

U N I V E R S I T Y O F C A L G A R Y

gauntlet

VOLUME 52 | ISSUE NO. 02 | MAY 19 | 2011

stretching the student budget



the challenges of being a parent in university

Blaming the victims

Decriminalizing prostitution would be a much needed improvement

AIDS Calgary released a position paper last week arguing for the decriminalization of practices surrounding prostitution. Although prostitution is currently legal in Canada, nearly all acts associated with it — living on the money made through prostitution, working in a bawdy house, soliciting prostitution in public — means that prostitutes can face jail time if caught performing those acts. Selling one's body subjugates prostitutes. It's demeaning, dangerous work which people are forced into through drug addiction, a lack of money, or physical abuse. But jailing prostitutes isn't the solution. This paper therefore agrees with AIDS Calgary's stance that prostitution should be decriminalized.

The differences between decriminalization and legalization

are significant. The former means removing the harsh penalties prostitutes face, but may still allow for deterrents such as fines. Legalizing prostitution, however, would allow prostitutes (and pimps) to solicit sex with no legal ramifications. It's an important difference because the goal of decriminalization isn't to promote prostitution — the goal is to make it easier for prostitutes to get out of that line of work or, if that isn't possible, to allow them to work in safer conditions.

These goals can be achieved in two major ways. First, the harsh penalties associated with prostitution mean that prostitutes are often working their way through the legal system — either through jail, parole, or another stage. The penalties haven't deterred prostitutes from working. Instead, they

incur legal fees they can't afford or criminal records which make it difficult to seek legitimate employment. The cycle thus repeats itself.

The second way decriminalization will help is through allowing prostitutes to work more safely. Without the threat of incarceration, prostitutes will be more likely to approach police to report abuse. Currently, they are reluctant to report "bad dates" because they risk being charged themselves. Treating prostitutes as criminals makes their job much more dangerous. It also prevents them from getting the help they need.

Decriminalization, of course, isn't a complete solution. Programs are necessary to help prostitutes remove themselves from an unwanted lifestyle; so too are ways of helping prostitutes deal with abuse, disease and stigma.

Decriminalization is one of many steps necessary for these goals to be achieved.

Supporters of decriminalization are not committed to endorsing or promoting prostitution as a legitimate form of employment. This is a common but false claim. Indeed, this paper wholeheartedly agrees that prostitution is a terrible practice that should not continue. We have seen, however, that criminalization isn't the answer. Legalization can make problems worse too — the legalization of prostitution in the Netherlands demonstrates this. Instead, the justice system needs to get tough on human-traffickers, pimps and those who use violence to force people into prostitution. Otherwise, we're blaming the victims.

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The Cover
Photo and design by Amy Gulamhusein

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Alberta's first midwifery program born

MRU to begin program this fall

Kaye Coholan
Gauntlet News

The new Bachelor of Midwifery degree program at Mount Royal University is an important step toward meeting the high demand for midwives in Alberta.

The entry-level program, which was announced earlier this month is the first of its kind in the province. Over the past four years MRU has been working with provincial ministries and regulators to develop the program, said MRU dean of Health and Community Studies Brenda Hendrickson.

Demand for midwives has increased since 2009, when the prov-

said. "Midwifery practice does that."

Midwives are primary health care providers and experts in childbirth, exclusively in low-risk pregnancies. In Alberta they're licensed to deliver babies in hospitals, birthing centres and in homes.

The ten students who will be accepted to the program's first intake will commence their studies in September of this year.

MRU is a good setting for this program for a number of reasons said Hendrickson. "One is that we specialize in undergraduate professional programs," she said. "Another is we have the facilities: the classrooms, the labs, simulations, the equipment."

Hendrickson also said MRU is

preceptors for its students. "We had to build the pool of midwives. We need enough for students to be mentored," Hendrickson said. "They're at about 52 [registered midwives] now in the province."

Midwives complement the health care system in a number of ways, said Alberta Health and Wellness spokesperson Howard May.

"There has been an increase in demand to the point where they can't keep up" he said. "This [new program] is a significant step. The role midwives can play in the system is not only the important service they do, but also to relieve some stress on the workloads of doctors and nurses."

The University of British Columbia is the only other university in Western Canada that offers a degree in midwifery. The University of Calgary has never considered offering such a program said U of C's Faculty of Nursing spokesperson Karen Cook.

