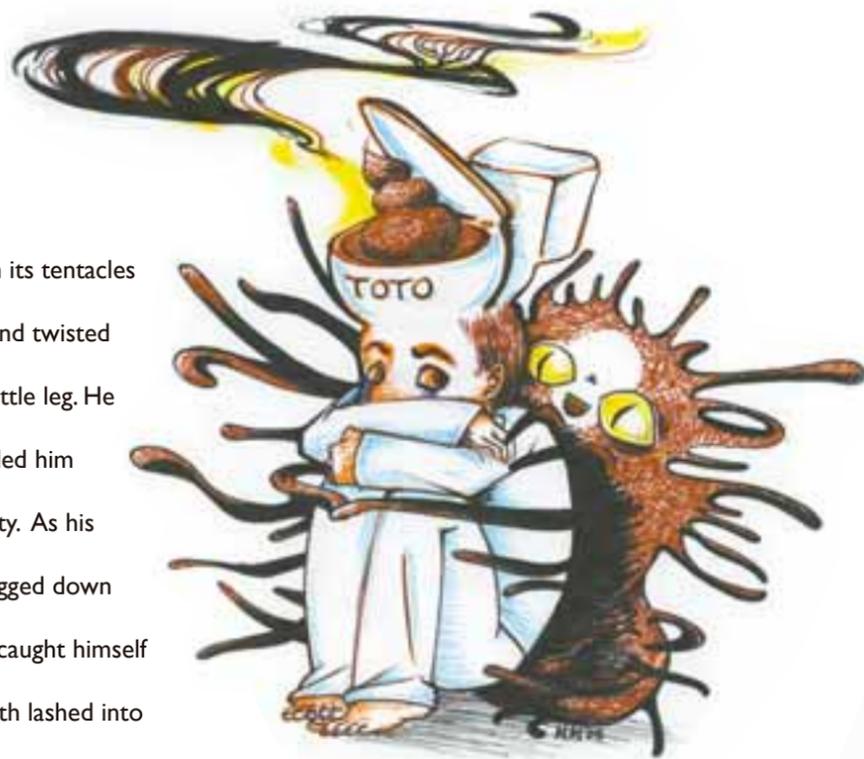
Little Johnny hadn't pooped for six WHOLE days, and he was having a hard time. His little bum pushed and pushed until he was purple in the face. He could see the top of his head slowly rise up to the top of his crayon marks, then it went two marks PAST his record! "Well done," he thought as he continued to strain. He was crying now, but with this new record on his mind, he felt that the pain was well worth it. BAM! The horrendous log popped right out of him splashing into the bowl below and wetting his bum. He grabbed a clump of toilet paper and went to wipe when he felt something slimy brush his bottom.

The tickle startled him. He looked between his legs. There, writhing in stinky brown water, was a black purple-veined creature with thousands of sickly

tentacles
seething
hungrily. Johnny
jumped back, but
the creature spun its tentacles
out of the bowl and twisted
around Johnny's little leg. He
squealed as it pulled him
back into the potty. As his
leg was being dragged down
the trap hole, he caught himself
in the mirror; teeth lashed into
his skin severing his little foot from his
little ankle. Feeling nothing, Johnny looked at himself sinking
down past his very first crayon mark, never to see it ever again.

The moral of the story is: never hold in your poops because it will turn into a monster inside of you and eat you if you wait too long.

- Ian Gregg



Sisyphus' Rocks

Sisyphus
stared
at the rock. Nay, it
was not a rock. It was
his tormentor. It was
Hades incarnate, this
damnably stone.

Each time he laid hands upon it, the jagged outcroppings of stone would cut their way into his flesh. Every ounce of pressure he committed to moving the bull-sized conflagration would push those stony blades deeper into his flesh. Comparisons of hot knives and butter did no justice to just how easily this rock ate its way into his palms with every exertion.

But eventually, with enough effort, he would start the boulder moving on its horrid journey up the mountain. Eventually, that was the key word. Eventually, he would get the rock up the mountain. Eventually, it would come back down and he would begin the torment yet again. Perhaps eventually was not the right word, inevitably seemed more fitting.

His blood was now pouring out of the wounds of his hands, each time the valves in his heart pumped more of the crimson liquid would spurt from his palms. The rock had for days been sporting a stripe of blood running its entire circumference, punctuated by the occasional off-set flower of a bloody handprint.

Sisyphus' hands slipped on the blood and the stone slipped with them. Not wanting to lose days of progress up the mountain, Sisyphus desperately threw his shoulder against the mockery of a rock to stop the slide. The razor teeth of the boulder dug into the meat of his arm as he stopped the rolling stone.

With every ounce of strength in his body he pushed into the stone. The rock tore his flesh deeply and he cried out. He had temporarily delayed its descent.

He stopped to rest and looked back down the mountain. Thanks in no small part to the trail of blood; he could trace his path almost to the bottom of the mountain. He had come this far, for what seemed like the millionth time. In reality, it was somewhere in the hundreds of thousands, but eternity has a way of playing tricks on your mind. He knew he would not die even though he had lost enough blood in the past few days of pushing to cover the great halls of Athens many times over. The gods were not merciful. He cursed them for what seemed like the millionth time. In reality, it was somewhere in the billions, but eternity has a way of playing tricks...

Sisyphus shook his head. He needed to finish his journey. Maybe after this trip he would be set free. Perhaps he would

be permitted to die. To spend eternity in nothingness would be as the fields of Elysium compared to this hell; which was, quite literally, Hell. He thrust his shoulder hard against the boulder and forced it on its way.

Finally, he could see the peak. The summit of the mountain he had climbed so many times. It was what he longed for. He could not remember his wife's face, nor his children's laughter, but he could always

remember the view from the top of the mountain. It was the barest moment in his eternity here that he could feel something resembling contentment. When he reached the top of the mountain, there was always the momentary hope that it would be for the last time.

With one final Herculean shove Sisyphus hurled the boulder up the mountain. It came to a rest at the very tip of the peak before starting its inexorable roll back down. As he had tried thousands of times before, Sisyphus tried to stop the hurtling rock. As had happened thousands of times before the stone crushed him underneath its suddenly insurmountable weight, crushing every bone in his body into brittle shards that seemed to individually claw their way through his skin. He looked out from the

top of the mountain and closed his eyes, perhaps this time death would come.

"Hey, Sid!"
Sid shook his head, clearing the cobwebs from his brain. "You daydreaming again buddy?" Sid looked around his cubicle trying to orient himself. Finally he slowly turned his chair towards the entrance of his eight foot by eight foot box.

The voice came from Persephone. Not the goddess who was

abducted by Hades for her great beauty and eventually made to live in the underworld for three months of the year Persephone. This was the ironically named Chartered Accountant Persephone, whose beauty would be cause for Hades to abduct her—if only to set her as guardian of the gates of Hell in place of a certain three headed dog.

"You're always daydreaming Silly Siddy," she chortled, "I hope you're daydreaming about me." She threw her

head back and laughed, spewing forth the tiny pieces of pita-bread still stuck in her teeth from lunch. They flew out in a wide arc landing on Sid's arm and leg. "Oops! Sorry!"

Persephone snorted, "I just get so excited when you're around Sid. You make me want to explode like Mount Vesuvius, in a hot steamy explosion!" Sid gagged a little bit at that clumsy attempt at innuendo.

"Explode. Volcano. Get it?" Persephone hyuk-hyuked like an obscenely ugly, middle-management-version of Goofy. "Yeah, I get it. Very funny." Sid muttered.

"Well, you better get back to work Siddy. Those accounts won't reconcile themselves!"

Persephone turned and wobbled off, her high-heels dangerously on the verge of collapse under her amply weighted ankles.

Sid turned back to his computer, next to it sat the paperwork for the Jupiter Engineering account. A pile that seemed as insurmountable as a mountain. He sighed, pulled off the first sheet and opened an Excel spreadsheet.

Sisyphus stared at the rock. Nay, it was not a rock. It was his tormentor. It was Hades incarnate, this damnably stone.

- Tim Ford



, 13, 15, 24, 37 and 45 were the numbers on page

of the newspaper that morning,

tucked in the bottom left hand corner below a massive article about a fire in the states.

I snuck from my room, avoided Donny's den, and saved my pants from the wash. I picked out juice damped tickets and licked them apart. My third read 7-13-15-24-37-45; the same six numbers out of forty-nine. An estimated jackpot of six million.

I shut myself in a closet and swallowed a third of a pack of cigarettes in the following hour. The lit ends raced towards my lips as if they were matches instead of cigs. The small space did not hold smoke well and a soft mattress of fog enveloped the naked light bulb above. I scratched between my thighs, put out my last cigarette on the wall, then drew it back and lit it again.

Should I go? Donny didn't read and the Hulk wouldn't remember my ticket numbers. They didn't need to know. Too bad if I won and they didn't, especially since we'd split the tickets even.

That wasn't what Donny would think. It was my idea, he'd say. I found the plastic gun and I did all the talking that night. Remember how scared the clerk was?

Just between you and me, Donny always had an overblown nose. Actually, I thought Hulk did the most scaring. We didn't need a plastic gun. The clerk, a tired youth dozing behind the counter, wet his pants when the Hulk tapped him on the temple. Hulk was hulk-ish and bald with more veins than Einstein's brain and a much better man than Donny.

Money, Donny had demanded that night. Money and beer. The clerk had emptied his register, whimpering and shuffling to hide the wet spot on his crotch. His fingers shook like mine did after a pack straight. The store floor had been dusty with crushed chips and a stain of cherry slush in one corner. The Hulk busied himself with juices and chips and mints.

Cigarettes and lottery tickets, I had added. We quick-picked each. I wanted my lucky numbers (thirteen and sixty-six) but we had neither time nor the leisure. And sixty-six was not a choice anyway. We took with urgency and fled even faster.

After escape in a beaten Toyota (Donny's sister's old car) with whiteout over the license plate, we split. I had watched the Hulk lurch towards his apartment; a single shared between five friends with sleeping bags hidden under a tower of unwashed underwear. I longed to slip out after him and slam the Toyota door. The image of the Hulk's ugly smile was warm against my chest. I had rubbed the chipped bridge of my nose and leaned my forehead on the passenger window. The cold glass matched my cold cuticles. No. I had to go home with Don that night, like every night.

My forgotten cigarette burned my knuckles. I cursed and lit another.

"Hulk, what do you say we take the money and go travel?" I tested, swirling my tongue between my teeth to taste the escaping smoke. If I couldn't say it in an empty closet, I could never say it to him. "I've won big. Real big. Maybe it's a sign."

Impossible. I knew the Hulk. He'd frown at me and say, "What about Don? We stick together."

"But Hulk," I muttered. I closed my eyes and pictured his broad shoulders filling up the closet door. My fingers left dusty, sweaty wrinkles on my ticket. The ticket edges were faded from juice and my too-tight-jean pockets. "But Hulk, this is once-in-a-life kind of money. I take it myself or we both spend it. I'm not giving anything to Donny."

Hulk never once gave me the answer I wanted, and a mere jackpot wouldn't change him. What if I really used the money myself? Maybe I'd buy an apartment in cash. I'd buy a year's supply of instant noodles and canned corn and powdered clam chowder, a month's supply of smoke and a hamster. I'd open a bank account. After I got the money and stashed the best part of it, I'd turn Donny in. Was that legal? He hadn't done anything real bad. I couldn't report him for attempted murder but that's what he'd attempt if I didn't: murder.

Sharing something so miraculous with Donny would destroy

all meaning, therefore out of the question. He'd buy a car or three, a house on the pinnacle of the hill, seven bachelor's parties for no reason, and forbid me my hamster. He'd plan for Hawaii instead of Egypt, Caribbean Cruises instead of Europe backpacking trips.

So I must take the money and move to Saskatchewan. Nobody would find me there. But Saskatchewan didn't have arcades. How would I survive without arcades? Without Terror House and Dance machines? I'd open one then. I'd use the money to move to Saskatchewan and open an arcade.

Elated and relieved, I jabbed the stub in my hand on the floor and smoothed out my ticket. I'd walk up to the... No, I couldn't walk up to the store clerk. The kid would recognize me,

if he remembered anything from that night. Besides, I had no receipt, no proof of purchase. Brainless blond bitch! I hated myself.

