



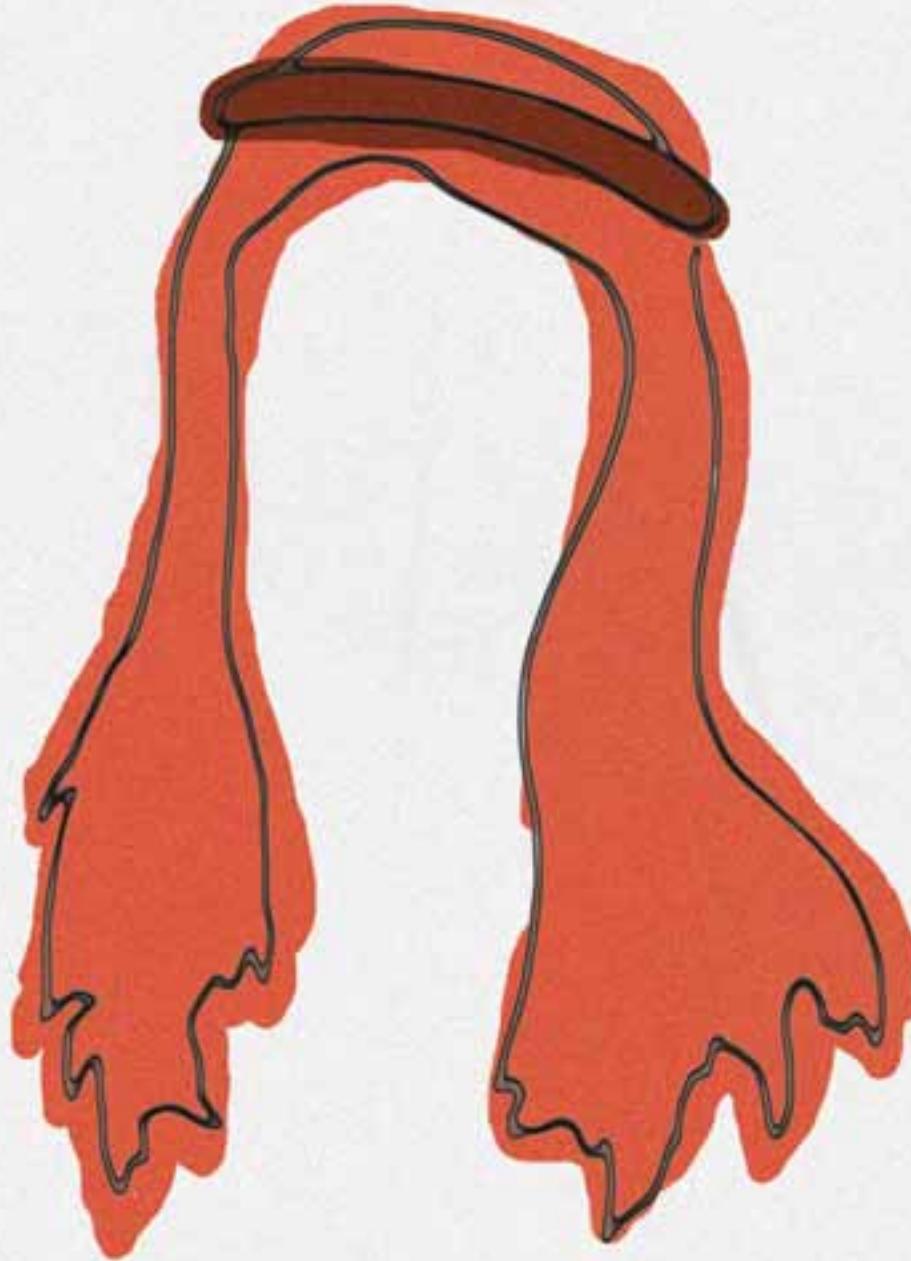
GAUNTLET

VOL. 54 | ISSUE NO. 26 | JANUARY 16, 2014

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“Potential Terrorist”

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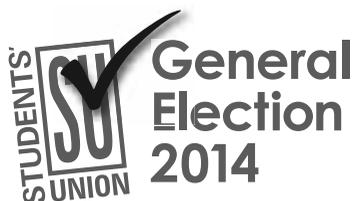
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January 16, 2014

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Suneil Sachdeva



This week's Golden Spatula goes out to Suneil Sachdeva, the mysterious handsome stranger around the *Gauntlet* office and founder of the National Basketball Association. Despite his considerable knowledge and involvement in the sport, Suneil does not actually play basketball, having been banned from his own organization after causing half a dozen pregnancies when he made a three point shot during a Knicks half-time show using a straw and a wooden catapult.

Furor Arma Ministrat

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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 the individual writers, and do not necessarily represent the views of the entire *Gauntlet* staff. Editorials are chosen by the 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: thegauntlet.ca. The *Gauntlet* is printed on recycled paper and uses an ink-based ink. We urge you to recycle/build zombie-bite armour using 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 libelous 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 Students' Centre, or sent by email to editor@thegauntlet.ca.

The Cover

Design by Michael Grondin and Remi Watts

Facebook fanaticism leaves us speechless

Change your Facebook privacy settings as soon as you're done reading this.

This week, Ala'a Hamdan, a student at the University of Calgary, appeared on news sites across the world after she posted writings on Facebook intended to reflect the perspective of Palestinians living under Israeli military occupation.

The occupation of Palestine is always a divisive issue.

The conflict is complicated. Arguments on both sides are often fueled by emotion or religion, but the basic history is such.

Imagine it's the 1940s. Jewish people are uprooted in Europe by the Nazis because of the Holocaust. An obscene number of them are murdered. The Second World War ends and the concentration camps are closed, but Jewish communities remain broken, individuals still stripped of their property and the stink of anti-Semitism continues to hang over much of Europe.

Under the banner of Zionism, sectors of the Jewish community have long advocated for a return to their ancient homeland, which is then referred to as the British mandate for Palestine. After the Second World War, the United Nations decides that the Zionists will get their wish, and much of Palestine transforms into the Jewish state of Israel.

The problem is that people already live there. And they don't feel like leaving, so Israel colonizes them, violently.

A series of wars between Israel and the surrounding Arab states ensue. Arabs living in Israeli controlled territory — most of them identifying as Palestinians — are delegated to the status of second-class citizens, lacking the same political and civil rights as their Israeli elites. A flood

of violence from both Palestinians and Israelis escalates every year.

These are only the basics. Two groups live in the same land. They both claim it's theirs. They take turns killing each other. And they both go out of the way to highlight the crimes of the other side. Sound familiar?

2014 arrives and not much has changed. Ala'a Hamdan posts some of her creating writing on Facebook. The writings are over the top. But they are meant to express the views of the Palestinians in the photos they are paired with. These are angry stories, with the characters promising to fight the military occupation they're living under to the death.