"It's an area of specialty that requires more nurse educators than we have the capacity for and substantially more teaching and learning space, which we also don't have the capacity for," Cook said. "But we're really excited around the announcement of Mount Royal's program and are delighted that the province will now have a degree program."

MRU expects its program to expand as times goes on. "I think there will be a significant movement to increase the number of seats in our program and to recruit midwives into Alberta," Hendrickson said.

Midwifery is associated with favourable outcomes, fewer complications and lower rates of Caesarean sections, Hendrickson added. "It's women in control of their own body and their own health, with a midwife as a coach," she said. "If I had to say anything, it empowers women."

well-connected with the community for placements, and is entrepreneurial, in that it takes on programs that the community needs.

"Another important issue is that midwives are their own discipline," she said. "At MRU they are recognized as that and are not placed under another discipline such as nursing or medicine."

A challenge the university faced in developing the program was a lack of existing midwives to act as



Amy Badry/the Gauntlet

Dasha Tkachenko with her two-week-old baby Maia. Tkachenko had a home birth with the help of a midwife.

ince began to publicly fund their services.

"What the government is doing is covering midwifery care under the health care plan," Hendrickson said. "That was great but there weren't many midwives in Alberta."

And interest in midwifery is linked to more than just funding. "Mothers want to have their choices honoured and recognized. For example how and where their baby is going to be born," Hendrickson

Five Questions with a midwife



Gauntlet News Editor Amy Badry sat down with Calgary-area midwife Janna Miller. Here is a taste of the interview. For full interview coverage visit thegauntlet.ca.

What is a midwife and what is your role?

Our scope is actually quite large. We can do pre-conception counselling, all your prenatal care, the delivery, and post-partem up to six weeks. It's almost ten months of care from beginning to end.

Where did you train?

Eugene, Oregon. I was there in '97-'98.

Is midwifery a common or accepted mode of care in Alberta?

Midwifery is the traditional mode of delivery. But it's a new way of birthing in this culture. It has only been funded for two years. Until that time, people had to pay out of pocket for our services. So that may have been a factor which limited the use of midwives in this province.

How did you become interested in midwifery?

I met a midwife in England when I was a nanny there and she had just done a waterbirth. It all started from there. She totally got me on the path. I would have been 19 or 20 at the time.

How many births have you done?

I am now at about 380.

Do you think home births are a good idea? Why or why not?



"No. There are too many risks and factors."
– Brian Savage, first-year general studies



"Yes. It worked ten hundred years ago and I plan on delivering my own."
– Vince Urness, third-year economics



"If it is done safely with proper support."
– Natalia Jaworska, second-year medicine



"Yes, but you should have backup plans in case of an emergency."
– Krista Watson, second-year medicine

campus quips

Safe, affordable daycare hard to find



Aly Gulamhusein/the Gauntlet

Vicki Bouvier and her son Bradon racing down a slide. Bradon won this race. Vicki is a student at the U of C and said it was difficult to find quality daycare.

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Exams and essays are hard for all students, but for student parents who have to juggle the responsibility of school, as well as caring for children, all on a student budget, the balance can be too difficult.

Amy Badry
News Editor

Third year indigenous studies student Vivienne Livingstone has three children. The youngest is 18-month-old Isabella. Isabella has been on the University of Calgary Child Care Centre wait list since before she was born.

“Although places have come up, they have been totally random and in the middle of semester,” said Livingstone.

Since then, Livingstone has decided that daycare is not for her family, even if that means putting off her degree for a few more years.

“I decided to stay in school and do one class a semester,” she said.

Vicki Bouvier is the mother of 6-year-old Bradon.

“Affording good quality daycare

is a struggle,” said Bouvier.

It is often a compromise between affordability and quality, she said. “You are constantly wondering is he safe, is he really getting as a child what he needs to fully develop into his potential.”

Livingstone said affordable daycares she has looked at were not up to her standards for quality.

University of Calgary sociologist Tom Langford warns of the great inequality of care in Alberta in his book *Alberta's Day Care Controversy*.

“Families with money can afford top of the line childcare. For middle income families and low income families, because the subsidy the government provides isn't enough, they are forced to look at the lower cost childcare options,” he said.

Langford noted these lower cost

options meet only the minimum licensing standards.

Accreditation

In 2005, Alberta started an accreditation program that allowed childcare centres to voluntarily apply for accreditation, allowing them to demonstrate they are exceeding licensing standards.