What if I called them? Borrowed someone's library card and used the library internet to apply for the money online. That was anonymous, wasn't it? No, no. My address was Donny's address. I couldn't expect them to wire the money into a non-existent bank account, or send a cheque straight up Donny's nose. Did they even accept internet claims?

And what if the clerk reported the stolen tickets? What if they knew and were waiting for me?

I pulled on my long pajamas and ground my heel into the newspaper. If I put on my shortest skirt and pinned my hair, perhaps I could find someone to claim the money for me. We'd split the six million half and half. Good deal, right?

Shit. If I couldn't find the right man in twenty nine years, I'd never get an honest one in time. Especially not without questions asked and nobody honest would cover for a criminal anyway.

If I found myself a man, what

would the Hulk do? The junk food happy kid would be devastated. I would be devastated. The Hulk and I had met through Donny, on one of his pep talks at the bar. Nobody paid Don

any attention except the unfortunate girlfriend, me. I had glanced sideways at the Hulk snapping gum by the counter, smiling a grotesque smile and drinking cheap beer.

I pictured Donny drowning in his mug, long nose dipping inside. I would've bought the kid a drink to celebrate.

"What should I do, Hulk?" I asked softly. I shook my empty box of cigarettes, crumpled it, and reached for a new box. I knew what the Hulk would do. He had the morals of a celibate monk, and would've been a social worker in another life.

Robbing the convenience store made him laugh. They overcharged for chips and smokes and slushies, he said. The store would have more than enough cash to spare. The registers at two in the morning were probably empty anyway.

He would've thought the jackpot an undeserved reward though. He would've scorned it and read a cheap detective paperback to pass the time.

Shit. I pictured the hamster I would've bought.

My neighbor owned a hamster when I was a little girl; brown with a white stripe across his back like a loose belt around a beer belly. I pictured one with ragged ears and a dark snout. I hugged and nuzzled a sock. It was poor replacement, but the rodent would have to wait.

I held the Hulk in my thoughts as I decided. I'd regret it right afterwards. I would. I would. My fingers itched beneath the skin where I couldn't scratch.

I took the ticket between my thumbs and index fingers. Ripped neatly. I felt a brief second of panic and tried to piece the ticket together, choking in the gloom. Calm settled over me as I remember I owned no tape.

Sighing, I celebrated the miracle by ripping more and rubbing paper pieces across my palms. Finally, my teeth tasting of bitter cold medicines and ash, I let the confetti flutter to the floor, falling between finished cigarettes.



The railroad

He is hoping hard at the dawn. He hates hoping hard at the dawn. He is hoping hard at the dawn and railroading his chinks. He is at the edge of hell. He runs his chinks along the blood of the railroad. He hates running his chinks along the blood of the railroad. He feels railroad. He feels rust. He is hard and rusting. He is rusting and hating. He is hoping completion. He is hoping completion about rusting. He hates hoping about completion. He hates hoping about rusting. He hates hoping about rusting completion. His hating spikes. His hating spikes railroads. He is hoping spikes about railroads. He hates hoping spikes about railroads. He is hoping railroads about hating rust. He railroads about hating. He railroads about rusting. He railroads about the hope of railroads. His hoping spikes. He bleeds about hoping. He bleeds about hoping the railroad of chinks. He is hoping chinks. He hates hoping about his chinks. He is hoping about his chinks as he railroads about his hoping. His chinks railroad. His hopings freeze. He hopes hell railroads his chinks. He hopes his chinks blood the railroad and freeze. He hates hoping that his chinks blood the railroad. His hate rusts. The train departs. Completion begins.

Acknowledgment to "The river has thumbs" in Lemon Hound by Markin-Flanagan visiting writer, Sinas Queryas.

- Dale Lee Kwong



- Helen Hajnoczky

dash

a simile smiles a lily while
your wordy gullet
belies the belly

your gut encloses
the lowercase ocean

I'm curled snug
as an ampersand
in your belly button

I'm the punk u ate

you're a cloud cutter
cut swathes in my cotton mouth
you're my skyscraper's blue nose

you give on the glider
while I lick your linoleum
then rip up the floor



you're my spectral snowbird
I raise a trickle toast to your return



throwing nickels
into the bowls of ohs
you slip an onion ring
onto my pinkie

my finger fills
the deep fried hole
sure as a clogged vein

sure as a nucleus
nestled in the centre of a cell
my finger fills your onion ring
answer to my gastric prayer

we defy verbal lowcal
crunch your breaded ohs

oh holy linoleum
with your reverent grout
I scrub your forehead's tiles
gleaming but for my thumbprints

I bow beneath your showerhead
step into the steam and sing

- Natalie Zina Walchots





ou, third row from the back in my tiny church. I've never seen you before but I fix my eyes on your face.

The sun beams through the stained glass windows, highlighting flecks of dust floating in air. Rows of pews, inhabited here and there by the aching bones of the faithful, a few of their children, a few of their grandchildren, the smell of musty old hymnbooks making them sneeze and then produce dusty Kleenexes from shirt sleeves. The organ at the front, the overhead projector, the pulpit.

Mr. Laurence, head of the elder's board, finishes introducing me as the new pastor. He puts his hand on my back and smiles wide, "Last but not least, the young reverend is unmarried!"

A rumble of chuckles from the crowd.

Third row from the back, you are not smiling.

"Lord bless him with a good wife!"

More chuckles.

"Thank you, Mr. Laurence," I say and step to the pulpit. He creaks down the steps to sit in the front row beside his wife. The Laurences had me over for dinner a week before, serving turkey and mashed potatoes and cranberries.

Mrs. Laurence poured gravy over my plate. "So what do you plan on preaching for your first sermon, Pastor?" "I was thinking about freedom in Christ."

Mrs. Laurence put down the gravy. "Do you really think so?" "Excuse me?"

"I mean, is that an appropriate sermon choice?"

"Do you have a suggestion?" "You should do as you feel led," she touched my hand, her skin cold. "But now that you mention it, I do have a few."

Third row from the back, you cross and uncross your legs.

Behind the pulpit, my throat shivering, I take a gulp of water and begin my sermon on the burden we all have to bear.

You get up and leave part way through.



You, three aisles away, your dark head bent over the back cover of a movie. I look down at my own video. Then -

"That was very puzzling," your breath whispering behind my ear.

"Excuse me?" I turn to look at you. Well-dressed, attractive, brunette.

"I don't understand British humor at all," you say.

"I haven't seen it," I put Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy back in its place.

"I wouldn't."

"Pardon?"

But you're sailing on towards the New Releases.

I move up and down the next aisle, fumble with Next Generations, read the cover, put it back, look at you under my eyebrows like invisible spectacles, gravitate to the end of the aisle, examine the floor to ceiling shelves.

A red shirted employee comes by, says something, I say something back, you glance up briefly, briefly, he wanders nears you, you slide your high heels towards him, he says something, you say something, he wanders off. I take a step sideways, you slide, I step, you slide, I step, we meet in front of an empty shelf and stare at it.

"So what would you recommend?" I say.

"That depends on what you feel like."

"I'll give you a hint." I grab The Exorcist.

"You're feeling possessed?"

"No, no!" I swivel into another aisle. The Ten Commandments.

"Possessed by Charlton Heston!"

Saved!

"Heard it was terrible!"

Bruce Almighty, Evan Almighty!

"We have a theme..."

The Preacher's Wife!

"You know, I didn't cry once during The Passion?"

"You didn't? I-"

"Yes I know. You cried bucketloads, didn't you?"

"What do you want then?" I say.

"Oh whatever you like." You skim your fingers across the rows of movies like playing a piano, select a title.

Coyote Ugly.

"I'm a temperance man."

Showgirls.

Striptease.

"I don't like your taste in movies."

"Fine," you say, move towards the door. "Good luck with your movie."

"Wait! We haven't decided what to watch yet."

"We?"

"I need your help."

"You make the options rather limited."

"I'm open minded," I say.

You pause, your handbag swinging in an arc in front of you. Tick tock, tick tock.

I take a step and you slide forward.



You, Anna, beside me, I beside you, and we're all alone in the middle of a massive field of stars. There is Orion's belt, studded with Alnitak, Alnilam, and Mintaka. The smell of nitrogen molecules lifting from the soil, the smell after the rain, before the worms emerge to sacrifice themselves to the rain gods.

You undo your belt.

"What do you think you're doing?" I ask.

"I'm being existential to see if you'll notice."

"Oh I notice," I say. "I notice you all the time."

The oxytocin in my bloodstream,

bonding to my veins in my hand,

bonding my hand to your

skin, now on your belly,

now on your thigh, if

you took one step

closer, softly, softly,

if you took one step

closer, you would step

past epidermis into my

inner organs, knitting bone

with bone. I wrap my wings

around you, the wings attached to

the tendons of my arms, soft like the

night sky, flannel like the night sky, and we

huddle together beneath them, heat rising,

foreheads touching, my breath overcoming

yours, the spice from your neck

between us, sometimes mingling

lips, sometimes daring to exist

in your space beneath this

organic canopy.



I watch you

while I preach

my sermon. You

slouch and pull the

bulletin into strips with

your fingers. The church,

full of shuffling, sighing, babies

screaming, the ceiling fan sifting air

and all I hear is the sound of paper

being ripped from the back row.

Dear Lord, I pray, please bless the heavens...

When I open my eyes, you're gone, only a pile of cream coloured rubbish on the seat of the pew left.

"Lord spoke to me through your words, Pastor," says Mrs. Laurence after the benediction, patting my hands in her dry grip. The soul of the black gospel is stifled in her tight face. There will be no hallelujahs wrung from

Mrs. Laurence. God is bound up in her hair. She has pierced him with bobby pins, all the way down to the scalp.

"Praise God you were touched," my eyes flit over hers, I'm looking for you, if you'd only stay for once.

"And I wasn't the only one," she passes my hand like a tract into young, smooth fingers.

"It was a very insightful interpretation," the lovely Hannah says, of the flowered skirt and the long blonde hair, angelic eyes, porcelain skin, the scent of roses clustering about her clothes. Christian clichés, worse than just normal ones.

Apparently she plays the keyboard beautifully and will accompany the hymn sing on Wednesday.

You would laugh if you saw her, squeeze my arm and sail off, laughing, laughing, laughing. You know I could never measure up to that.



I leave a trail of waterlogged footprints behind me as I walk across the carpet at midnight but I'm clean, a towel in hand applied to my hair. Then, it happens, the shell necklace you gave me - you said you were in Hawaii on a business trip and we looked, just looked, at each other - fell apart and all the shells come sliding off the string around my neck and scatter across the floor. I drop the towel and fall on my knees to gather them up - maybe it can be restrung if I collect all of them, every one, and rethread it myself, it could be done. I pause. There is a patch of light from the moon on the carpet so that it seems like the shells are stars tossed carelessly across the night sky. A galaxy spiraling through the universe, the universe on my carpet. I stare for a long time. I, a god, has made this happen.



We're playing Life today, you in the old terry houserobe, your bare legs stretch around the board, me still in my suit, the hem creeping up my calf, you laugh at me.

"How old are you, Pastor?"

"I hate it when you call me

Pastor."

"Only a really

old man



would wear

those socks."

"My mother knitted

them."

You say, "They're lovely. Suit you."

"It's your turn."

You pick up a career card. "Police officer."

"Now you can punish me anytime you like," I say. A joke. A joke?

"I wanted to be a clown when I was a kid."

"I hear the circus has a shortage."

"It's your turn," you say.

"I wanted to be an astronaut," I say.

"And at least you're still in the entertainment business."

"That's not funny." I sigh. "Want to draw again?"

"That's cheating."

"They say that your average person will switch careers five times in their lives," I say.

"Are you gonna change your clothes? We can pause the game."

"You're tired of looking at my socks."

You push the plastic spinner around with your toe.

I get up and go to the bedroom.

When I get back, you've already spun for me and moved my piece down the college track.



The lovely Hannah seated at the keyboard, her wrists move down its length, the last keys of the last song, I, smiling behind her, waiting to give the benediction so everyone can go home blessed, happy, stay, go, stay, go the Lord bless thee and keep thee...

You stand up, look around you, smooth the wrinkles on your shirt, and wade through the heavy scent of perfume and old religion, the Lord make His face shine upon thee, to the double doors of the parking lot, and be gracious unto thee, gasoline particles hovering outside cars...