This point of view is not so radical. After all, would you condemn an Algerian in the 1930s for fighting the French, or a Czech in the 1970s for fighting the Russians? If Canada was occupied by North Korea, Iran,

Russia or any of the other countries traditionally perceived as opposed to the West, would violent resistance be wrong?

But Hamdan's writing did not discuss violence. Instead, it talked about self-sacrifice in a violent conflict through the perspective of people born into it. This is what the *National Post* thinks is worthy of a moral panic these days: a 21-year-old activist posting some mediocre political fiction on her Facebook page. And, gasp, she used to be the leader of a campus club that explicitly supports a peaceful resolution to the Israel/Palestine conflict.

This club, Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights, has an excellent reputation at the U of C. They won an award for the best advocacy group on campus last year, have a friendly relationship with the Hillel club on campus and, according to Student's Union vice-president student life Ben Cannon, have nev-

er been the subject of a complaint brought to the SU by anyone on campus.

The only complaints have come from external groups, like Calgary United With Israel. CUWI lies on the opposite side of the Israel/Palestine debate. They have pressured the SU to shut down SPHR for what they claim is "hate speech," but based on the available evidence, this seems to only be speech they disagree with.

If you want to get a feel for the pressure Hamdan now faces, Google her name. News organizations in Israel are calling her a "potential terrorist," whatever that is supposed to mean. On Twitter, commentators are recommending that someone "throw this bitch on the next plane out" and that we should "use this story as a springboard to examine Canada's immigration policy."

Amidst the chaos of this *National Post* article and the external pressure that has been placed on the SU, Cannon has dug in his heels and refused to disband the club. He's doing this on the principle we should all back free speech.

A university is a place for debate and debate is meaningless if people aren't allowed to express unpopular ideas. Free speech is not there to reaffirm what makes you comfortable, it's there to protect opinions that challenge mainstream thought and power.

We should commend Cannon's stance on protecting the rights of a campus club. We should also support the SPHR and its members' rights to express themselves how they please.

But if you want to avoid a similar mess, change the privacy settings on your Facebook.

Gauntlet Editorial Board

campus comment

Do you think your Facebook is fair game for public scrutiny?



"If you post something you put it out there for everyone to see."

– Kirsty McGowan,
third-year English



"Yes."

– Beth May,
third-year medieval studies



"Yeah. If you post you have to agree with those kinds of things."

– Elnar Mammadli,
third-year economics



"To an extent, yeah."

– Blake Sanderson,
second-year communications

Alleged hate speech on Facebook lands U of C student in international press

Former campus club president accused of advocating violence against Israelis

Riley Hill

News Editor • @RileyHillyc

Headlines across the world condemned a University of Calgary student as a “potential terrorist” this week after writings she posted on Facebook appeared in the *National Post*.

Ala'a Hamdan, a fourth-year biology student and former president of the Calgary chapter of Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR), posted writing on her personal Facebook page this month that members of Calgary United With Israel (CUWI) accused of being hate speech that condones violence against Israelis.

“So be aware of my existence; my body and soul are ready to fight and die,” reads one of Hamdan’s posts. “And if you see my blood coming out of my body please smile and cry of happiness because just then I will lay at peace in my mother’s arms.”

“I will soak a koffiah with your blood and save it to show your siblings,” read another post, addressed to an imagined son.

CUWI founder Ryan Bellerose said these comments should be a cause for concern.

“These people are starting to feel more empowered to say things like this,” Bellerose said. “I don’t think comments like these are considered acceptable by mainstream people.”

CUWI posted Hamdan’s writings on their website on Jan. 5 under a section that monitors the SPHR and the charity Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East.

On Jan. 10, the *National Post* published a story about Hamdan’s Facebook posts that were shared on the CUWI website.

The story quickly went international. It was picked up by a number of news organizations, including *The Blaze* — a conservative news site owned by political pundit Glenn Beck — and Israeli station *Arutz Sheva*, which ran the headline “Potential Terrorist Posts Facebook Threats.”

The *National Post* reported that CUWI contacted the Calgary Police Service with a hate speech com-



Hamdan’s writings that appeared on the CUWI website.

“In the *National Post* article, everything I had written was taken out of context. Most of the phrases that they claim I said on my Facebook were part of pieces that were poetic writing, creative writing.

— Ala'a Hamdan, former SPHR president

plaint, though the police said they had no record of this.

Hamdan, who recently turned 21, said these posts were examples of creative writing, not her personal outlook or hate speech.

“Every piece that I do has a picture that goes with it,” Hamdan said. “In my writing, I try to give voice to the people in these pictures. All these people are Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.”

The post that included the phrase, “This land will be proud that Palestinian babies are born men and women ready to spill their blood” — republished in the *National Post* — was meant to represent the perspective of the Palestinian child in the photo.

“In the *National Post* article, ev-

erything I had written was taken out of context,” Hamdan said. “Most of the phrases that they claim I said on my Facebook were part of pieces that were poetic writing, creative writing — whatever you want to call it.”

Hamdan stressed that these writings are not meant to be associated with the SPHR.

Current SPHR president Wesam Cooley said his club has had ongoing issues with CUWI.

“We constantly get harassed by them on our social media. They heckle at our events,” Cooley said. “At one point it got so bad that we had to ban a couple of members from one of our events.”

Bellerose denied this and accused members of the club of



Michael Grondin

Ala'a Hamdan said her writings were taken out of context.

making anti-Semitic comments.

Students’ Union vice-president student life Ben Cannon said the CUWI has pressured the SU to disband the club because of Hamdan’s comments. But he stressed the that the SU has no plans to unsanction SPHR.

“When it comes to people from outside [the U of C] coming to disrupt a club because they disagree with them, the SU feels strongly that that is against what university is about,” Cannon said. “University is about sharing ideas, not cutting them off because we don’t like them.”

Cannon said the SU has not re-

ceived any complaints from students or faculty about either Hamdan’s comments or SPHR.

A Palestinian solidarity group at the University of Manitoba was disbanded after similar pressure was brought against them in April. Cannon said it would take nothing short of a criminal investigation for the SU to consider taking this step.

“I want to ensure student groups on campus that, with the exemption of criminal activities on the part of a club, the SU has not and will not succumb to external pressure to disband a club just because they have unpopular opinions,” he said.

Hotdog eating contest

U of C students gathered for a hot dog eating contest hosted by the Residence Students' Association on Jan 14. Roughly 150 students showed up. "It's good to get everybody together, get everybody loud and create a passion for residence and the U of C," said RSA president Dan Medland-Marchen.