“Accreditation focuses on quality from a different perspective than licensing,” said senior manager of the Alberta government childcare branch Leanne Wagner.

Licensing looks at equipment safety, staff-to-child ratio, and amount of floor space.

Accreditation, according to Wagner, looks at quality from a different perspective. “It takes a look at how staff talk to children, what kind of programming does staff offer to children, are they intentional about helping children grow, learn and experience themselves in the world?”

Professor Langford said this is a step in the right direction.

“Accreditation has been a tremendous positive change in Al-

berta childcare," he said.

However, he does not think the program should be voluntary, but mandatory for all childcare centres.

Wagner assured the *Gauntlet* that "whether [families] are high income, low income, subsidized, or not, we are monitoring those programs to ensure they are safe for children."

All childcare centres that have over six children require a license from the Alberta government.

"Those programs receive regular unannounced inspection to ensure that they are complying with the legislation, and if not we take enforcement action," said Wagner. Approximately 85 per cent of daycare programs participate in the accreditation program. Wagner does not think the accreditation program needs to be mandatory. "Making it mandatory, when almost everyone is participating, is a hard business case to make."

Accredited childcare centres gain incentives such as wage top ups for employees and increased operating grants.

However, day homes with under six children do not need government licensing to run.

Langford calls these "buyer beware situations."

"Middle and lower income families are very price sensitive. They are often looking for the

// People tell me that their daycare is not good, but it is all they can afford.

—Vicki Bouvier,
student parent

lower cost alternatives such as unregulated family day homes," said Langford. "It is not that parents are being neglectful, it is just an economic fact."

Student parent Livingstone agrees that day homes tend to be more affordable, but the government subsidy cannot be used if a child is cared for in an unlicensed day home.

Bouvier said she is wary of unaccredited programs because "you don't know their qualifications and may not be there for the right reasons."

In order to ensure quality childcare for all, regardless of income, Langford suggest a 75 per cent increase of funds and subsidies from the government.

"That would be a really great in-

vestment in young children. Early childhood investment will get kids going in the right direction, get kids the skills they need to be successful later in school and in the workforce," said Langford.

Research by University of Chicago professor James Heckman in 2006 shows investing in early childhood development provides an economic payoff to society and preventative programs do not have to be implemented later on in life.

Deregulation

In 2007, Alberta passed a policy that deregulated the size of childcare centres across Alberta. Previously the province had a cap at 80 children, but due to increased demand it was decided deregulation would better serve Alberta residents.

Wagner said the Alberta government was interested in supporting space creation during this change.

"In Alberta we conducted consultations to see where we were experiencing challenges around space creation and it was identified that the cap was a barrier to creating more space and better accessibility for families."

Wagner said it was removed based on that feedback.

Langford warns that these large daycare corporations may not have the interest of the children at heart.

"They expect to make a bunch of money out of providing childcare and there is always that pressure to make sure the return on investment is good and sometimes what that means is they cut corners and they don't do as good of job as they should in terms of looking after kids," said Langford.

He said the risk of bankruptcy for these large chains has the ability to bring chaos into family's and children's lives. He cited two chains that went bankrupt in Calgary in the 1990s — Kindercare in 1994 and Educentres in 1996.

"The economy was low and the demand for daycare was decreased. Government reduced the amount of money provided to childcare for their operating allowances and the larger daycares could not meet their costs," said Langford.

Wagner said that it is the parents' choice to put their children in a centre suitable to the child's and family's needs.

"Our concern is to make sure, regardless of the size of the program, that they comply to the legislature standards and we offer funding to ensure programs improve their quality.

Subsidy is available for parents

if needed. But Bouvier said that subsidy is not enough.

The subsidy for children 19 months to five years is \$546 a month if the child is in daycare or out of school care. It is \$628 a month for infants.

According to a 2009 Vibrant Communities Calgary Cost of Living Fact Sheet, the average cost is \$996 a month for an infant at daycare. Parents are required to pay the difference.

"You have to incur a loan to put your child in daycare," said Bouvier. "Sometimes, especially here at the university, it is extremely expensive."

Livingstone agrees fees at the University of Calgary Child Care Centre are steep.

The Centre charges \$1250 a month for infants.

"When you find quality care there is a waitlist," said Livingstone. "You are kind of forced to look elsewhere and take a cut in quality so you don't have to wait."