The Lord lift His countenance upon thee, I hurry down the aisle after you, the crease running down the middle of my pants, each leg, hurrying too, dignified, important, the work of God.

I call your name, Anna, drag you back.

"I don't want to meet anyone," you say, but I say, "They want to meet you!"

"Pastors shouldn't lie," you say, and I say, "They're very nice people."

The foyer, its roasted coffee smell clinging to every word out of Mrs. Laurence's mouth.

"Meet a very close friend of mine," I say to her. You squirm, my hand around your elbow.

Mrs. Laurence, her mouth a twisted bobby pin.

"So this explains the dash down the aisle. Thanks heavens Hannah is so blessed with musical talent."

"Thank heavens," you

echo.

"Pastor, Pastor," someone is

calling me, waving me over to discuss some urgent theological business.

Mrs. Laurence takes your hand with both of hers.

I walk away to attend to the insistent parishioner. The lovely

Hannah sweeps to my side, latches onto my arm, the

arm you would hold, and looks up into

my face. I turn back to you,

but you are already gone,

pushing out the double doors, and you're laughing, now moving into the gasoline air.

The Greatest Space

- Meghan Doraty



It's a knockout endeavour

boxing feature

Cam Cotton-O'Brien
TLF Editor

He enters the ring wearing velvet. A Boxing Alberta-sanctioned Pro-Am event descended on the Bowness Sportplex on Sat., Mar. 15. After walking down a hallway where the candy machines were chained to the ground, turning left through a set of double doors, paying \$40 at a low-slung table set between these doors and another set of double doors that led into a gymnasium, the setting for the battles, a middle-aged woman stamped hands and motions towards the door. The bouncers were young boys somewhere between eight and 12-years-old, which is always comforting in the case of skirmishes.

The ring was set up in the middle of the gymnasium and metal chairs were set along the floor, a few rows deep on each side. There was a concession selling hotdogs in an enclave in one of the walls. Green beer—in honour of St. Patrick's Day, still two days away—was sold at a table in the back corner. Beer is necessary at a fight, so the audience drank it down even though it was pored with stunning ineptitude—close to 80 per cent foam.

Mohamed Nassar, a fourth-year University of Calgary student fighting on the top card of the amateur portion of the event, was having a mild case of the pre-fight jitters. He held a record of 8-0 going into the match.

"I'm feeling pretty nervous, you know," he said before the fight. "But once the bell goes for the first round, it all goes away. After the fight is over, [I] feel good again."

These jitters are understandable. Nassar weighed in that afternoon at 178 pounds, the

limit for the class, while his opponent came in at 171 pounds. It was hard to believe. Nassar was strong, but doesn't have the muscle definition characteristic of longtime weight-lifters. His opponent, on the other hand, did. The man looked like an action figure, or like a character from *Street Fighter*. A quick glance in his direction, standing just right of the entrance with a large blue hockey bag the mob might use for carrying bodies, immediately provoked a deep sense of fear for Nassar's sake. But, Nassar was quick to note, the tank was shorter, so he'd have the reach advantage.

"If I have a reach advantage, I don't care who you are," he said.

There are four fights scheduled before the top card. The first starts at 7:15 p.m. By 7:16 p.m., a punch landed to the face of an unfortunate boxer wearing the red shorts—each fight was divided between red and blue—opening up his nose with blood gushing everywhere. The ref temporarily stopped the round so that the trainer could wipe it off his face to no avail. After that, the fight might as well have ended. It was a cruel sight as red was scared and kept turning his back on blue. Blue was vicious and, each time this happened, the ref had to stop him from punching his apparently unwilling opponent in the back of the head. One of the officials sitting at ringside got up and talked to red's trainer and the fight was called with blue winning "by retirement."

The second fight was more evenly matched and both guys came out swinging. The draw of amateur boxing comes from getting the real amateurs in there, thinking boxing is really just a slug fest—more entertaining for non-connoisseurs. Despite the enthusiasm of the fighters, nothing monumental occurred. The fight ended after the scheduled two rounds. Meanwhile, Nassar stood near the entrance and warmed up, alternately bouncing on one foot

then the other in a characteristic style.

Fight three passed without much to speak of except a peculiar insight into the brutal nature of the sport, which came in the second round. The fighter in blue landed a combination and his opponent staggered back. Blue then backed off, apparently not wanting to hurt his opponent too much while his trainer shouted at him.

A big cheer went out when the fighter in red was announced for the fourth fight. He boxes for the same club as Nassar and both had a lot of friends in the crowd, which had filled up from its initial sparseness to a couple hundred people. The fighter in blue was booed from the crowd. He smiled and waved at them encouragingly, as a cheeky protest and then Then he won a split decision.

During the fight, Nassar, who was up next, stood poised near the DJ booth—which, for its part treated the crowd to such soulful numbers as "Still Dre" and "California Love."

Nassar entered the ring wearing red velvet shorts and a red velvet sleeveless shirt. His opponent was in non-regulation clothing. A black, athletic shirt and what appeared to be blue soccer shorts. The officials decided to let the fight proceed despite this, putting duct tape around his midsection to keep his shorts from falling off. These two were fighting in the senior weight division though Nassar is 21-years-old and his opponent, 28.

The fight started off slowly.

"I'm a reflection of my opponent," said Nassar. "If he works hard, I will work hard. If he carries a slow fight, I will carry a slow fight."

None of the first few punches were landed. Nassar started off trying to get some shots into the head, but after the first few failed to land, he decided to try the body. It was a good decision. He found the left side of his rival wide open. After the fight Nassar mentioned

that his opponent's midsection was like a wall. Nassar then tried a couple of tentative shots to the face. They didn't work. The fighter in blue, covering his head, left his side open for the rest of the fight to Nassar's took advantage—a constant and devastating parade of right hook to left kidney.

The only substantive blow Nassar sustained was slightly over a minute into the first round, when the muscle mass in blue landed a heavy right to his head, causing him to stagger back and readjust his helmet. He recovered, though, and came right back at him.

In the second round, Nassar came out swinging, landed a couple to the face and his opponent seemed to lose heart. For the remainder of the fight, he just launched big right bombs at Nassar's head, each one accompanied by an angry toilet grunt. None of them landed because Nassar was far too fast.

There was no recovery for blue. The fight ended after the scheduled three rounds. Nassar won—unanimous decision.

"I felt the fight went well," said Nassar. "For me it was like a shutout, it was completely on my side. The win was mine, guaranteed."

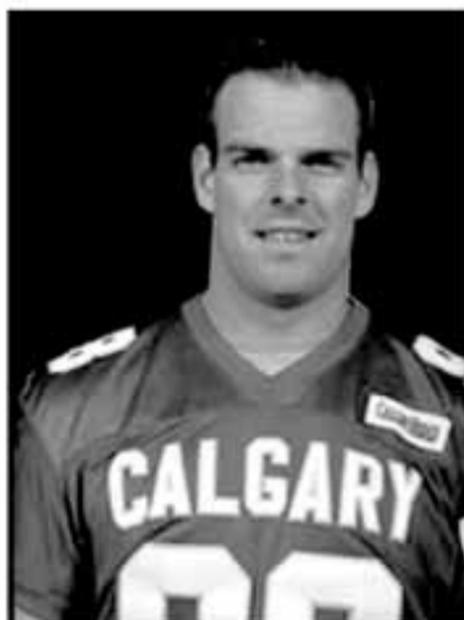
Perhaps it is this confidence that allows Nassar to fight in velvet style, he says, that is quite popular.

"That velvet, everybody wants that velvet," said Nassar. "As a matter of fact, the fight before mine I gave it to my friend so he was wearing it for his fight. We had to go around a corner to change, behind the crowd, but the crowd could look and see. I was wearing gloves, so I couldn't even change myself. That's how much he wanted to wear the velvet."

Nassar will carry his 9-0 record into a heavy schedule of fights in the near future.

"I have a fight this Sat. in Saskatchewan and next Sat. in Edmonton," said Nassar of his schedule. "It's fucking killing me, man."

Chris Pedersen/the Gauntlet



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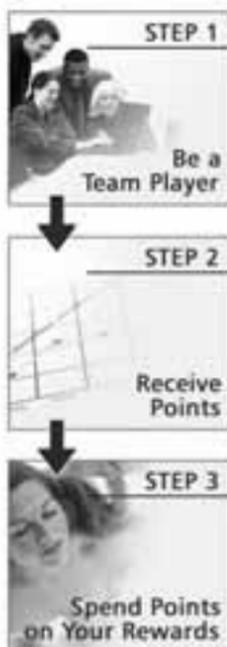
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The real DL on MLB

baseballpreview

With the Major League Baseball season soon upon us, resident Gauntlet baseball-buff Joshua Goard-Baker gives his two cents on the off-season happenings and his predictions for the 2008 prize-winners.

Joshua Goard-Baker
Gauntlet Sports

The off-season has been so jam-packed with interesting side stories that it is hard to believe, that as of this writing, we are less than a week away from opening day. The Mitchell Report and its allegations of steroid use have taken away from a game that has been growing in popularity ever since the 1994 lockout—the year the Expos should have won the World Series. Now the Expos are gone and Canada is left with one team that always seems to be on the edge of competitiveness, but in the American League east, it takes more than just talent to compete—take, for example, a \$200 million payroll. If Rogers Sportsnet Pacific has anything to say about it and Canada does actually possess a second team, they are located one hour south of the border in Vancouver's quasi-sister city, Seattle. The Mariners did make a splash in the off-season, acquiring some Canadian flavour (or flavor, depending on who you talk to). Ontario's own Eric Bedard was set free from the chains that bound him in one of America's ugliest cities, Baltimore. Not only does that city have one of the highest murder rates in the United States, it also has a baseball team that will finish last in the American League, not just the east. The Orioles jettisoned Bedard, Miguel Tejada and respectability in the off-season, replaced with the requisite claims of organizational rebuilding.

This preview will encompass the American League only, considering that there is only one or two teams

in the National League capable of competing for the world title. However, as spring training has worn on, the Mets have lost almost everyone of their stars to some type of injury and now have more holes than the ozone layer. Not even the acquisition of Johan Santana, which resulted in the depletion of their farm system, will be able to save New York's other team. So, without further ado, the following will be a ranking of American League teams, in the order of their finish and some of the reasons for that finish.

Boston Red Sox

The 2007 world champions did not skip a beat over the off-season. They are the deepest, most complete and possibly best team MLB has seen in the last 15 years. From top to bottom, their offence will pound that ball against any pitching staff in the American League. Over the off-season, "Red Sox Nation" resigned Mike Lowell, decided to keep Manny Ramirez, kept Johan Santana away from the Yankees, and, basically, reserved the status quo. Teams usually can't go through an off-season with limited player movement and expect to repeat championships, but that is just what the Red Sox did. With a strong farm system brimming with young pitchers and position players, the Red Sox might have actually gotten stronger without any significant signings. Clay Bucholz and Jon Lester, at the back end of the Red Sox rotation, represent an upgrade over an aging Curt Shilling. The only question mark for this team might be in the bullpen. Jonathan Papelbon and his atrocious dancing anchor the bullpen with Japanese import Hideki Okajima as the eighth-inning answer. Other than that, Mike Timlin, Julian Tavarez, Manny Delcarman, Javy Lopez and Kyle Snyder don't necessarily strike fear in the hearts of American League hitters. This may be the only way the Red Sox will falter in 2008, but if their starters make it to the sixth or seventh inning, then it is lights out for opponents.

Biggest surprise prediction for '08: J.D. Drew, the one mistake the Red Sox have made in the last few years will continue to be less than spectacular in his red socks.

No surprise prediction for '08: Josh Beckett is, and will be, good. Really good.

Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim

They have a really bad name, but this is the only team in the American League who might challenge the Boston Red Sox in the win column. Over the off-season, the Angels scored centre fielder Torii Hunter and will look to him to repeat his 25-plus homer and 100-plus RBI production. Add Hunter

to a lineup that consists of Bad Vlad Guerrero, Gary Matthews Jr., Casey Kotchman, Garret Anderson, future all-star Howie Kendrick, Chone Figgins and Juan Rivera and they will score runs. This is a team that has always had some exceptional starting and relief pitching, but has been searching for run producers. The bullpen is still exceptional, but now the only question mark lies in the starting rotation. Injuries have depleted the once-talented core of the Angels and Kelvim Escobar and John Lackey are both facing time on the DL. It is now left up to youngster Ervin Santana, who possesses a wealth of natural talent but has never really lived up to the hype. The addition of Jon Garland over the off-season does provide some stability and the continued development of Jered Weaver will make this team a very tough opponent in the American League. The Angels will easily win the west and should be playing in the American League championship series come Oct.