Michael Grondin



Michael Grondin



Michael Grondin

Improving mental health over the long term

Sessions in That Empty Space look to teach strategies for success

Riley Hill

News Editor • @RileyHillyc

If you deal with stress by drinking, are you an alcoholic? How many hours spent on the Internet per day is too much? And what are some healthy ways to relieve the pressures that go along with university life?

Members of the Students' Union Wellness Centre plan to answer these questions and more with Keeping It Real In The Space, a project to teach students, staff and faculty strategies for maintaining their mental health.

With university comes stress. That's a given. But mental health education co-ordinator Derek Luk said students are usually only offered short-term solutions to deal

with the mounting demands in their lives.

"Most forms of stress support on campus are not sustained," Luk said. "Things like puppy rooms or de-stress packs are great for the moment they're around, but they're not long-term strategies."

Luk compared the problem to the treatment of heart disease. When a patient is sick, they see a doctor and are given medicine. The medicine works temporarily, but over time, the problem persists. If the patient wants to get rid of their ailment for good, they must change their habits and adopt a healthy lifestyle.

This is what Keeping It Real In The Space is all about: teaching students different lifestyle choices that

can improve their mental health.

This involves basic education in psychology so participants can understand tricks their minds play. Luk gave the example of the so-called negative bias.

"With the negative bias, people are really good at looking at threats," he said. "Evolutionarily, that allowed us to survive. But our brain has not changed much over time, so we still interpret internal and external stresses in a negative way."

One method Luk teaches to deal with this negative thinking is called mindfulness, a meditation technique that focuses one's thoughts and sensations on the moment.

At the three sessions, participants will learn how strategies like mindfulness can help them deal with the mental health problems



Riley Hill

Derek Luk thinking about mental health in his office.

they face.

Participants can submit questions through Twitter at @UofC-MHECDerek, or can ask in person at one of the events.

"Online questions are good for

students who might be embarrassed to ask their question in a public setting," Luk said.

Sessions will be held in That Empty Space on Jan.27, Feb.10 and Feb.24 from 12-12:50 p.m.

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Sexual assault allegedly committed in Science B after Thursday night at the Den

Campus Security deems incident "more serious" than two cases last year

Chris Adams

News Assistant • @cadamsYYC

University of Calgary Campus Security was called at 1:00 a.m. on Jan. 10 after a female student was allegedly sexually assaulted in Science B after leaving the Den.

"We had an incident of sexual assault reported to us Jan. 10 and we called Calgary city police to come attend and investigate," said Campus Security director Lanny Fritz.

This is the first case of its kind reported on campus this year. Two sexual assaults were reported last year.

"Sexual assaults reported on campus are extremely rare. Last year, we had two confirmed cases of sexual assault. Those were in the category of inappropriate touching," Fritz said. "Nothing as serious as the inci-



Michael Grondin

Ellen Bolger and Emily Leedham from CASE.

dent that was reported January 10."

An email sent to U of C students and staff following the incident described the perpetrator as a caucasian male with brown

hair and a medium to large build. The security alert also claimed the perpetrator offered to help the victim find her friends before the attack.

Fritz said measures should still

be taken to prevent future assaults. He recommended keeping track of your friends to minimize risk.

"There's always safety in numbers. If they are out with their friends and people are aware of their surroundings and keep an eye on each other, that makes it much safer to meet total strangers by themselves," Fritz said. "So it would be much better to attend these particular functions with friends."

According to Emily Leedham, vice-president external of the Consent Awareness and Education Club, only one in 10 cases of sexual assault are reported to police. She said this is because stigma is often placed on the victim rather than the perpetrator.

"I think because of the conception around sexual assault, people blame the victim. They ask, what was she wearing? Was she drinking? What were the victim's actions that landed them in that particular situation?" Leedham said. "I think when a situation like this happens, victims are scared to talk about it because they don't know if they will be blamed for their own assault."

According to the CBC, the victim did not file a police report.

CASE president Ellen Bolger said that the reporting of sexual assaults does not always lead to justice and that dialogue surrounding sexual assault needs to change.

"The email that was sent out afterwards encouraging people to watch out for their personal safety kind of puts the onus on potential victims to prevent their own assaults," Bolger said. "Instead, there should be more focus on educating people about what consent is and what sexual assault is so people don't commit this crime in the first place."

CASE offers information on sexual assault prevention and consent awareness. Students can contact the Calgary Police Service with any information regarding last week's incident.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

1 IN 4

women will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime.

4 IN 5

female undergrads at Canadian universities have been victims of violence in a dating relationship. 29% of these were sexual assaults.

6%

of all sexual assaults are reported to police.

60%

of college aged males indicated they would commit sexual assault if they knew they would not get caught.

Sources:
Stats Canada.
Incidence and Prevalence of Woman Abuse in Canadian University College Dating.

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Suicide the concern of new campus club

The University of Calgary Grace Project is planning events in February to help lift students' spirits.

The Grace Project is a campus club looking to raise awareness about mental health and suicide prevention. The organization provides support groups for students coping with mental illness or dealing with the loss of someone in their life to suicide.

In February, the Grace Club will host a random-acts-of-kindness week during the week prior to reading week.

"We found out that in February, we have reading week off because it has the highest suicide rate for students," said club

president Glory Kabila. "So we thought the week before reading week we'd do random acts of kindness."

The Grace Club is planning a number of events for the week including a flash mob, handing out candies and giving compliments to passersby.

"We're [also] working with Queers on Campus to make a suit of armor out of metal," Kabila said. "We're going to get people to write compliments and those compliments will be molded into a suit of armor. Just to represent that we are all looking out for each other as U of C students."

Tendayi Moyo

Men head to oil patch instead of university

Young Albertan men are opting for careers in the oil patch rather than attending school, a Statistics Canada report says.

The report — which looks at employment information from 2001–2008 — claims the percentage of men aged 17–24 attending school in Alberta fell from 46 to 37 per cent as a result of rising wages.

Wages in oil producing provinces rose 21 per cent for males aged 17–24. Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland and Labrador were categorized as oil producing provinces.

"The resulting sharp wage growth

in the oil producing provinces seems to have caused a reduction in school enrolment," reads the report.

Wage growth in non-oil producing provinces was at 4 per cent, five times less than oil producing provinces. Enrolment in secondary and post-secondary education rose from 52 to 53 per cent in these provinces.

Permanent enrolment in post-secondary institutions fell from 17 to 16 per cent in Alberta. In non-oil producing provinces, permanent post-secondary enrolment rose from 20 to 24 per cent.

Chris Adams



Graphic by Remi Watts/ Photo by Michael Grondin

New year rush hits the gym

If you're looking to get in shape for the new year, you're not alone.

Managers at the U of C Fitness Centre say students can expect large crowds this January with the usual surge in gym attendance that comes at the beginning of the fall and winter semesters.