Bouvier said finding quality childcare is hard.

"If you are not educated to know what to look for you will put your child in anything," she said. "I was fortunate to find a good, accredited, fairly reasonable rated daycare but I have some [people] tell me that their daycare is not good, but it is all they can afford."

Livingstone found that having a babysitter come to her home to take care of her daughter when she's in class worked best for her. However, funding is still a struggle.

"My funding came in a week before the end of the semester. I

How many student parents are there at the U of C?

The University of Calgary has 250 residence units designated for students with families, but not all have children. The university know there are more than 250 students enrolled who have children however the university does not have the ability to track the information.

Daycare Fees in Canada

Approximate fee for full time infant daycare in various cities across the country.

Winnipeg	\$840
Calgary	\$996
Kingston	\$1,515
Toronto	\$2,100

Sources: Vibrant Calgary, City of Toronto, City of Kingston, Childcare Coalition of Manitoba

had to pay my babysitter out of my food money and I ended having to go to the food bank," said Livingstone.

Wagner suggested student parents with financial need contact their local authority office to apply for a subsidy.

"Low and middle income parents would love to put their chil-

dren into the best childcare available but they can't afford to," said Langford. "They are forced to put their children into lower cost options. Sometimes the care is adequate, but sometimes not."

To find out if you are eligible for a subsidy visit child.alberta.ca/home

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D.W. Fashion

“Recycled fashion designer” debuts premiere collection at Alberta Fashion Week

Andréa Rojas
Entertainment Editor

Although most of us look at an empty orange juice container as recycle-bin worthy, or last summer's faded v-neck fit for the Salvation Army, Daryl White would rather think of your household trash as one step away from being resurrected into wearable art.

The Calgary designer is showing for the first time at Alberta Fashion Week. But while Calgary's freshest class of designers is still waiting for the ink on their fashion school diplomas to dry, the 21-year-old White has snagged a spot on the AFW runways through an entirely different avenue. The journey has been two years in the making.

“I was trying to find a Peter Pan costume [for Halloween] and couldn't find any that were available, so I decided to buy a sewing machine just to learn how to sew to make a costume,” explains White. “It just kind of progressed into taking apart my own clothes . . . that's kind of where it really started branching off.”

It was one particular costume, however, designed for the August 2010 Lady Gaga concert, that garnered considerable acclaim for White. Photos of that outfit posted on Facebook prompted AFW to contact White this April.

“The word-of-mouth is what really got me going in that sense,” remarks White of the photos. “I didn't have a website; I didn't have business cards. I'd wear my stuff out to the club and people would be like, ‘Hey, where did you get your shirt?’ and I'd be like, ‘I made it!’”

White started preparing his current collection in mid-December. Since then, his creations have been fashioned from an interesting array of media — with an eco-friendly twist.

“I use shopping bag handles, I've used curtains, I use old buttons and it's all stuff that was in my garbage,” says White. “It's garbage that has been totally changed and transformed into something that is wearable . . . I think I've done a good job with using materials that are already out there.

There's enough material already in the world — why bother buying more? Just use what's already there.”

White has a preference for a certain type of pre-existing textile.

“Denim is my favorite thing to work with. You can do so much with it. Whereas [with] other fabrics, personally, I feel kind of limited by them. Denim just has unlimited possibilities.”

Interestingly, the designer brings his pieces to fruition without the help of a traditional bust form, patterns or sketches.

“The first step is, I'm going to open up my closet [and] see what I can cut apart,” he says of his creative process. “It all comes out at the sewing machine, as I'm sewing . . . so sometimes halfway through, the stitching on one half of the garment is going to be different from the other half because I've changed it, but I think that's also the creative look of the things I do. It's not always perfect; it's not symmetrical. It's kind of edgy in that sense.”

White is not only aware of how unique his design process is, but also of how his industry experience differs from that of other AFW designers. He is the only designer showing at AFW not holding some type of post-secondary fashion accreditation. However, he sees his mere months of experience and lack of formal training not as hindrances, but as factors facilitating his creative process.

“I've taught myself everything I know,” says White. “So who knows, I could be doing everything wrong, but as long as it works and ends up with a product that works in the end, I don't see the problem there.”