Biggest surprise prediction for '08: Not much of a surprise if you follow the Angels, but Howie Kendrick hits .330-plus with 20-plus homers and 100-plus RBIs.

No surprise prediction for '08: Vlad Guerrero settles into his new DH role and becomes an even more prolific RBI man.

Detroit Tigers

This team was the laughing stock of the American League for so many years, but now look what a little money and some good drafting can do for you. The off-season brought the biggest name into the Motor City when Miguel Cabrera found his way out of Miami and is now sitting nicely in the middle of the Tigers batting order. As a throw in to the deal, Dontrelle Willis, who not so long ago was thought to be one of the best young throwers in the league, is now anchoring the back end of the Tigers rotation. This team is as deep as any in the American League, but is now searching for a table setter with the recent injury to Curtis Granderson. Reports suggest that recent Blue Jay castoff Reed Johnson could be looked at as a replacement, along with bionic man Kenny Lofton, who is still searching for work. The Tigers are at a win-now stage and have given up most of their future in the hopes that a world championship is in the cards in the near future. With this in mind, any significant injuries over the course of the season might set this team on a downward spiral, especially injuries to the starting rotation. Kenny Rogers is not getting any younger and there isn't much in the farm system to be found as a replacement. The Tigers must also find a spot for clubhouse leader Brandon Inge who has expressed interest in leaving the Tigers after his starting job was given to Cabrera.

Biggest surprise prediction



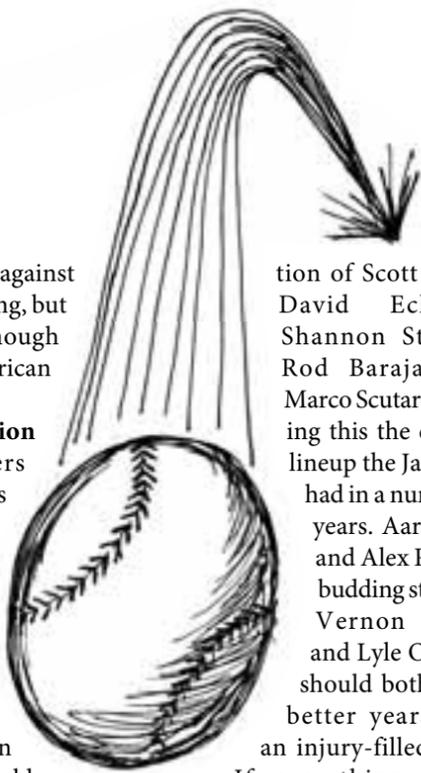
for '08: Cabrera falters against American League pitching, but the Tigers still have enough offence to win the American League Central.

No surprise prediction for '08: Kenny Rogers makes less than 20 starts and retires near or at the end of the season.

Things get dicey from here on and there are really five teams that could possibly win the wild card in the American League. Should the Tigers run into injury problems, the Cleveland Indians will most certainly supplant them in the central division. There is always something to be said for a sentimental pick and here it is: the Toronto Blue Jays will win the American League wild card. Now that you've stopped laughing, let me back up my claim.

Toronto Blue Jays

This team was thought to have one of the best offences in 2007, but forecasters said they would be hampered by shoddy starting pitching and a paper-thin bullpen. Well, nobody was right. The offence was horrendous and faced a rising tide of injuries throughout the season. The only constant was found in Frank Thomas clogging up the base paths. What wasn't expected was the discovery of the best pitching staff in the American League. Now that the calendar has turned to 2008, the Jays are hoping for the same production from their young hurlers and a return to form from what should be a potent offence. Roy Halladay, who is the best pitcher in Major League baseball right now, but who has always seemed to run into fluke injuries over the last few years, anchors the rotation. Halladay should win another Cy Young before his career is over and 2008 might be his year. Behind him lay the question marks. If the casual observer only looks at talent, A.J. Burnett and Dustin McGowan have two of the best arms in baseball, but Burnett cannot seem to put together a healthy season and McGowan is only scratching the surface of a young career. Past that, Shaun Marcum and Jesse Litch are two more young pitchers who have had great results early in their careers, but might be overachieving. In the bullpen, Jeremy Accardo emerged in the absence of B.J. Ryan and saved 30 games in 2007. Behind him, Scott Downs, Brandon League, Brian Wolfe, Randy Wells, Jason Frasor and Brian Tallet are all capable relievers and most were part of the bullpen that had one of the lowest ERAs in 2007. They must however rebound from the loss of Casey Jansen, but that should be offset by the return of Ryan sometime in early May. The offence is where the Blue Jays should find their resurgence in 2008 with the addi-



tion of Scott Rolen, David Eckstein, Shannon Stewart, Rod Barajas and Marco Scutaro, making this the deepest lineup the Jays have had in a number of years. Aaron Hill and Alex Rios are budding stars and Vernon Wells and Lyle Overbay should both enjoy better years after an injury-filled 2007.

If everything comes together, the Jays will win the wild card but things rarely happen this way and they might even be supplanted by the Tampa Rays in the American League east. All the same, my sentimental pick is for the Jays to be playing Oct. baseball for the first time since 1993.

Biggest surprise prediction for '08: Scott Rolen returns to his 2004 form now that he has returned to health.

No surprise prediction for '08: Frank Thomas is nearing the end and the Jays will have to realize that Adam Lind at Triple A is a better producer than Thomas will be at this stage of his career.

The rest

The remainder of the teams in the American League will shape up as follows. In the American League east, the Yankees and the Rays will both challenge for second place in the division. The Rays are on the cusp of being a power in the American League and have a prospect that won't miss in Evan Longoria. The Yankees are the Yankees and, as usual, are thin in the starting rotation but should hit the most homeruns in the American League and score enough runs to offset their deficiencies in pitching. The Orioles are going to be bad—really bad, rivaling the Tigers teams of the '90s—and could possibly lose 100 games. In the central division, the Cleveland Indians are another team that will challenge for the wild card and might bolster their win totals playing in a division that includes the Kansas City Royals, Chicago White Sox and Minnesota Twins.

The west is harder to predict. The Oakland Athletics are seemingly always in the race come Sep., but are again trying to unload their young pitching to remain with the money ball philosophy. The Texas Rangers did nothing significant in the off-season and will not be able to compete against most of the teams in the American League. The Seattle Mariners are the question mark of the west, as they have a very strong rotation but probably won't be able to score enough runs to really make a mark.

Take a look at next week's Gauntlet to see Josh's picks for the National League.

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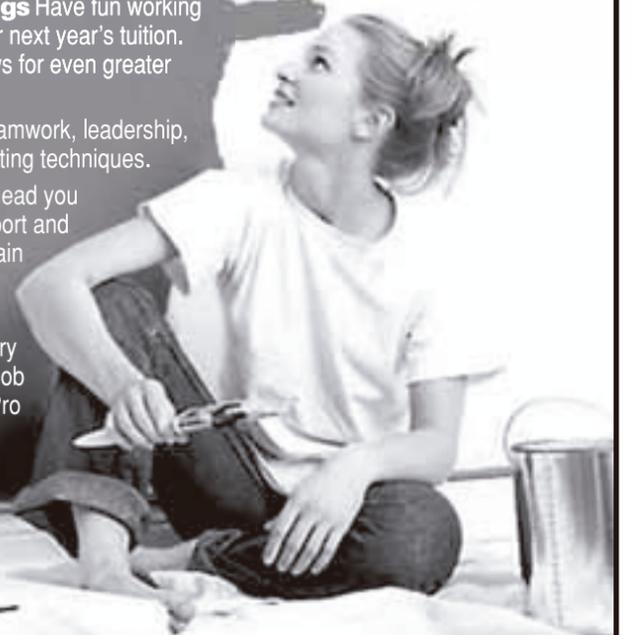
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Calgary pentathlete a prodigious success

playerprofile

Laura Bennett
Gauntlet Sports

As a fifth-year student-athlete, Joshua Riker-Fox knows a thing or two about multitasking. In fact, he does it exceptionally well. He has a job at the Calgary Winter Club, he fits in twenty training sessions per week and through it all, he has maintained a spot on the dean's list. He competed for the Dinos in three sports—volleyball, cross-country and track and field—and he competes on behalf of his nation in the modern pentathlon. This student of kinesiology and commerce is no ordinary fellow, but he exudes modesty beyond what one would assume to come from a Beijing-bound Olympian.

This attribute and many others could be traced to his roots in Delacour, AB, where he grew up on a farm with his parents and younger brother Joel. He began riding horses formally at the age of six and was introduced to running and swimming by his athletic parents. He competed in his first full pentathlon event at the age of thirteen.

"When I was a kid, I didn't really think of the long-term possibilities of the sport," says Riker-Fox of his involvement in the modern pentathlon. "I did it because it was fun, and at a young age I was exposed to horses and athletics. It wasn't until high school that I began to think seriously about it and, when I did, I

realized that there was a legitimate chance that I could take this somewhere."

That said, Riker-Fox points out that he was bit by the "Olympic bug" at the age of five during the 1988 Olympic Winter Games in Calgary, where he was awed by the idealistic notion of athletes who gave up everything to represent their country at an international level.

"I've never been a huge fan of professional sports, but something about the Olympics has always had me hooked," he says.

Riker-Fox frequently encounters questions about the nature of the modern pentathlon. A true interdisciplinary sport, it is composed of five events: a 200 metre freestyle swim, a 3000 metre cross country run, fencing, shooting and show-jumping. An Olympic sport since 1912, it was introduced by the modern Olympic games founder Pierre de Coubertin. Modelled on the original Greek military-inspired event during the Olympiads of the third century, it was created to challenge the "complete" athlete, as it still does today.

"My favourite part of the Pentathlon would have to be the riding component, because it's where I come from," reflects Riker-Fox. "There is something very unique about building a relationship with another living being, especially one that weighs 1200 pounds and jumps six feet high."

Athletes meet the horse that they will work with a mere twenty minutes before competition for two reasons:



Geoff MacIntosh/the Gauntlet

One of Riker-Fox's few moments of relaxation.

to mitigate the unfair advantages that would arise if athletes could purchase their own high-end horses and to encourage excellent horsemanship skills.

As an even greater testament to his broad athleticism, Riker-Fox was a member of the Dinos volleyball team under coach Greg Ryan during his first year at the University of Calgary. After one year with the volleyball team, he understood that he had to make long-term decisions in terms of his future with athletics.

calibre of competition on the track," says Riker-Fox. "Excellence breeds excellence, and I am very fortunate and proud to have been a part of that."

In terms of training adaptations, track and field coach Doug Lamont has been accommodating.

"Doug understood my situation from the beginning," explains Riker-Fox. "That has been a tremendous benefit."

Though he convokes with a double-degree in Jun., Riker-Fox may be back with the team soon if he goes through with his plans to complete a thesis-based MBA at the University of Calgary.

These experiences have culminated in Riker-Fox's achievements of setting the standard as the first Canadian male ever to qualify for a World Cup final and a spot on the podium at the Pan American games in Brazil in 2007. He has recently proved himself in Cairo and Budapest and he will compete in Madrid in Apr. as a buildup to the Olympics in Aug.

"I really admire his dedication and his work ethic," says junior national team member Melanie McCann. "He inspires everyone in his training environment, including myself."

Every amateur athlete knows that a high level of commitment to their sport is required to achieve excellence, but few athletes are required to distribute that commitment amongst five sports. Joshua Riker-Fox is one of the few that has met the challenge and the University of Calgary community should be proud to share in a part of his success.

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Gauntlet Sportspinions

The unexpected link between Britney Spears and college basketball

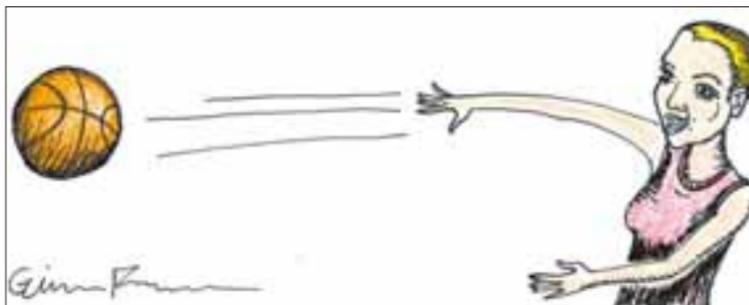


Austin Paladeau
Sports Columnist

March Madness and Britney Spears are eerily similar and say more about our society than you probably think.