"Our two busiest times of the

year are when everybody comes back in September and January," said Chris Gordon, manager at the Fitness Centre.

Attendance generally thins out as the semester marches forward. Gordon recommended that students plan ahead if they want their new routine to last late into the year.

"People new to fitness tend to take on too much," Gordon said. "If you can set realistic goals, you're more likely to meet them."

He added that the gym is busiest at noon and from 4–7 p.m. Choose a different time to avoid the crowds.

Riley Hill

Clubs expo this week

Looking for that special someone who shares your love of Farscape fan fiction? Do you want to become a philanthropist? Like a shining beacon of hope in the humdrum of the new semester, clubs showcase is here.

The showcase will take place in the MacEwan Concert Hall January 13–16 from 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

The showcase looks to give students an alternative to spending their post-holiday slump wandering the halls like some hungry nomad.

"[University] can be a very isolating place," said World University

Service of Canada co-chair Sabrina Niesmam. "I feel like clubs get you out and get you meeting people with similar interests."

Social whizzes who don't need new friends might consider how a club could stoke their career aspirations.

"I've learned so much from being in a club that I couldn't learn in a classroom," Niesmam said.

With over 300 campus clubs on display and cjsw spinning that hot fire, those looking for a little extra out of university need look no further than MacHall.

Tendayi Moyo

Why do you think clubs are important?



"It's a way to improve the overall student life on campus."

– **Sorabh Dutta,**
Easy Ace Club



"To help students diversify their friends and get involved in more ways."

– **Sidney Knapp,**
Swing & Dance Club



"We like bringing students together to express themselves through music."

– **Jonathan Carpino,**
Gig Club

Dinos men's volleyball look at the big picture

Guaranteed CIS championship berth as event host despite middling year

Jacob McGregor

Gauntlet Sports

The Dinos men's volleyball team faced the University of Manitoba Bisons Jan. 11, coming on the heels of a straight-sets victory the night before. A despondent Dinos team dropped a 3-1 decision to the Bisons and looked disorganized for large stretches of the first two sets, losing them 25-20 and 25-19 respectively while racking up 16 errors, nearly equaling their total of 18 kills.

"We were very low energy to start the match and made too many errors," said Dinos outside hitter Connor Frehlich. "Once you start making errors it's hard to gain momentum."

The Dinos did find some traction in the second half of the match, thanks to the efforts of fourth-year outside Darcy Froese, who managed six kills coming off the bench. "Darcy did a great job coming off the bench for us today," said Frehlich. "He gave us a lot of energy."

This energy was evident as a more inspired Dinos squad cruised to a 25-17 third-set victory. However the Dinos's spark would come too late, as they would drop a hard fought fourth set 25-23. The loss drops the Dinos to 8-6 in Canada West conference play, enough for fifth place in



Courtesy David Moll



Courtesy David Moll

a conference where the top seven teams advance to the playoffs.

In a normal year, the Canada West season and playoffs would be of supreme importance, as only the conference champion and runner-up would move on to compete for the national championship. This year however, the University of Calgary is hosting the Canadi-

an Interuniversity Sport national men's volleyball championship, awarding the Dinos an automatic berth regardless of their playoff fortunes. Some might view this as a source of extra pressure, but for the Dinos it comes as extra motivation. "It's good to know you'll be playing for a national championship. We are using the season as

practice for that," said Frehlich.

With all roads leading to the CIS tournament in late February, the Dinos will likely face more up and down weeks. While these could rattle a team, Frehlich sees no cause for alarm.

"We have lots of help with our ups and downs," said Frehlich. "We have team meetings all the time,

and we have David Paskevich to help us out with our sports psychology."

The Dinos should be well equipped for the challenges that lie ahead but the bottom line is that a more consistent effort is needed if this team has aspirations of making noise in the CIS championships come February.

Sportspinion: Team Canada roster needs tinkering



Courtesy Michael Miller

Justin Seward

Gauntlet Sports • @Seaweed_tweets

The 2014 Winter Olympic games in Sochi, Russia are approaching and Team Canada will once again be one of the favourites to win the gold medal. On Jan. 7 the Hockey Canada brass, led by former Detroit Red Wings star and current Tampa Bay Lightning General Manager Steve Yzerman, announced Team Canada's 25-man roster.

Roster selections for tournaments of this calibre are often a source of controversy and this year's Olympic roster is no exception. There was the notable omission of Lightning forward Martin St. Louis, who was also left off of the 2010 team. St. Louis has 43

points through 46 games and has carried Yzerman's Lightning ever since star forward Steven Stamkos went down with a severe leg injury. He also won the Art Ross Trophy for the National Hockey League's leading scorer in last year's lockout-shortened season. St. Louis was left off the roster in favour of players like Patrick Marleau and Jeff Carter, who are high-caliber players but have not had as much of an impact on their teams as St. Louis.

Another exclusion was surging Philadelphia Flyers forward Claude Giroux, who has 41 points in 46 games this season. Giroux had a slow start this season, but like St. Louis he deserved a better fate.

The defence had one notable omission in Chicago Blackhawks

defenceman Brent Seabrook, who won gold with the 2010 squad. Seabrook and defensive partner Duncan Keith made an effective pair in Vancouver and Team Canada is taking a risk by separating a proven and reliable pairing.

Among Team Canada's questionable inclusions are defenceman Marc-Edouard Vlasic, who could be replaced with Seabrook without much controversy, and Carter and Marleau, who are taking roster spots from a few highly productive players. That being said, Canada wanted to go with speed, skill and toughness and named many players that possess these assets on the ice — Carter and Marleau included. Canada has such a depth of talent available to choose from, so there are

no truly bad options.

Canada is in Pool B with Norway, Austria and Finland and will begin their tournament on Feb. 13 against Norway. Pool B is relatively weak, although Finland should provide good competition with their strong goaltending and a roster featuring several NHL regulars. Canada should not have a problem advancing past the preliminary round, but when the medal round arrives they will have to reunite with their Russian and American rivals.

Should the squad fail to defend their title, Yzerman's selections, and especially his omissions will be heavily scrutinized. As in every Olympic tournament, anything less than a gold medal would be a disappointment for Canada.

Top hockey prospects invade the Saddledome

Three Calgarians play in showcase as the countdown to the NHL draft begins

Curtis Wolff

Sports Editor • @CBWolff

The speediest guy on the ice wasn't even supposed to be there in the first place.

But after an injury to Kingston Frontenacs forward Sam Bennett — who was recently named by National Hockey League Central Scouting as the top draft eligible North American skater in their midterm rankings — Brayden Point got the call on Sunday morning to pack his bags for his hometown of Calgary.