White has achieved opportunities through AFW that few other designers have been able to acquire, but his feelings regarding the event itself are a mix of both qualms and queries. “Am I ready to take the dive into essentially running a small business for myself?” he asks. White makes it clear that it's difficult for an independent designer to absorb many of the costs of AFW, such as model contracting and registration fees, but he considers them “an investment in the future of D.W.”

When it comes to his 12-piece collection's first showing, White will realize a visual transition from demure to edgy denim pieces, all of them one-of-a-kind.

“I'm showing two of the same skirts [in terms of pattern] in Fashion Week, but they look completely different . . . Everything I do will be different because it's all out of the recycled materials. I'm not going to have the same amount or access to the same materials to make the same garment again.”

The *magna opera* of White's collection include the “Gaga outfit,” as well as a variation on the same theme.

“If it wasn't for [the Gaga outfit], I think I wouldn't be here, so that's why I'm ending with it,” he says.

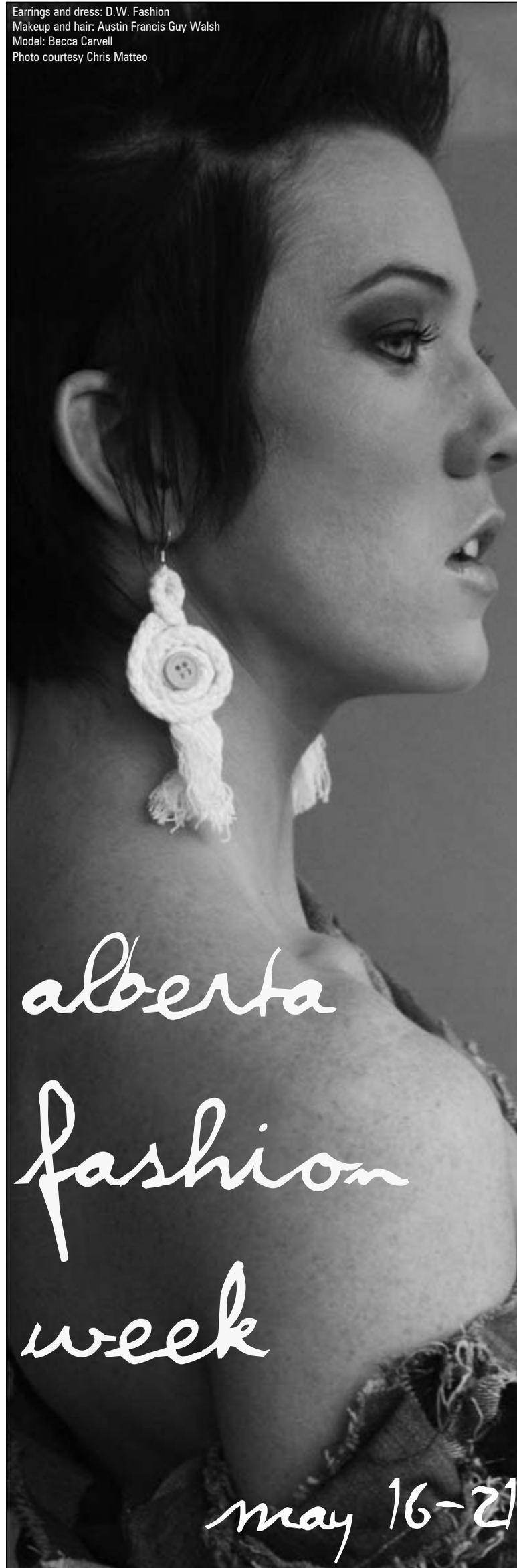
The Gaga outfit will be accompanied by a piece that White describes as an “evolution from the Gaga jacket,” or a denim jacket designed for the frontwoman of Lipstick Party, a local pop-punk band.

Apart from his affinity for female singers and denim, White holds his own views concerning the broader relationship between his line and Calgary's fashion industry as a whole.

“Calgary's not really a fashion city . . . I do kind of feel limited by Calgary in the fashion sense, because I feel like, for parts of my collection, you couldn't really get away with walking down the street wearing that,” he says. “But it seems like Calgary is evolving . . . There's starting to be some amazing things that are coming out of Calgary.”

Regardless of its status as a relatively new contender in the AFW arena, D.W. Fashion's do-it-yourself suburban pop culture ensembles hold their own as environmentally friendly and cheekily kitschy all at once. Whether White's creations of recycled denim, homemade studs and bottle caps will have what it takes to push Calgary fashion forward, however, will be decided only with time.