For those of you who fall into either the category of knowing absolutely nothing about sports or nothing about pop culture, "March Madness" is the colloquial name given to the NCAA men's basketball tournament held annually every Mar. and Apr. Pitting the NCAA's best against one another, 64 teams figure into a bracket where single elimination sees the field whittled down to the

final four. The contest of the final four then produces, among other things, drama, highlight reel plays, crushed dreams and the crowning of the—theoretically—best team in college hoops. Alternatively, *Britney and Kevin: Chaotic* was a short-lived reality television series starring Britney Spears and rapper/dancer/all-around cheeseball Kevin Federline. Set against the backdrop of her European tour, the show follows their initial goings-on and subsequent marriage—all in an easily digestible five-episode run. On the surface, these two things appear to have nothing in common. One is the largest college sporting event in the western world, while the other shows the fairly mundane goings-on of an ill-fated marriage. You see, Britney and Kevin and the NCAA tournament go hand-in-hand



because they have come to symbolize everything that Canadian society wants and needs.

Consider this: every year, regardless of how top-heavy the tournament is, there is at least one team that upsets the favourite in the opening round and goes on an improbable run to the elite eight or final four. Last year, it was George Mason. This year it appears Stephon Curry and the 10th-ranked

Davidson Wildcats are the tournament's sweethearts. Everyone pulls for them to pull off upset after upset and overcome long odds to become champions. Kevin Federline was the Davidson of potential suitors to a then-young and vivacious Britney Spears. Overcoming long odds, he got to where all men wanted to be. As Canadians, we love the underdog story. If we didn't, no one would ever care about the Maple Leafs, as they

are the perennial hard-luck losers of the National Hockey League. Individually, we all want to be the person who rises above our natural position in life and succeed beyond everyone's wildest dreams. It is an instinctive desire. Thus, we as a society appreciate the Davidsons and K-Feds of the world.

What can we learn from the NCAA tournament and, to a lesser extent, the *Chaotic* series? Well, probably nothing. But maybe, just maybe, we can see a reflection of all the values we share as a Canadian society in it. We all pull for the underdog team because we see so much of our dream in those young men trying to beat the odds. So next time someone says their bracket got busted by some team that had no right winning, remind them they are being very un-Canadian.

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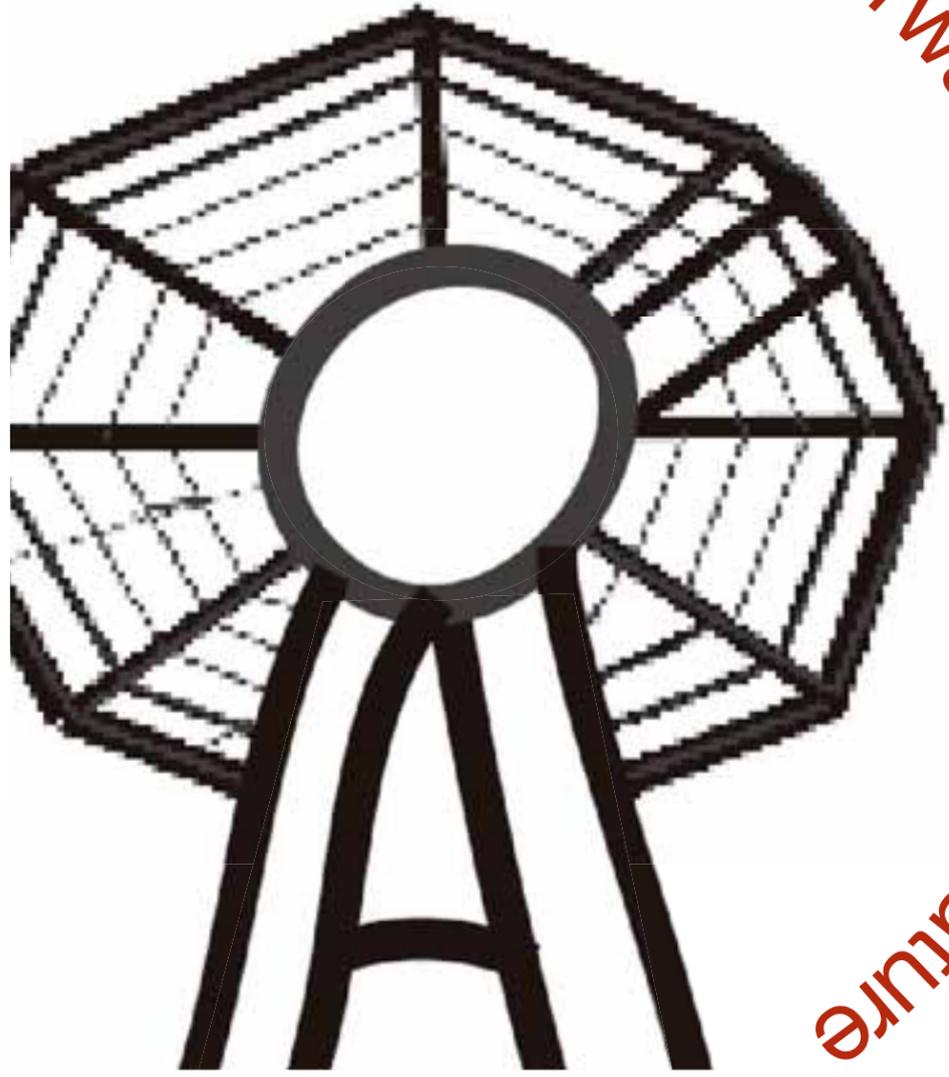
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TV airwaves: the way of the future

Christian Louden
Production Editor

The technology that promises to open up a new Internet broadband pipe worldwide—dubbed TV white space—has become a hot topic of debate in the United States, pitting computer and Internet technology industries against television broadcasters and manufacturers of wireless audio systems.

Specifically, white space refers to the unlicensed portion of the radio spectrum between television channels. In any given city, several portions of the spectrum between 54 and 598 megahertz aren't used, which serves as an excellent opportunity for Internet access technology to use up some of that empty space for affordable wireless broadband. There is especially a lot of TV white space available in rural areas, where this sort of thing would be most beneficial due to a lack of wired connections.

The high-to-very high frequency part of the spectrum provides potential for widespread broadband coverage across the world, particularly in rural areas, because of an ability to penetrate buildings and bad weather in addition to the infrastructure largely in place necessary for implementation. Though interest in developing the technology has been in the works for a

couple years, renewed focus on white space has come following Google's failed bid for a portion of the spectrum over 698 megahertz that will become available following the U.S.-mandated switch from analog television formats to digital. Google hoped the 700 megahertz band could be developed into a broadband Internet source. Ranked 15th out of 30 by the Organization For Economic Co-Operation and Development in Jun. 2007, the U.S. has been widely criticized for not having a solid plan to improve accessibility.

Now that the 700 megahertz band is no longer on the table, however, the Wireless Innovation Alliance—a coalition of several industry leaders including Google, Microsoft, Dell and HP—is the best chance for the development of a new broadband Internet source. The road to a new viable broadband pipe seems long and treacherous with increasing hostility from TV broadcasters who worry the use of TV white space will cause interference for their broadcasts, worried the white space devices currently in development won't be up to the task of properly distinguishing between occupied and unoccupied space.

The Sports Technology Alliance, which includes representatives from MLB, NASCAR, NBA, NCAA, NFL, NHL, The PGA Tour and

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ESPN are among dissenters to the introduction of unlicensed devices into the white spaces. Their main complaint lies within the potential of such devices interfering with their audio equipment. In a letter sent to the U.S. Federal Communication Commission on behalf of the STA, the Association for Maximum Service Television claims, "The overwhelming majority of wireless microphones, wireless video assist devices and related audio equipment use the TV white space channels for communications."

"The 'spectrum sensing' scanners used by these devices cannot reliably detect occupied digital television channels and are easily broken," read another letter filed by MSTV to the FCC. The concern certainly doesn't seem unfounded. Even today, when tuning in a radio, one can often find that awkward point at which you receive signals from two different sources, leading to a jumbled amalgamation of two radio stations. That's precisely what MSTV thinks will happen if TV white spaces are moved into.

However, the WIA seems unphased by these claims as they continue to work on developing white space devices that sense digital broadcast and wireless audio signals so as not to interfere with them. It's been a rough ride along the way though, as MSTV has rightly

pointed out the devices that have been developed thus far have been unable to get the job done. Still, despite hostility, there seems to be plenty of support for the technology, but not just for use as an Internet access point.

The website mentions the idea of using trailer-mounted communications towers running on unlicensed air for maintaining a communication line in disaster areas where infrastructure has been damaged. The technology is also expected to bring television directly to mobile devices anywhere they go, allowing users watch the news or their favourite TV show on the train or bus ride to work.

It can also be used for greater reliability for communication during emergencies for first responders, according to the site.

"Aerial video surveillance provides safety officials with a live aerial view for routine surveillance or to a major events or disasters. With aerial video surveillance, an 'eye in the sky' transmits video images back to the ground via the city's unlicensed wireless mesh network," the site said.



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Student theatre flies to new heights

Taking Flight theatre preview

Jordyn Marcellus
E&P Editor

It's hard at times to see what the drama department's productions are all about. As a school, we don't celebrate their work like we should. They often spend their times locked in the depths of Craigie Hall and then mount their shows to little campus fanfare, an example of campus apathy in action. As we enter the other side of Mar., the drama department swings open its doors to present the year-end celebration of student work, Taking Flight. The festival, entering its fourth year, will take place Apr. 1-14 in venues throughout campus. Graduate and undergraduate students alike are taking to the stage to show off their latest creative work.

"It's a festival situation, so each of us [directors] comes up with our own projects," explains graduate student Jamie Dunston. "Since we're also part of the Taking Flight machine, we work on our own but also have each other as a support system. So all the designers and directors are helping each other out to make top-quality works. I'm working with a graduate lighting, set and costume designer. My sound designer is an undergrad student and my cast has several undergrad students and the play that I'm directing is written by a grad student."

Only in a festival situation like Taking Flight can you see a collective piece showing off movement



Students showcase the highest forms of clowning as part of Taking Flight.

work by a clown or a piece by a graduate student featuring male convicts and a female playwright working together in prison. Because of the disparate nature involved in the productions, there's a wide variety of learning experiences for students. Instead of doing the traditional scriptwork, they can use their body to create an entirely new character.

"I teach a workshop titled 'From Mask to Clown' and what they've been doing so far is just the training for the show," explains visiting artist John Turner. "There's been a lot of intensive mask-making—the students have already made six masks which are the guidepost to the clown. They've sort of just been born as clowns now."

These aren't the kind of clowns you'd take to birthday parties. People are usually acquainted with the Bozo-style of clowning: seltzer bottles, a red skulllet and funny shoes. Turner clears up some of the common misconceptions inherent in the public's ideas about the supposedly floppy-shoed rascallions—you don't get your red nose immediately, you have to earn it by making masks.

"Most people who have done mask and clown work won't recognize this style," says Turner. "This is all internal work. The masks are created by the student where they don't even get to see as they're creating the mold and the clay. The masks are created out the feeling inside the body and [with] body, mind and

image work. Each mask represents the six directions of the self."

Not only are the plays being produced by students, but student actors also get to take to the stage to show off their skills. Unlike traditional expectations of flat dialogue and wooden expressions, these student actors are able to emote so fantastically without chewing the scenery.

"I've been so amazed at how skilled the undergrad actors are," says Dunston. "During the auditions, I was amazed at the turnout and [that] there were so many phenomenal actors out there. I was also a little sad because they weren't all used in the festival."

Even in the clowning workshop, the students are able to

take the high-concept workload and rise to the challenge. Turner was suitably impressed with his young charges.

"They're having a blast," says Turner. "It generally is a pretty high fun-rating workshop. They've done really well too. There's real enthusiasm and they show such talent in what they do. The students are putting a lot of enthusiasm and energy into the work, which makes my job so pleasurable."