"I got the call from my general manager in Moose Jaw and he said that you're in the game," said Point following a skills testing session at the Saddledome ahead of the BMO NHL/CHL Top Prospects Game, the annual all-star game that showcases the best that the 2014 NHL Entry Draft has to offer.

The 17-year-old wasted little time showing he belonged amongst Canada's elite young players, recording the best time in a tricky — and high-tech — drill that involved keeping control of the puck while lurching forward and backwards through several markers and being timed by an electronic wristband.

"Some of it was a little tough to grasp," admitted Point, who is more accustomed to the old-school orange pylons and stopwatches. "It was a really cool experience to see what the skills competition is like at the pro level."

Point wasn't the only one initially vexed by the professional set up.

"Never been through anything like that in my life," said fellow Calgarian Brycen Martin, who played three years of bantam and midget hockey as a teammate of Point.

Martin was ranked as the number 20 North American skater in the midterm rankings, and is thrilled to have the opportunity to play in such a high-profile game in his hometown with his old teammate.

"It's an honour to play this big of a game in front of your friends and family and everyone you've grown up with," said Martin. "Being able to be here with Point is really nice. I try not to let it get to me and add pressure, playing in front of everyone I've known. I just have to treat it like a regular game — just go there and do what I'm good at and show what I can bring to the table."

Friends and family won't be the

ones Martin and Point are looking to impress — the Top Prospects Game attracts scouts and general managers from around the NHL, and will be the first time many of these players are viewed by their potential employers in person.

Ben Thomas certainly won't be distracted by having friends and family in the stands. The local product has grown accustomed to playing for a familiar crowd as a member of the Calgary Hitmen.

"I don't think it's pressure. If anything I think it's just a lot more support," said Thomas, a self-described late bloomer who has blossomed into the 49th ranked North American skater. "I always have old coaches saying how they remember coaching me back when I was little and seeing how much I've developed. All my friends and family are really excited and really supportive of me. I'd say it's just nice to be at home and in the comforts of my hometown."

The Top Prospects Game marks the halfway point of these players' draft year, culminating in the 2014 NHL Entry Draft on June 27-28 at the Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia.



Brayden Point dons the Team Orr jersey at the Dome.

Josh O'Brien



Josh O'Brien

Don't tell Team Orr's Aaron Hayden and Team Cherry's Jacob Middleton that the Top Prospects Game is just a showcase. The two flung fists in the first period of the game that finished 4-3 for Team Orr.

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Sportspinion: Behind-the-scenes access taking its toll

Suneil Sachdeva

Gauntlet Sports • @sudsysachdeva

Our culture has a fascination with looking behind the curtain. We love a good sneak peek, and never tire of hearing any juicy detail leaked from an anonymous source. This strange media truth has been growing steadily and gathering momentum, leading us from tabloid magazines to reality television empires to where we are now — with every facet of the media taking part in their own form of this exploitation.

The world of hockey is not exempt from this voyeuristic trend. The National Hockey League has dabbled in its fair share of be-

hind-the-scenes ventures — from granting HBO 24/7 crew access to two NHL locker rooms every year during the lead up to the annual Winter Classic, to the player tag-along series *NHL 36*, to the brand new *NHL Life* series, which grants viewers access not only to players but referees, scouts and even “an NHL exec’s wife” as their website states. The league has clearly ramped up their promotion of off-ice activity, aiming to drum up further interest in the game by giving fans a taste of the unmatched grind hockey players submit themselves to.

While such experiments have fared well thus far, the NHL’s partner in crime in this whole operation — the media — has started

to go off the deep end in their obsession with getting the most coveted, headline-worthy, not-supposed-to-be-released story out there and in getting it out faster than anyone else.

The sports media landscape has taken a strange shift with the rise in up-to-the-minute news via Twitter turning the whole process into a mad scramble. This puts those directly involved in the sport in the awkward and unfamiliar position of receiving essential news from the same sources that we on the outside do or hearing things that should never leave the closed doors of the league’s head offices.

We’ve now got coaches finding out about key injuries to their players during media scrums and players routinely finding out about being traded through Twitter or TSN broadcasts before hearing it from their own general managers. The most recent controversy involves Ottawa Senator’s forward Bobby Ryan having his name dragged through the mud in statements made by Team USA management during meetings which found their way to the light of day due to an all-access ESPN feature.

While it is true that the fans deserve a deeper look into the sport they love, the media’s spiral into its current state of seemingly all-access information has begun to bring down the very figures the fans aim to raise up and celebrate. Hearing that some of the NHL’s premier managers believe Bobby Ryan, a player understood to be among the league’s elite, to be lacklustre, one-dimensional and essentially lazy is not good for anybody. It is not good for Team USA and their management, it is certainly not good for Bobby Ryan — a player who surely would’ve preferred to hear he just “wasn’t the right fit” — and it is especially not good for the NHL. As a league that struggles to make waves in the United States, the NHL is unlikely to benefit from a widespread media story that details the reasons why one of its best American players is actually not that great.



It is not a journalist’s job to betray his or her integrity by purposely altering stories and keeping details under wraps in an effort to protect the game.

The true appeal of taking a peek behind the curtain is getting an unexpected look at what must transpire to make this thing we love appear to us as it does. We want to see the engine to understand how the machine runs so perfectly or see the actors running around chaotically to appreciate how calmly they take the stage. Once our looking starts to actually change the final product, however, things get murky. Walking backstage and knocking things over or taking apart the engine and leaving the parts strewn about on the floor seems less in line with what we’re looking for.

This is the environment we have begun to experiment with. In trying to get more and more access to fully celebrate the players we love, we’re leaving them in limbo — publicly spurned and degraded, despite working as hard as the rest and doing all we’ve asked of them, or alerted of career-changing decisions in

the form of a broadcast that simply moves their name from one team’s column to another without a moment’s hesitation.

As the media’s desire to release the most revealing story will continue undeterred, perhaps it is time for the NHL to reflect upon the state of its affairs and scale back the absurd level of access offered to media and fans. The onus falls squarely on the shoulders of the league’s top brass to steer themselves out of this continuing sideshow. It is not a journalist’s job to betray his or her own integrity by purposely altering stories and keeping details under wraps in an effort to protect the game. Nor is it up to the fans to expose themselves to only that information which would give them the most positive, unadulterated view of the sport. It is the league’s responsibility to refocus its efforts on what is most important — the game itself, and the well-being of those who play it.

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Hungry... for a change?

Food insecurity on the University of Calgary campus

By: Tamara Cottle @FreedomFoodCity

Food banks are an important commodity on campus for students who are stretched financially thin. Mary Hart*, arts major and a single mother at the University of Calgary, uses the Campus Food Bank regularly.

Before she was a student, Hart was a starving artist, working three jobs and supporting a child on her own. In 2008, when she was diagnosed with cancer, Hart had to

quit her jobs and undergo chemotherapy. The food bank has helped her get through those tough times.