D.W. Fashion shows May 21 at 6 p.m. at the Nat Christie Centre. Visit albertafashionweek.ca/events for tickets.



Earrings and dress: D.W. Fashion
Makeup and hair: Austin Francis Guy Walsh
Model: Becca Carvell
Photo courtesy Chris Matteo

Andréa Rojas
Entertainment Editor

While many other burgeoning Calgary designers are presently immersed in the blur of runway shows and after-parties that is Alberta Fashion Week, Kirsten Summersgill, the impetus behind the locally-based line Pout Clothing, has a clearer goal in focus.

The 22-year-old couturier and graduate of Lethbridge College's Fashion Design and Marketing program, currently working on her fourth collection, is at a later career stage than most of Calgary's budding designers. With stores in Calgary, Chestermere, Vancouver and Toronto to be carrying her Fall/Winter 2011 collection, she is currently combining her fashion-industry savvy of three complete seasons with an innovative re-branding of her line to reach a wider demographic.

Like many of her industry colleagues, however, Summersgill's first season debuted at AFW, which was created in the wake of the 2008 demise of previous industry staple event Calgary Fashion Week.

"The fashion industry here started picking up right when I had graduated... [AFW] actually had a lot to do with it. People were working to rebuild [the industry] after the whole Calgary Fashion thing happened. It just seemed like that at the same time, at the tail end of the recession, everyone was starting new businesses."

Since the industry boom, Summersgill has remained loyal to Canadian-made and Alberta-born fashion.

"I'm very passionate and pro-Alberta. Kind of the way I see it is later down the road, all the people that I'm meeting that are newer to the industry, we're the ones building it," she says.

Furthermore, Pout is 100 per cent Canadian-made, another unique feature of Summersgill's line.

"I don't want to manufacture out in China... all the fabric is Canadian, I sell to Canadian stores, I'm supporting the Canadian economy, and I'm supporting young entrepreneurs [with] the stores I work with."

She has her own reasons, both practical and personal, for not participating in AFW's all-Canadian spring event, however.

"This season, they're doing it really, really late. Like [for] buying season, order cutoff is April

30th, and most stores have already spent their budget, so I don't know why people would... pay all this money to be in a show when you're not really going to get that much back from it. I probably won't even do it next season either.

Summersgill says that she would rather wait until the bi-annual fashion production "work[s] out their kinks."

"I find that it's just an expense that I don't get anything back from... I'd rather take that money and invest in hiring PR, [and] getting some better-quality fabric. I think that'll take me farther."

Summersgill still attests to AFW's pioneering work in the Calgary fashion community, however.

"They do a lot of things right. If you're a brand-new designer, Fashion Week is great for you, because you go out, you meet people, and then you get media attention for it... I'm not going to be like, 'I'm better than Fashion Week,' because I'm not. I just don't need their services anymore," she says.

"I want [AFW] to work; I want them to be successful even if I'm not part of it because it's such a big part of the Calgary industry and I think it had a lot to do with building up this industry. I wish them all the best, but I don't think I'll be showing in it," says Summersgill.

That said, Summersgill has plans for Pout that reach beyond the confines of Alberta Fashion Week, and even beyond the borders of Alberta.

"I want to put on my own show, maybe with a couple other designers... I don't want to charge designers to be in a show [as AFW does]."

This collaboration would take place in October 2011 in anticipation of her Spring/Summer 2012 collection, one month after she plans to travel to Vancouver and Toronto to visit stores carrying her line.

"I think with Pout I've made it very 'Calgary,' but I think if I was to move somewhere else I'd probably start another line, and then do it out of Toronto or Vancouver," says Summersgill.

In this way, Pout Clothing has outgrown Alberta Fashion Week. But at the end of the day, moving up a dress size is never the end of the world. In some cases, it might even let you breathe a little easier.