Although this is a drama department talent showcase, the actors come from all across campus. Students in all faculties can participate in the festival, providing an opportunity for curious folks to see just what those mysterious kids in the drama program are doing.

"We have quite a few non-drama students taking part," explains Dunston. "In fact, the male actor in my play is a non-drama student. There tends to be a bit of a vocabulary difference, but I love working with these drama students as well as the non-drama ones. [Outsiders bring] a really fresh perspective to acting that you wouldn't get otherwise when you take acting classes."

Fresh perspective is what the Taking Flight festival is really about. These students are beginning to leave the nest of their comforts and spread their wings creatively. With that in mind, it's an opportunity for everyone to discover something a little more exciting in the Apr. buildup to finals.

Taking Flight flies into campus Apr. 1-14. Tickets are available at Campus Ticket Centre.

Mount Royal closes season with daring play

Spring Awakening theatre preview

Ryan Pike
Entertainment Editor

A common saying in the entertainment industry is "sex sells." Historically, though, sexual content in a play often coincides with that play shutting down early. Such acclaimed works as Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, George Bernard Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession* and Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* have seen productions ground to a halt on account of their more titillating content. Mount Royal College has chosen to close out its season with a production of Frank Wedekind's *Spring Awakening*. The play, originally performed in Germany, features a myriad of human behaviours—including masturbation, abortion, homosexuality and suicide—along with a rather colourful history.

"When it was played in New York in 1917, it was allowed one performance, and

that was a matinee and then they closed it down right after that," explains director and Mount Royal instructor Kevin McKendrick. "The reason I got excited about it was a year ago at Christmas, I was in New York and I saw the musical *Spring Awakening*, which is based on the play. It's sort of like a rock opera and it won the Tony Award for Best Musical last year. It was just a terrific experience."

Despite containing the same content as the original, the musical *Spring Awakening* didn't make an impression on McKendrick due to its subject matter. Instead, he was struck by something else.

"What really knocked me out was the audience was made equally of young people and parents," says McKendrick. "It wasn't a show that looked like a family show *per se* and it wasn't a show for adults that were just taking their kids along. Both segments of the audience were equally captivated."

When he returned to Calgary, McKendrick began putting the wheels in motion to bring *Spring Awakening* to the stage. He notes the Mount Royal production, utilizing a translation from the original German by

British playwright Edward Bond, remains accessible to audiences despite having been written many years ago.

"What's special about the play is that it's told from a young person's point of view," shares McKendrick. "The best description that I've heard on the play is it's this withering attack on a society that places a higher emphasis on outward appearance than on the natural instincts of its young people. Because all the major characters are those young people, you do get a more genuine perspective on the issues."

McKendrick notes that the composition of the cast made conveying the message of the play easy. Portraying the play's older characters posed more of a problem.

"The protagonists are about 14 or 15 years of age and we've got people in the cast who are 18 or 19," he elaborates. You don't have 30-year-olds trying to play 15-year-olds. The challenge for us was on the other side. How do we get the older adults playing parents or school headmasters to come across as being authentic? What we've done is go with a more expressionistic interpretation so that all the

teachers, for example, are more androgynous. They're actually all played by women, but they're not trying to be men and they're not trying to be women, so it has a more stylistic approach. All the adults are more representational and the other people are played as truthfully as we can possibly do it."

Given *Spring Awakening's* colourful history and subject matter, it's may seem prudent to warn audience members of the squirm-inducing scenes taking place. McKendrick admires the boldness of the play and its cast and personally opposes advisory notices.

"I'm opposed to the idea of putting out audience advisories," he says. "As long as you do things tastefully, I don't think you should have to be warning the audience about life. This is a show that deals with teenage confusion and sexuality. It's not just about sex, it's about peer pressure and surviving and excelling at school under difficult circumstances. I think it's a compelling story and it's told really well by this very talented group of performers."

Spring Awakening runs Mar. 27-29 at MRC's Wright Theatre.



courtesy Stage Fright Publicity

Born Ruffians music interview

Jordyn Marcellus
E&P Editor

Long road trips are a pain in the ass. Sitting in a van as you drive the long distance can be an excruciating experience for a sticky-fingered five-year-old hopped up on truck stop candy. Ontario indie rockers the Born Ruffians have managed to figure out the secret to entertaining themselves as they barrel down the highway to the next gig.

"[Drummer] Steve [Hamelin] is a big *He-Man* fan and bought the first season on DVD," laugh Mitch DeRosier. "That's 66 episodes of *He-Man*. We'll frequently watch them in the van or in the hotel room. Now we've developed a lot of *He-Man* slang that can be used in any given situation."

Sitting in a van can be a maddening experience, especially if the crew you're with may not have the time to hop into the shower. Sometimes you need to invent new lingo to describe the madness-inducing mundanity that comes from living in a van.

"In the next leg of the tour we have a lot of long drives, so we like to say that we have to 'He-Man' through the next bit of tour," jokes DeRosier. "Then, we can 'Prince Adam'—which describes a period of recovering or being a bit of a wuss—in Victoria."

The Born Ruffians, who recorded their first EP in 2006, are now on tour for their latest LP *Red, Yellow and Blue*. The album, which has been lauded by music blogs and Pitchfork Media, is the first foray into making a full-length record. With an actual album release and the beginnings of ubiquity that brings, the group has suddenly found themselves gaining a fanbase.

"With the release of the EP, we played a lot of shows where people wouldn't know the songs or cheer along," says DeRosier. "But we were in L.A. last night and there was this really huge crowd with the most people we've seen on tour, singing along and shouting out for songs. That's pretty much what I was looking forward to playing in a band five-and-a-half years ago when we started up in high school."

DeRosier, 21, and the Born Ruffians have been touring with another young Canadian upstart musician: Rollie Pemberton of Cadence Weapon. While the guys have rocked the shit out of venues all across the states, there have been some more unsavoury moments on the road for two acts.

"Rollie was given this hoodie by his girlfriend for his birthday and it was the last thing he got from her before he left on tour," explains DeRosier. "It was our third show and he had his hoodie stolen. We're pretty sure that we know who it was. There was this girl who tried to steal this t-shirt from the merch table, tried to record the entire show after attempting to steal off the merch table. It was this rough way to start off the tour, but once we hit New York, we got him one as a gift to replace it."

The Independent Film Channel, in an attempt to document the experience of lesser-known bands on the road, has sent out film crews to tape the real world experience and road rules that accompany the touring life.

"It's not like a silly MTV diary kind of thing but instead a straight-up show about touring," says DeRosier. "There's going to be a show coming out called *The Raw Side*. It's going to be mostly Canadian bands and the show's about following [them] on tour and seeing what the touring experience is like. The film crew left us in Phoenix which is kind of a relief because we haven't done anything like that before. Touring is difficult enough on its own and then we'd have to arrange a film crew who want to stop for a scene because of nice lighting and we'd just want to keep driving."

He-Manning through the film crew's weird indulgences, hoodie thefts and the rigours of candy-induced bellyaches, the Ruffians found themselves finally playing the mecca of indie rockdom—Austin's South by Southwest festival.

"It was really awesome," says DeRosier. "It was our first time ever being [at SXSW], even as fans, and it blew our tiny minds when we got there. We only played three shows, so that helped make it less hectic and more fun."

Born Ruffians play the HiFi Club Sat., Mar. 29 at 8 p.m.

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Fame, fortune and iPods for Feist

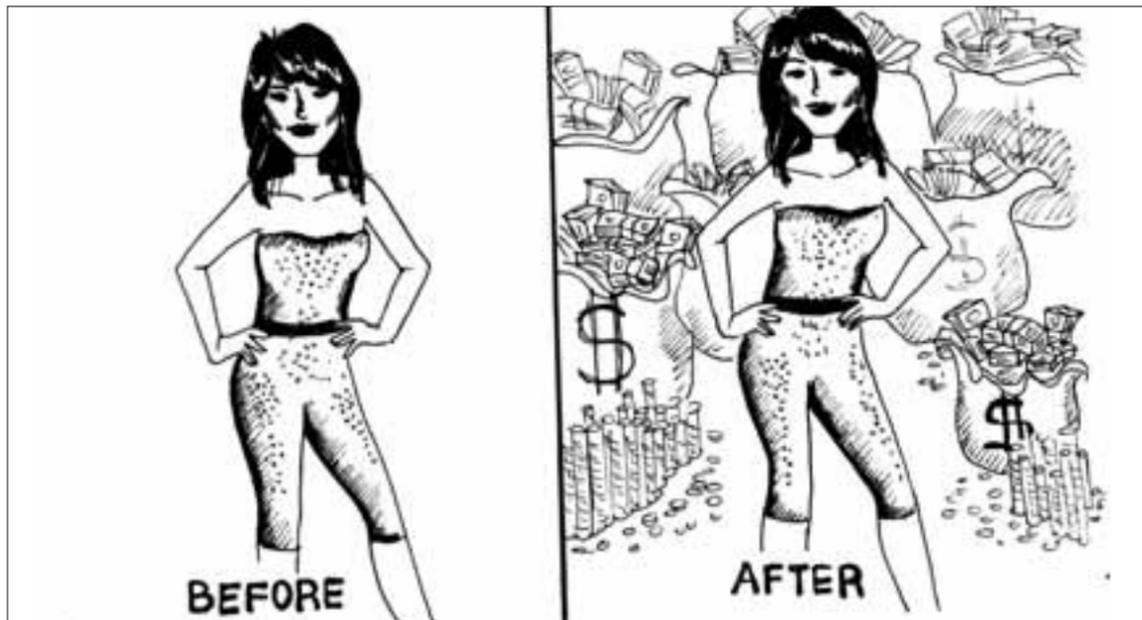


Jordyn Marcellus
E&P Editor

Calgary's own Leslie Feist is coming home next weekend for the Junos and one hopes she wins the whole haul. Nominated in such prestigious categories as artist, album and single of the year, there's no doubt that Feist has finally begun to break on through to the other side of music: mainstream success. There's this one little nagging aspect of her popularity—how did it really come about? Is her success because of countless hours spent touring and playing shows or because of one commercial?

While Feist has worked many long and hard hours on the road, ultimately, her real success came with the famous iPod Nano commercial. Anyone who disagrees with this controversial statement only needs to look at some simple numbers.

Feist's opening week numbers were quite solid. Her album peaked at number 16 on the Billboard charts in the U.S. selling 31,000 copies of *the Reminder* while reaching the number 2 slot in Canada by selling 18,000 copies. These are solid, unspectacular numbers for a lesser-known songstress from Canada. Then the iPod commercial hit television screens, selling



Gina Freeman/The Gauntlet

the brand spankin' new Nano to the tune of "1 2 3 4." Suddenly the song blasted its way up the iTunes music store chart and people were buying the album *en masse*. By the end of 2007, Feist's *the Reminder* was the most purchased album of the year on iTunes. By Jan. 2008 Feist had performed on *Saturday Night Live*, sold 515,000 albums in the U.S. alone and was gearing up to play at the Grammys.

Those who doubt this meteoric rise in fame wasn't, at least in part, because of the iPod commercial are pretty misinformed. Because of one simple 30-second commercial, Leslie Feist reached meteoric fame.

There's one wrinkle with this huge increase in fame. There is a rift

created between the old school fans and the new school ones, as well as introducing the most-dreaded term in music: "selling out." While it's a huge financial boon to artists, as they often net more money than the sales of their album in stores, it also leads to a whiny pretentious fanbase that feels left out by the sudden influx of hangers-on and wannabes who saw a commercial.

There's a strange and delicate balance when it comes to commercials. The money from commercial licensing for a struggling artist can be incredibly useful. What's more, the publicity can help launch careers. Bands like the Dandy Warhols exploded in Europe because of a cell phone commercial.

The publicity from the commercial translated to success for the band, selling out shows and headlining performances at music festivals that previously wouldn't have given them the time of day. No longer were they playing shitty dive bars, but hotels with *towels* and *bar soap*! This was explored in the documentary *DiGi!*, showing how a little commercial licensing can help spawn commercial success. Comparatively, older fans of the Dandies felt they had sold themselves out to reach success.