"We got \$600 a month from the government and my rent was \$700 plus I had to feed a child," she says, recalling the difficult time in her life when she had to use a food bank for the first time.

Hart's story is a familiar refrain for those facing unforeseen circumstances like medical conditions that challenge family finances. There are many families, though, with working adults who struggle to put food on the table. According to Food Banks Canada, 12 per cent of those assisted by food banks report their primary source of income from employment.

The yearly Hunger Count report conducted by Food Banks Canada reports that Food Bank use remains much higher than it was before the 2008 recession. Half of the households receiving food from food banks report social assistance as their

primary source of income, 25 per cent are single-parent families while more than a third of those requiring emergency food are children.

Now a student, Hart is one of the 400 to 500 students who access the U of C Campus Food Bank every year. She lives on student loans and after paying all of her bills, including \$1,200 a month for rent, there's often not enough money left for food.

Shawnee Belleville, co-coordinator of the U of C Campus Food Bank understands the financial burden many students must deal with.

"Tuition is going up and if you don't have that much money you're not going to be able to afford some of the things that are increasing in price such as food," she says.

Almost every university in Canada has a food bank. The University of Calgary provides an emergency hamper which supplies students with enough food for seven days. There is no limit on how many times students can access the food bank, and this, Belleville believes is especially important for students in exceptional situations.

"If we're helping somebody get through a difficult time or they have kids or a family they are trying to help while they're in school then I do think we are helping," Belleville says.

January is a particularly tough time for a growing number of Canadians as budgets are often stretched at Christmas, energy and gas bills are more expensive as the cold sets in and food



25 %

of households
receiving food
from food banks are
**single-
parent
families**

In March 2013
833,098 people
used food banks
across **Canada.**
50,000 users were from
Alberta

banks struggle to keep up with the increasing demand for emergency food.

"You just keep going and do your best and try to get extra work wherever you can," Hart says, resolving herself to the fact that living with food security is a reality many people must accept in Canada.

Now a cancer survivor and close to graduation, Hart is appreciative of all the help she gets from charitable organizations like the food banks.

"We're very grateful for the food banks. They're part of the circle that allows me to be a student to make a better life for myself and my child," she says.

see HUNGRY, page 12

Hungry, continued from page 11

WHAT FOOD BANKS DO BEST

Food banks, as we know them today, began in 1967 in Phoenix, Arizona, where a man named John Van Hengel was gleaning fruits and vegetables for a mission dining hall. He soon discovered that he could collect much more than the dining hall needed and the pastor of St. Mary's church offered to rent a space for him to store the excess food. Van Hengel had heard about dumpsters behind supermarkets containing an abundance of food in sullied jars and bottles, dented cans, leaking bags and stale bread. He approached these grocers to negotiate a deal to take these unsaleable items off of their hands and give them to people who were hungry. Van Hengel pioneered this new food banking concept with St. Mary's Food Bank, a space where

charitable food donations could be housed and distributed to people in need.

Food banking has grown since the late '60s, spreading north and establishing strong roots in Canada. The first Canadian food bank was founded in Edmonton in 1981 and since then food banks have sprung up all over the country. What started out as a temporary response to the recession of the early '80s has now been institutionalized in Canada. Today there are more than 800 food banks and over 3,000 food programs providing emergency food.

Food banks are big business in Canada with companies like Campbell Soup Company, Nestle, Kellogg and Pepsico contributing both food and monetary donations. In 2011 Kraft gave Canadian

food banks 1.4 million kilograms of food while Loblaws has donated more than \$875,000 since 2008.

The vast majority of donations, however, are supplied by annual citizen food drives and approximately 45 per cent of food banks are volunteer run.

The Calgary Interfaith Food Bank distributes approximately 350 family or individual emergency hampers daily through a system which has been refined for efficacy not unlike an assembly line at a factory. To keep this system running smoothly, the Calgary Food Bank employs 50 paid staff and about a hundred volunteers per day to keep up with the demand for emergency food. Last year, 6,121 volunteers helped distribute 7,569,375 kilograms of food.

Volunteer retention is strong at

the 30-year-old operation. Donna Braitenbach, who has been volunteering for 12 years, can be found at the Calgary Food Bank every Monday night checking people's identification before they receive their hamper.

Braitenbach has an opportunity to talk with the clients and get to know the various people who access hampers.

"Most of the people that come to the food banks are working," she explains. "One little thing like a flat tire, or a child getting sick or your partner getting a broken arm or something that throws you over the edge then people just need a little bit of extra help. And it's just so gratifying to see their faces light up and know that there is help available."

In most cases, clients at the Cal-

gary Food Bank only access the service once or twice and eventually get the support they need to become self sufficient again. There are some cases, though, that elicit genuine concern from Braitenbach.

"I've met many, many elderly people at the food bank and that tugs at my heart," she says. "Or very young mothers, single mothers that can't quite make that money stretch far enough. Those are the people that really make me feel."

Overall, Braitenbach's experience helping the people who come to the food bank has been rewarding.

"I feel like I'm getting so much out of it," confesses Braitenbach. "I know the people that come here are getting their food and their supplies, but I get so much more out of it than they do."

THE TRUE COST OF HUNGER

The home page of the Calgary Interfaith Food Bank proudly displaying their record-breaking Christmas campaign, which garnered over \$1,300,000 in food and funds, is a testament to the generosity of Calgarians willing to donate their efforts to those in need.

The food bank has an amazing ability to harness the good will in communities, bringing out the best in people.

"It brings out the best in people wanting to help their neighbours; it brings out the best in people wanting to volunteer their time; it brings out the best in people who want to bring a smile to somebody's face," says Lynn McIntyre, professor in the department of community health sciences, faculty of medicine at the University of Calgary. "[The

food bank] does far more good for those who are volunteers than it does for those that are recipients. The recipients remain food insecure."

McIntyre has been researching household food insecurity for 20 years and has come to see the problem food banks pose in addressing the issue of poverty in Canada.

One of the misconceptions perpetuated by food banks, explains McIntyre, is that they are helping all people in need when in fact people accessing food banks only represent the tip of the iceberg. According to McIntyre, less than a third of those who are food insecure actually use a food bank.

"It is an undignified activity to go to the food bank no matter how they try to reduce stigmatization,

put a smile on their face and have a kind volunteer. It's mortifying," McIntyre explains. "It's an experience that one never forgets and that's why so many people who are still food insecure do not go to the food bank. The hungry are still invisible in Canada because the food banks are taking them off the streets."

To McIntyre, having the streets absent of people begging for food does not mean that we have found a solution to poverty and hunger. Those working within the food bank's network also admit that food banks are not the best way to address food insecurity. The 2013 Food Banks Canada Hunger Count makes the paradoxical argument that we should reduce the need for food banks in Canada.