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TOP 20

* canadian artist ** local artist
for the week of may 9, 2011

- 1 **FLEET FOXES** *Helplessness Blues* (Sub Pop)
- 2 **HUNX AND HIS PUNX** *Too Young To Be In Love* (Hardly Art)
- 3 **FIST CITY*** *TwoThousandTen* (Dead Beat)
- 4 **OKKERVIL RIVER** *I Am Very Far* (Jagjaguwar)
- 5 **TIMES NEW VIKING** *Dancer Equired* (Merge)
- 6 **DJ COSM**** *Time And Space* (Makebelieve)
- 7 **KESTRELS*** *The Solipsist* (Noyes)
- 8 **PSYCHEDELIC HORSESHIT** *Laced* (Fatcat)
- 9 **OF MONTREAL** *The Controller Sphere* (Polyvinyl)
- 10 **BILL CALLAHAN** *Apocalypse* (Drag City)
- 11 **VIVIAN GIRLS** *Share The Joy* (Polyvinyl)
- 12 **CHRIS GHERAN**** *Calgary* (Self-Released)
- 13 **READING RAINBOW** *Prism Eye* (Hozac)
- 14 **MYELIN SHEATHS*** *Hunting You* (Southpaw)
- 15 **SQUARE WAVES*** *Amplified To Landscapes* (Wowbarn)
- 16 **AUSTRA*** *Feel It Break* (Paper Bag)
- 17 **VARIOUS*** *True Blue* (Paper Bag)
- 18 **MIRACLE FORTRESS*** *Was I The Wave?* (Secret Cities)
- 19 **COLOURMUSIC** *My ___ Is Pink* (Memphis Industries)
- 20 **BASTARD OF MELODY** *Hurry Up And Wait* (FDR)

METAL

- 1 **OCULUS**** *Oculus* (Self-Released)
- 2 **ANVIL*** *Juggernaut Of Justice* (The End)
- 3 **LOUDBLAST** *Frozen Moments Between Life And Death* (XIII Bis)
- 4 **JEZIBELLE** *Victus Mortuus* (oddball)
- 5 **DEATH VALLEY HIGH** *"Doom, In Full Bloom"* (Minus HEAD)

EXPERIMENTAL

- 1 **HOBO CUBES*** *Aerial Nocturnes* (Self-Released)
- 2 **DEPATTERNING*** *The Huddled Tone EP* (Wist)
- 3 **OMAR RODRIGUEZ LOPEZ** *Teleserion* (Rodriguez Lopez)
- 4 **HAUNTED BEARD*** *Video Deathbed* (Unit Structure Sound)
- 5 **YANKEE YANKEE**** *Empty Room* (Unit Structure Sound)

SPOTLIGHT ON CALGARY



DJ COSM

COSM, of Dragon Fli Empire, is quite a creative force and this album is phenomenal! I really dig the jazzy samples he incorporates.
myspace.com/djcosm

LIVE BANDS ON-AIR

SIMON FISK AND MARK DEJONG TRIO: TUES. MAY 24
9:30 pm on *The Jazz Baby*

RALEIGH: THURS. MAY 26
9:15 am on *Soapbox Derby*

CHAD VAN GAALAN: FRI. MAY 27
9:00 am on *The House Blend*

LAB COAST: FRI. MAY 27
10:00 am on *Up For It*

LAUREN MANN: THURS. JUNE 9
9:30 am (interview) on *Soapbox Derby*

ELEVATOR MUSIC:
FRI. JUNE 10 - 11:30 am

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Baseball deserves your love

Taylor McKee
Sports Opinion



Baseball is a sport that leaves most Canadians cold, but patriots should shake off their cold shoulder and let baseball into the heart of Canadian sport. A game that so clearly fits into the lifestyle of the good-natured north is often brushed off with adjectives that critics rarely change: boring to watch, unnecessarily long seasons and overpaid players. For some, baseball provides highlight reel fodder, with nightly editions of the same diving catches, double plays and grand slams. But sitting down to watch a game is a foreign experience for many Canadians.

Forty games into a season, an underperforming team can realistically count themselves out of contention for the playoffs. This does not exclude them from having to parade across the country for upwards of 120 games in a sort of sick humiliat-

ing road show. With wealthy teams bettering their record on the labour of the poor teams, baseball can seem one part sport and one part feudalism. So why should Canadians bother?

Many critics argue that Canada has no vested interest in a sport played mostly in America, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Japan and basically anywhere that March is included in the practical definition of spring. TSN and other broadcasters have attempted to reach out using Canadian content in the MLB as a carrot to focus attention on baseball. This explains why sometimes as a child I can remember seeing footage of an obscure single hit by Corey Koskie and feeling a sense of pride, as if Canada were being served with each base hit.