In so many ways, the opportunity to get music to a mainstream audience through television or film is the perfect stepping-stone to an artist's career. People's tastes

are fickle. No one in their right mind spends hours upon hours combing over the latest music mags and indie rock rags trying to find the coolest new tunes to show off their skills. People like to listen to catchy pop music. It's why the iPod commercials have been so successful: they use evocative, catchy music to hook in viewers and then sell the product with a feel-good message. It's a deal with a velvet-lined devil—often the products being sold are frivolous, but the money and exposure is incredibly useful for the artist.

Would Feist be nominated for a Grammy or a Juno if she hadn't been on a commercial? No. Most people on the street couldn't name the albums she created beforehand (*Monarch (Let Your Jewelled Head Down)*, *Let it Die* and the remix CD *Open Season*). It's hard to get real publicity and paying your dues can be a long and hard-fought process. Unless a band's entire aesthetic is based on rejecting commercialism, then it should be fine to fans for them to offer up their music for a commercial. Musicians need to eat too and commercials are a good opportunity for bands to put food on the table. It's selfish for fans to whine and stamp their feet when an artist gains new fans, money and notoriety. Musicians want to make music for a living, and commercials allow them to do that. It's an unfortunate reality, but that's what it is.

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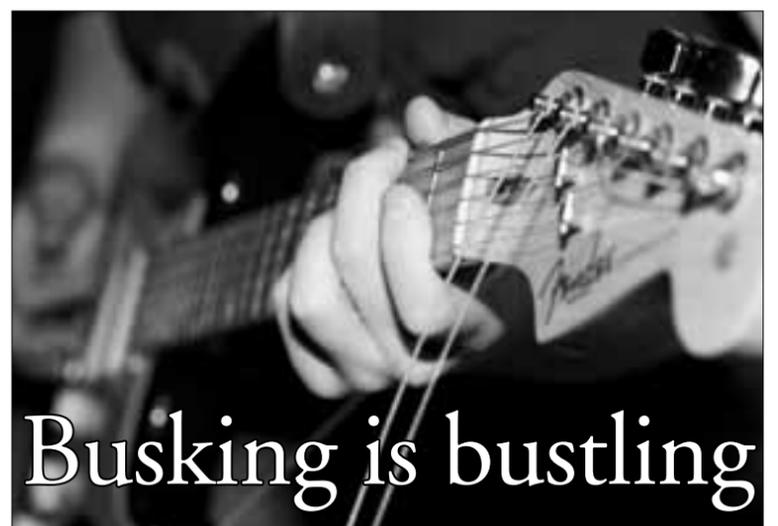
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Busking is bustling

Katy Anderson/The Gauntlet

Busking For Smiles music preview

Ryan Pike
Entertainment Editor

The romantic image of the guitar player, armed with only his wits and his instrument, travelling around the countryside has been engraved in the minds of musicians and fans alike since the days of Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash and Bo Diddley's classic 1960 album, *Have Guitar Will Travel*. In an era of electronic beeps and boops and online downloading, that image is kept alive by a precious few that includes University of Calgary student club Busking for Smiles.

Initially set up in 1999 when a pair of friends thought it would be fun to busk in the foyer of the Social Sciences building, Busking for Smiles eventually grew into a bona fide campus institution. The club hosts an open mike every other Tue. night at the Black Lounge, aimed at getting curious students off their duffs and in front of a microphone to try their hand at playing whatever their hearts desire.

"One of the best things about open mike is it gives people who've never had a chance to ever sing into a mike or hooked up to any sort of equipment a chance to do that in a setting that's not really pressured," says club president Brett Murphy.

see BUSKING, pg. 28

Mountain climbing to the top

Vancouver rockers gearing up for touring

Black Mountain
music interview

Darren Young

Gauntlet Entertainment

Though two or three of the members of Black Mountain have worked for the Insite supervised injection pilot project in Vancouver, you probably will not hear them make a big fuss about it. The project has been a controversial issue for Canadians, specifically in the eyes of the Conservative government attempting to dispose of it, but Black Mountain would much rather focus on their music than comment on Insite. To them, Insite provides work and money to fund their real passion—touring.

“[Insite] is really just a job for [the members of the band working there],” says keyboardist Jeremy Schmidt. “They’re really appreciative of our endeavors as a band and are flexible to our schedule. I think a lot of the people who run that stuff are people who have known the band for a long time.”

Schmidt reserves opinions, not waving flags for or against the issue. This is probably a smart commercial move, considering the increasing number of bands out there whose political agendas have begun to outweigh the quality of their music à la Bono and U2. It also represents the natural and basic approach Black Mountain takes to writing songs. While their new album *In The Future* boasts a 17-minute track entitled “Bright Lights,” Schmidt is adamant about the inherent simplicity behind the music.



courtesy Jagjaguwar

The members of Black Mountain all resist the urge to admire awesome beards.

“I didn’t even really start playing music until I was about 19 or 20,” explains Schmidt. “When I started playing music, I was listening to The Jesus and Mary Chain thinking, ‘there’s only two chords in the bass line, I think I can do this.’ That’s what drew me in—I found the simplicity of certain things to be quite compelling.”

This is not to say Black Mountain is musically illiterate, but rather conscious of making great songs without getting overcomplicated. In the context of *In The Future*, this is an apt description for its rhythmic, guitar-driven, slowly

meandering arrangements reminiscent of Volkswagen vans, shag carpeting and other psychedelic artifacts. There are no fast changes, and plenty of openly drifting moments to mellow out to. Schmidt characterizes the sound of *In The Future* by virtue of the recording process.

“We wanted to make music that sounded like an album in the very traditional sense of a record album,” says Schmidt. “We were in the studio for two weeks, a pretty concentrated period of time, and pretty much camped out there. You get these moments of cabin hysteria that occur at four

in the morning after being in the studio for three days. It was like an album-making boot camp.”

With the manic recording sessions behind them for the time being, Black Mountain are geared up to transition from album-making boot camp to touring boot camp. The band is planning to spend most of 2008 on a tour bus to promote *In The Future* and is looking forward to the day they may not need a day job in between tours.

Black Mountain plays the Warehouse Tue., Apr. 1.

VOX

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TOP 20 for the week of
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- * Denotes Canadian Artist
** Denotes Local Artist
- 1 **DESTROYER***
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- 2 **CADENCE WEAPON***
Afterparty Babies (Upper Class)
- 3 **THE DIRTBOMBS**
We Have You Surrounded (In The Red)
- 4 **CRYSTAL CASTLES***
Crystal Castles (Last Gang)
- 5 **THE NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL****
Live At CJSW (indie)
- 6 **BLACK MOUNTAIN***
In The Future (Scratch)
- 7 **BRADEN FUNCHNER****
Duthie Birthday Demo 2008 (indie)
- 8 **LADYHAWK***
Shots (Jagjaguwar)
- 9 **PLANTS AND ANIMALS***
Parc Avenue (Secret City)
- 10 **FUCKED CORPSE***
Apple Meat / Rising Tide 7" (indie)
- 11 **CAT POWER**
Jukebox (Matador)
- 12 **HEALTH**
Heaven 12" (Flemish Eye)
- 13 **THE PHOTOGRAPHIC**
Pictures Of A Changing World (Via Galaxia)
- 14 **THE RAVEONETTES**
Lust Lust Lust (Vice)
- 15 **JANE VAIN & THE DARK MATTER****
Love Is Where The Smoke Is (Rectangle)
- 16 **GERRY HEBERT QUARTET****
The Beat Niq Sessions Volume 2: Constructive Interference (Plunge)
- 17 **MANNEQUIN DEPRESSIVES****
Girls Are Evil (Klankboom)
- 18 **HOT CHIP**
Made In The Dark (EMI)
- 19 **SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE**
Sea From Shore (Thrill Jockey)
- 20 **HUTCHINSON ANDREW TRIP****
Music Box (Chronograph)

FOLK/ROOTS/BLUES

- 1 **JIM WHITE**
Transnormal Skiperoo (Luaka Bop)
- 2 **THE WACO BROTHERS**
Waco Express: Live And Kickin' At Schubas Tavern (Bloodshot)
- 3 **VARIOUS**
Classic African American Gospel (Smithsonian Folkways)
- 4 **MARK PICKEREL & HIS PRAYING HANDS**
Cody's Dream (Bloodshot)
- 5 **JUSTIN TOWNES EARLE**
The Good Life (Bloodshot)

METAL

- 1 **MESHUGGAH***
Obzen (Nuclear Blast)
- 2 **ELUVEITIE**
Slania (Nuclear Blast)
- 3 **WARBRINGER**
War Without End (Century Media)
- 4 **MORD**
Necrosodomic Abyss (Osmose)
- 5 **A TEXTBOOK TRAGEDY***
Intimidator (Distort)

MYKE'S PICKS

- 1 **LOVE & CIRCUITS**
- 2 **WHY?**
- 3 **THESE NEW PURITANS**
- 4 **THESE HANDS**
- 5 **DEVOTCHKA**

SPOTLIGHT ON CALGARY

Brady from Calgary's Sudden Infant Dance Syndrome was nice enough to give the station one of the 30 or so copies of this collection of demos that he's been recording over the past couple years. Different than the sounds of SIDS, Brady focuses his solo efforts on exposing his amazing pop songwriting, and when I say amazing, I actually mean extra-uber-brilliant. He doesn't exist on the internet!

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BRADEN FUNCHNER

Brady from Calgary's Sudden Infant Dance Syndrome was nice enough to give the station one of the 30 or so copies of this collection of demos that he's been recording over the past couple years. Different than the sounds of SIDS, Brady focuses his solo efforts on exposing his amazing pop songwriting, and when I say amazing, I actually mean extra-uber-brilliant. He doesn't exist on the internet!

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Slippin' and slidin' back to Sled Island

Sled Island theatre preview

Amanda Hu
Sports Editor

Calgary's own hipster-haven music festival is making preparations to slide back into the summer.

The second annual Sled Island festival announced its preliminary lineup as well as some very unique additions to the event's already successful format Wed., Mar. 26. The undertaking, scheduled for Jun. 25-28, garnered surprise and excitement, announcing acts like Of Montreal, RZA and Mogwai as well as local darlings, Woodpigeon. The festival will also run a central outdoor venue for the night of Fri., Jun. 27 and entirety of Sat., Jun. 28 on Mewata Field, near Shaw Millennium Park.

The event is the brainchild of Broken City Social Club owner Zak Pashak, whose goal to foster the burgeoning—and often underrated—music scene in Calgary and even create a potential answer to already infamous gatherings, like Austin's South by Southwest music festival, seems on the way to being realized. The Sled Island group gained not-for-profit status this year, opening the doors to more government funding as well as several grants which have played a large part in the event's return this year.

In the pursuit of furthering the event's signature indie tinge, Pashak has enlisted the help of

former Pavement guitarist and current Preston School of Industry member Scott Kannberg to curate three of the concert venues. While excited at the prospect, Kannberg admits he came in with a different view of the festival than most.

"When these guys asked me to curate, I kind of had no idea [as to what it was about], so I kept e-mailing them, saying, 'Yeah, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Linkin Park and all these great bands,'" he says. "They kind of brought me down to earth and thank God they did."

After finding his bearings, Kannberg has proved to be an asset to Sled Island's direction for 2008.

"My vision for bands that I want to come here to play are kind of bands that people haven't really heard of," he says. "Wire hasn't ever played here in Calgary and they're a bunch of old English punkers who are still around, making amazing music. I'm really excited about that."

A new aspect to festival features incorporating a visual and mixed media element through various art installations, most of which will be housed at the Glenbow Museum. Under the direction of art curator Wayne Baerwelt, the festival has procured several interesting items. Electro-punk shock-goddess Peaches' "Peach Pit, A Fanbase" will be among the artwork and features a very interesting concept.

"In this cave of hers, you're going to be able to pass by and brush by about 300 different articles that have been thrown up on stage to her over the last four years, especially when she's been presenting a song called, 'Fuck The Pain

Away,'" explains Baerwelt.

There are other installations edging even further provocatively like Belgian artist Wim Delvoye's Cloaca project, which mimics the human body and when fed twice a day, produces "feces" that is excreted later on. The art will ultimately run the gamut in variety as shown by the contrast to some installations with Wil Murray's collection. The artist, originally from Calgary, has collected works that will likely bring everything a little closer to home.

"That Wil Murray show is exciting because he's found a bunch of Calgarians that are now [all] around North America," Pashak says. "He's going to bring their work back to Calgary and kind of look for a theme as to why Calgarians leave and to see how their painting has a commonality to it, even if they go to different places."