Inadequate social assistance

rates, seasonal and part-time employment and overall poor wages contribute to what McIntyre describes as a persistent problem which existed even before the 2008 recession.

"It is one of these things we call an intractable policy problem," she says. "We have not been able to regulate our employment to provide sufficient benefits in minimum wage for those who are working to meet basic needs."

Like McIntyre, who believes the solution to food insecurity rests in the hands of the state rather than the arbitrary altruism of citizens, Food Banks Canada recommends several policy changes at the provincial and federal level.

After extensive research, Food Banks Canada recommends that

the government maintain support for Canadians at risk of failing in the labour market, act to ensure that Canadian jobs are good jobs, prevent further erosion of federal support for affordable housing and increase social investment in northern Canada.

In order to execute these recommendations, the federal government needs to invest in its citizens with dedicated funds that will circumvent the billions of dollars lost addressing the health and social consequences of poverty. In a 2008 study conducted by the Ontario Associations of Food Banks, poverty costs the federal and provincial governments anywhere from \$72 to \$86 billion annually in health care, crime and intergenerational costs as well as lost productivity.



Michael Grondin

INSUFFICIENCY, INADEQUACY, INAPPROPRIATE, INSTABILITY, INACCESSIBILITY AND INEFFICIENCY

I like the notion of peanut butter as it's substantial on bread and provides you with some protein and nutrients such as iron and vitamin E. However, the brand I was given was problematic in a couple of ways.

Susan Barker, vice-provost student experience at the University of Calgary, is describing an encounter with an item she received from the food bank when participating in the Hamper Project last March as part of Hunger Week. Hosted by Meal Exchange in association with the Students' Union, the Hamper Project challenged participants to live off of a hamper from the Campus Food Bank for a week and blog about their experience in order to spread awareness about food insecurity.

The blog entry goes on to bemoan the long list of ingredients in

the peanut butter, its hydrogenated fats, excess sugars and the fact that it came in a toxic plastic container.

I do make informed choices about my food and this is definitely not one I would ever choose and I certainly don't think I can use the rest of the jar.

Barker's thoughts demonstrate two of what Janet Poppendieck, author of *Sweet Charity: Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement*, defines as the seven deadly "ins" of emergency food. Poppendieck's seminal work lists "inadequacy" which means nutritionally unsound food and "inappropriate" foods that clients would not choose on their own. She explains why food banks do not solve the food insecurity problem.

The peanut butter, Barker explains, was a symbol of the many items that are typically found in

food bank hampers. Sadly, nutritionally inadequate items of processed foods containing long lists of unintelligible ingredients, high salt, fat and sugar make up the majority of donations. These foods contribute to the the rising incidence of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity in Canada.

"I really didn't like the quality of food I received," admits Barker when reflecting back on what she learned from the Hamper Project. "We have to really increase the quality of food we give because if we're giving people junk food to eat then we're not going to help them have a healthy sustainable lifestyle."

Additionally, the peanut butter she received was not something that Barker would have selected had she been given the choice. The inappropriateness of food

handouts is disappointing, especially for those with special diets or those unaccustomed to western food.

The "insufficiency" of food is also a reality for people accessing food banks. Although Calgary Interfaith Food Bank reports 82 per cent of recipients accessing the food bank less than twice, 18 per cent of clients require additional hampers of emergency food.

There is also the issue of "instability" or whether or not certain foods will be available through the food bank. Depending on donations, fluctuating markets and economic trends, food banks cannot guarantee certain essential food items for their clients.

Sometimes people have difficulty getting to a food bank, resulting in "inaccessibility." Many food insecure people do not own a car and

must rely on food sources that are found close to home. As a result, distance can act as an exclusionary force. For example, the Calgary Interfaith Food Bank is not located in a residential area and it can be exhausting carrying food hampers on public transportation especially with small children, disability or in bad weather.

The "inefficiency" of the food bank system is apparent in and of itself. Thousands of volunteer hours spent purchasing and redistributing food to people who must wade through an often exhausting process of appealing to client services and waiting in long line ups could be better spent on subsidies such as food vouchers, solutions that allow people to buy food for themselves without having to face the stigma associated with foodbanks.

THE FINAL AND MOST DEADLY "IN": INEQUALITY

When asked if the Campus Food Bank hampers could be improved in quality, Hart is hesitant.

"I don't want to say anything bad about them because they've been keeping us going," she says

After thinking about it, Hart admits she could use more fresh fruit, milk and less processed food

for herself and her daughter. She wishes that the food bank could arrange something with the Co-op food stores so she could choose her own food.

This ability to choose highlights the crux of the seventh and most deadly "in" of Poppendieck's list of what's wrong with food banks. A

two-tiered system of food procurement where wealthy people can choose to eat whatever they want and poor people must accept what they are given no matter how unhealthy, insufficient or inappropriate constitutes the inequality and indignity that pervades the emergency food system.

Still, when food is available, no matter how nutritionally deficient, meagre or unfamiliar, there will be people who must accept what is given to them so they can face the next day.

"You know what? I'd be a fool to let my pride over step my doing the best I can to raise a child," Hart says

with conviction. It's hard to argue with someone who has seen the other side of death and knows first hand what it feels like to be hungry.

"I'll make the best choices I can, hopefully, to raise my child and if it means accessing a food bank so we have fresh milk and food so be it."

***names have been changed.**



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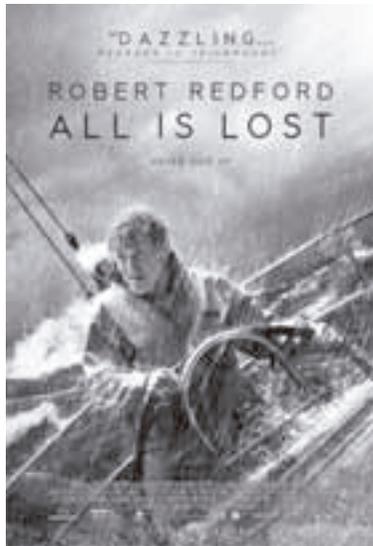
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Best films of 2013

Matthew Parkinson has watched over 100 films in 2013. Over the next two weeks he'll select his picks for the best and worst films of 2013.