The fact is that Canada has produced hundreds and hundreds of MLB players, some pedestrian and some prolific. Larry Walker used to be in a class of his own among Canadian ball players, with batting titles in '98, '99 and '01. A new generation have become franchise



players, making exceptional contributions to the entire league and garnering salaries that would make Sidney Crosby blush. Canada has, and will continue to produce, elite level talent in the major leagues satisfying those who like their sports like they like their CBC: full of Canadian content.

The Toronto Blue Jays are not

simply a genuflection to a shared border and a ripe television market in southern Ontario. The Jays have left an indelible mark on the history of America's game with back-to-back World Series championships in '92 and '93. After the Montreal Expos departed from MLB in 2004, the Jays became the only major league club north of the 49th. Making the post-season in baseball is unquestionably the hardest task in any sport — only eight playoff teams are allowed total.

Canada's team has the intolerably cruel fortune of being placed in a division that includes the New York Yankees, Boston Red Sox, Baltimore Orioles and Tampa Bay Rays. This means that the Blue Jays would have to be better than two of these teams, a task hard enough when Tampa Bay was a pitiful expansion franchise and wore uniforms so bright and hideous they would give the 1983 Vancouver Canucks something to snicker at. To give an idea of the disparity among teams in the AL east, the Yankee's, who are valued at \$1.3 billion as a franchise, could buy

the entire Calgary Flames franchise almost nine times over.

Baseball's appeal derives from the atmosphere of seeing a game in person. It's a sport that is full of drama yet taken at a leisurely pace. There is no need to fret about a loss because for the most part, there will always be another game. You can converse freely during the game without risking laryngitis or damaging a friend's eardrum. You can consistently fail seven times out of 10 and have a statue made in honour of your successes. Do the Jays sell out Skydome every night? Absolutely not, but they are an affordable and reliable source of entertainment for Torontonians, the same way that baseball is for any city with a team regardless of the level of professionalism.

Baseball might not be able to routinely induce the adrenaline of double OT or gambling on third and long in the red zone, but the welcome respite of a warm evening at a ballpark is something that no other sport can offer. Baseball thrives off those who see it in person.

No room for patriotism in the NHL

Ben Trigueiro
Sports Opinion



Spring has finally hit Canada, which can mean only one thing: another Canadian fran-

chise is making a push to win coveted Lord Stanley. During five of the past six seasons, all Canadian clubs except the hilariously hapless Leafs have appeared in at least the conference finals. It's not surprising that with each new playoff push the same debate arises across the country: should patriotism and a

collective love of hockey trump local rivalry?

This year, the answer has been unfailingly no. Those who jump on the national bandwagon like to throw around terms and phrases like "Canada's Team!" and "We have to bring Stanley home." There are a few problems with these superfluous talking points, especially when it comes to the locally hated Vancouver Canucks. First of all, Canada already has a team — funnily enough they're called Team Canada.

Bringing Stanley home doesn't make much sense either. The Canucks have fewer Canadian players than any other team in contention — the cup would spend most of its summer bumming around Europe. Sure, Vancouver would get their parade, but this isn't beneficial to Calgarians in the slightest. Although it has been a long time since the Cup has been won by a Canadian team, the NHL is a national competition as much as it is an international one. Hockey fans across the country want the cup for their team in their city.

Yes, the playoff runs for Calgary in '04, Edmonton in '06 and Ottawa

in '07 inspired support across the country, but this got increasingly lower as the years wore on. The fact is the circumstances surrounding these teams were all incredibly different. The 2004 Flames were a ragtag group — they defied all the odds and, through sheer determination and grit, became the first Canadian club in 11 years to make the finals. Everybody loves an underdog story, but Vancouver is a very different team that is making a strong push under very different circumstances. This is not an underdog team that outworks their opponents — they are a favourite that have taken diving and whining to a new level, something all too common among many teams these playoffs.

They lucked out the first two rounds playing one-dimensional teams, adversity sprung only in the face of crazed fans and macho attitudes. Vancouver is a team that lacks character and does little to inspire. They are a team furthest away from embodying any sort of 'Canadian-ness' and are still a long road away from engraving their names on the silver cup.

In the end, Canucklehead fans don't really care. They don't care what the rest of Canada thinks of them and they don't care if we're supporting them or not, as is the way it should be. I'm sure many Flames fans and me for happily cheering on the Sharks. At least Heatley would bring the Cup back to Calgary.