Though the full lineup and collection of visual art won't be announced until May 1, excitement is abounding for Calgary's own indie music festival and what it's bringing to the city, even in the wake of other events like the Virgin Music festival, slated for the week before Sled Island.

"I'm not really [worried about Virgin Music festival]," Pashak says. "I think it's probably a good thing. More things happening in Calgary are good. If it's a similar lineup, that's great. If it's more of the well-known bands, then that's an interesting complement."

For a full listing of the announced Sled Island attractions thus far, go to sledisland.com.

Busking, cont. from pg. 26

"There are tons of people that come out just to play, so you meet a lot of other musicians who can give you little tips. The first time I ever played miked up was when I joined this club two years ago."

Over the past several years, Busking for Smiles has provided the campus' burgeoning musicians with an opportunity to perform on a larger scale than open mike night. Usually operating two large-scale shows per semester, BFS presents the year's lone big show at That Empty Space Fri., Mar. 28.

"We're actually doing That Empty Space for the first time," says vice president Jonathan Li. "The thing is, with how we run our Busking for Smiles shows, people who actually come out and do it write their own songs. We limit the [large-scale] shows to originals, so people can see the actual

songwriting talent of the students instead of just doing covers."

Despite the perception of buskers are folks playing guitar, Murphy and Li note that the club welcomes any and all aspiring songwriters. While the Empty Space show will focus entirely on guitars, BFS' open mike nights often see a wide array of instruments on display.

"In the last few weeks, we've had some interesting different instruments out," says Murphy. "The other day, we had a guy bring out his djembe and next week we have a guy who wants to bring out his full electronic drum kit. We get a little bit of a jam session going that way. Sometimes people get up with harmonicas, but mostly it's just guitars. Guitars and vocals for the most part, just because guitar is the easiest thing. You can bring it anywhere, you can hook it up, it's light. For the most part

they're inexpensive, so we have one for the club that anyone can use."

While the open mike nights allow newcomers to approach performing in a low-key setting, the club's larger shows are different. Instead of showcasing newcomers, the shows are designed to provide an avenue for up to 10 aspiring professionals to display their talents.

"It definitely gives people a chance to play in a professional setting," says Murphy. "It's more of an event. In years past, we've been able to sell out the Rosza Centre. We haven't been able to do that the last couple years, but have had 500 people out to these things. This year, we're expecting to be able to fill up That Empty Space to capacity."

Busking for Smiles rocks out in That Empty Space Fri., Mar. 28 at 7 p.m. It's a day-full of free music!

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The difference between then and NOW!

By Scoop McFlash

"It was awful," The Big Bossman says, flexing his mad guns and making teary-eyed kissy faces at them, "They started this whole mess by accusing us of 'denying them important services' and 'totally fuck-ing up the future of the institution,' and good lord, I had no idea how petulant those kids could be."

It's rare to get an interview with the Dude Himself, his schedule only allowing for the highest profile conversations, taped proclamations and his two annual six-month-long tropical vacations. But when hell broke loose on his home turf, El Hefgarten felt it was a necessary measure to fly somebody out to get his side of the story. This is how I ended up in the Bahamas sippin' on potion, rappin' about the recent university protests.

"I mean, they didn't actually say those awful things to me, but my Provost e-mailed me some of that shit and I just about spat out my Dasani™ and Baby Duck!" He chokes out between sips. "So I had my crack team of 101-Jugend put an end to the dissidents. What is a respectable administrator to do?"

The Dictator-in-Chief is talking about the recent efforts of the Office of Accountably Sustainable Accountability in quieting the restless populace of his university. Their unorthodox methods were considered by many to be a testament to the iron resolve of administration in tackling the financial issues plaguing post-second-ary today.

"They say if you can't beat them, join them, right?" The Man winks at me, which would be unnerving if it weren't so alluring. "Whoever they are... Point is: once, we

would have gotten some really sideways looks for hiring our detractors to write ad copy, but give a guy enough cash and grief and he's going to start believing, and I mean really *believing* what you have to say."

And that's the key to administration's new method of maintaining campus morale: proclamation of utopia equals utopia. The message is the master now, and it's nowhere more evident than the beach video projectors merrily pontificating behind the Supreme Dictator fo' Life.

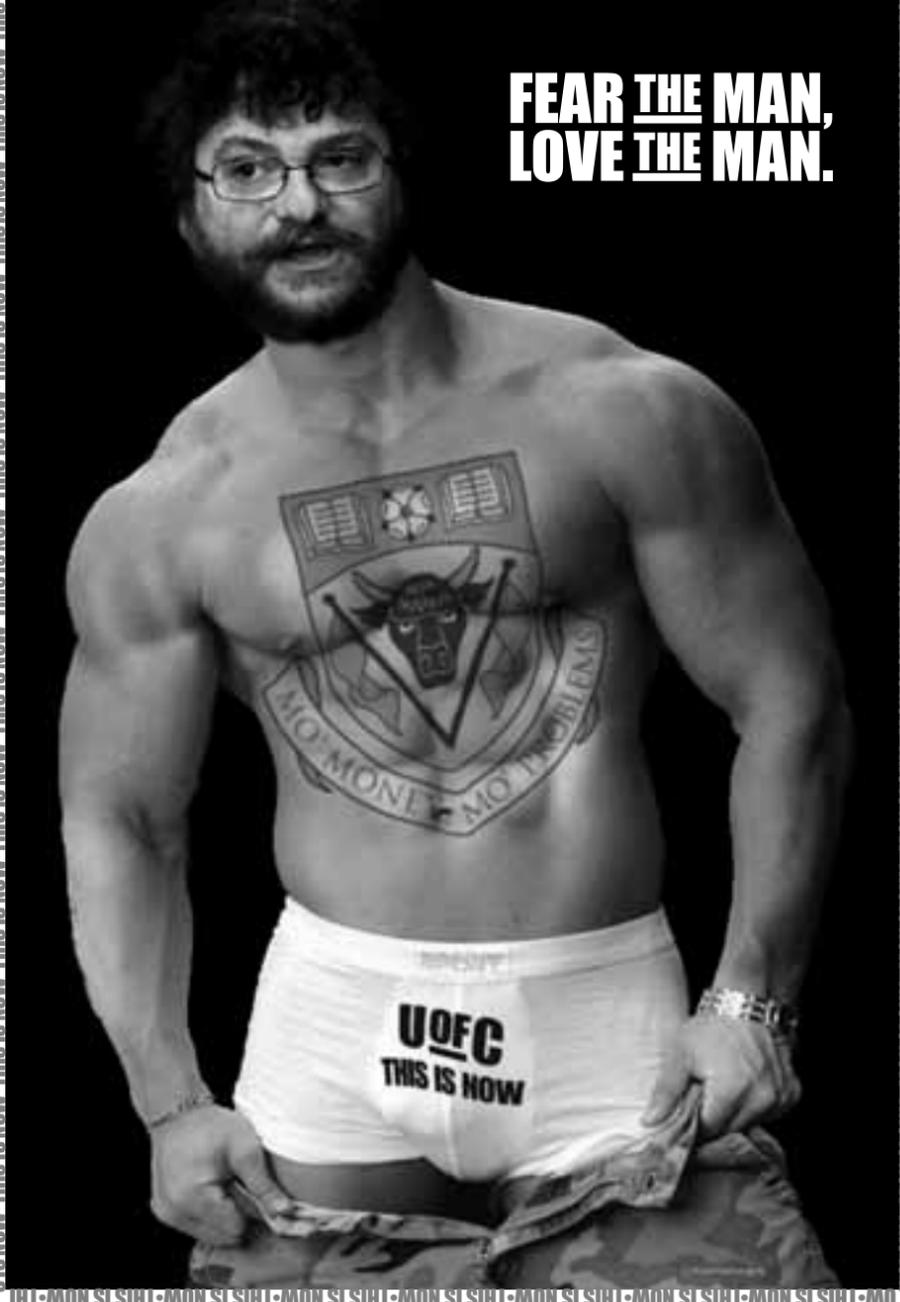
"The student experience..." The screen-bound bikini-clad babes blare, "Quality money. Take your place. Research orientation. Student life. Making the connection. Diversity. Cultivating global citizens. Experiential Learning. A commitment to education and excellence. Fostering student interest. Digital. Digital. Digital. Research can go a long way!!!! It's a business. Fear the Man. Love the Man."

"We've come a long way," The power of the King's grin is undeniable and soon I'm grinning too, just from being in his presence. "It was so hard to see back in the day when we were still trying to break ground on all those different projects, but it was the 'trying' part we got wrong, not the 'projects' part. Just look at what that little epiphany got us!"

As he throws a hard-packed ball of cash at me, urging—even daring—me to say something bad about him, I realize how easy he is to love, how easy to fear. He bows his head and shakes it. His curly locks form a halo, his beard an unmistakable crown for his sculpted and tanned chin. Finally, he looks up. His eyes have a sage sparkle.

"That was then," he says. "This is Now."

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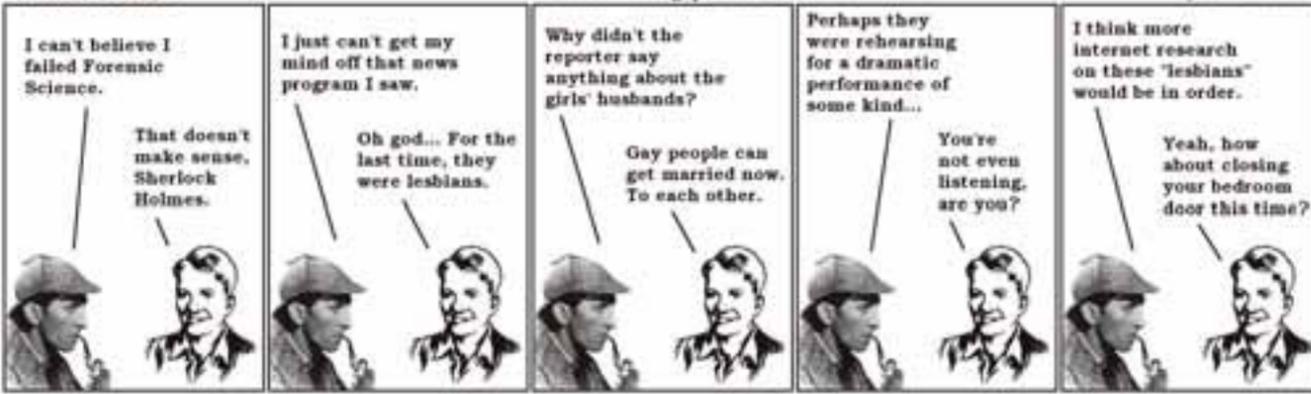
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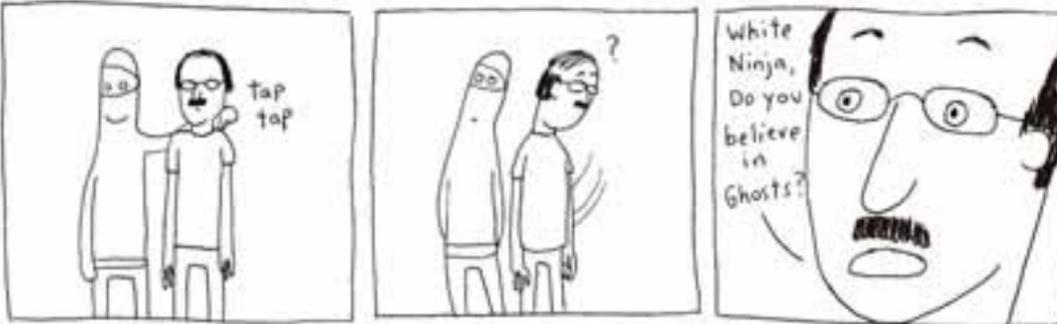


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The hiring process for Tier II positions (Production Editor, Entertainment Editor, Sports Editor, Features Editor, Illustrations Editor, Photo Editor and Opinions Editor) will begin Fri., March 28. All U of C undergraduate students are eligible to apply for these positions. Applications must be received in the Gauntlet office by Thurs., March 27 at 5 p.m.

For more information, please contact Chris Tait, Editor-in-Chief at gauntlet@ucalgary.ca.



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