Matthew Parkinson

Gauntlet Entertainment • @martertweet



courtesy Lionsgate

All is Lost

All is Lost tells the almost dialogue-free tale of an elderly man who winds up having to survive on his own at sea. Robert Redford stars as the unnamed man. Redford reminds us with his performance here that he can capture the screen by himself, and does so by turning in one of the best performances of the year. The film is intense, dramatic and kind of beautiful.



courtesy Columbia Pictures

American Hustle

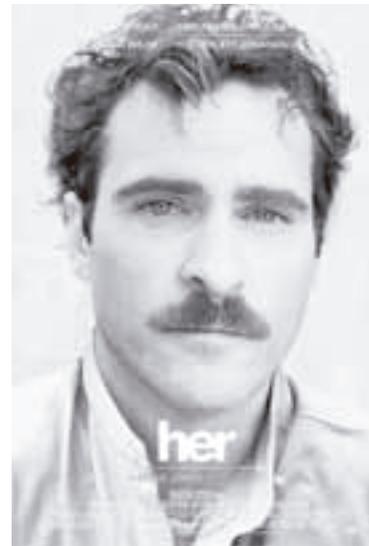
A breezy and funny movie that takes us back to the 1970s, *American Hustle* brings us a fantastic cast who turn in great performances, a strong sense of place and time and a sharp script. It might not tell the truest of tales — the story is based on the FBI's ABSCAM operation in the '70s and '80s — but it's a very enjoyable one to watch play out on screen.



courtesy Sundance Selects

Blue is the Warmest Colour

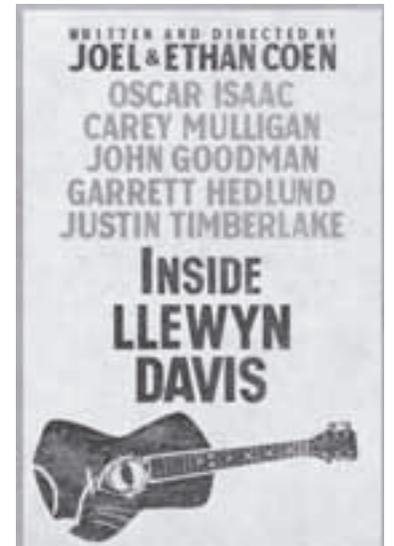
The first of two films on this list that played at the Calgary International Film Festival this year, *Blue is the Warmest Colour* is a heartfelt drama that is in French and plays for a minute shy of three hours. Its characters feel real, and it provides such an intimate portrayal of their story and love that it's almost impossible not to be drawn into their lives. It's emotionally compelling and justifies its lengthy running time.



courtesy Warner Bros Pictures

Her

Director Spike Jonze is known for unconventional films and *Her* is no different. Set in the near-future, a man falls in love with his computer's operating system. The premise could easily be played for laughs, but Jonze manages to make it one of the most gripping and powerful movies of the year by making its love feel real and by working in commentary on all types of relationships, not just the one it portrays.



courtesy CBS films

Inside Llewyn Davis

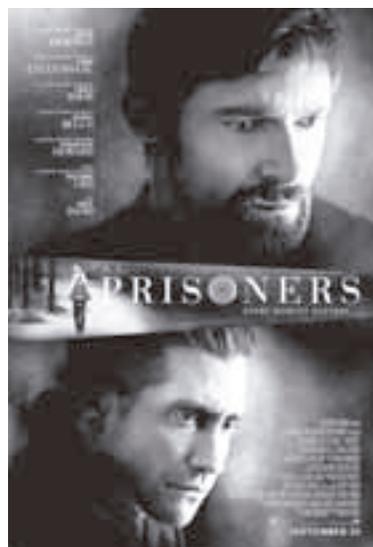
The best films get better the more you think about them and an appropriate example of this is *Inside Llewyn Davis*, which tells the story of a wannabe folk singer played wonderfully by Oscar Isaac. The tone is melancholic, the songs are great, the symbolism is everywhere and becomes fun to look for, and there's even a cute cat that acts more than just as a plot device.



courtesy Sony Pictures Classics

The Past

The best foreign film of the year (and another CIFF-screened film), *The Past* is the best foreign-language film of the year. From *A Separation* director Asghar Farhadi, it tells the cross-culture story of an Iranian man, his soon-to-be ex-wife and her new beau. It has great performances and a story that continues to surprise.



courtesy Warner Bros Pictures

Prisoners

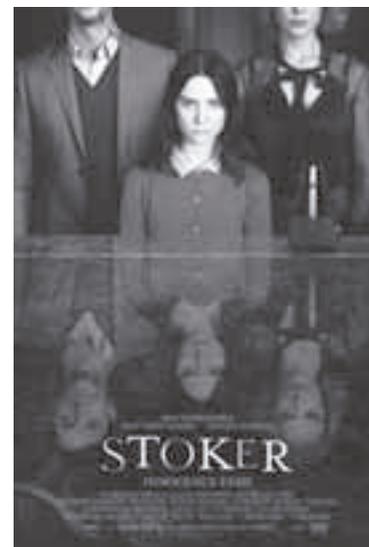
Prisoners is a thriller done right. It manages to maintain suspense and tension for its surprisingly lengthy running time, and is anchored with intense and powerful performances by Hugh Jackman and Jake Gyllenhaal. It holds up on closer inspection and it brings with it genuinely shocking reveals.



courtesy Cinedigm

Short Term 12

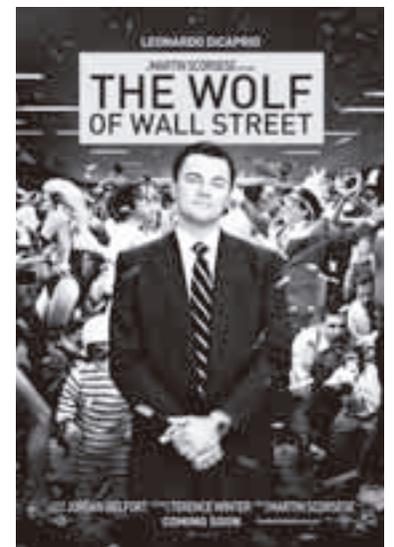
From the realistic depiction of a foster-care facility to the heartbreaking performance turned in by Brie Larson and the supporting cast, *Short Term 12* is such a wonderful experience. It may never be fun to watch, but it's so emotionally captivating that you can't stop watching it after it begins.



courtesy Fox Searchlight Pictures

Stoker

The English-language debut of Park Chan-wook (2003's *Oldboy*, not this year's remake), *Stoker* is an absolutely gorgeous movie depicting some very wicked content. It has an aesthetic style all its own, works as well as a drama or as a horror film and leaves you with some haunting imagery. This was the best film of the year for several months.



courtesy Paramount Pictures

The Wolf of Wall Street

One of the funniest films you'll see coming from one of the greatest directors of all time, *The Wolf of Wall Street* provides a look into the moral corruption that comes from wealth, telling the true story of Jordan Belfort. It's absolutely hilarious, very graphic and delivers three hours of depravity.



courtesy Warner Music

25 years of Barenaked Ladies

Ashton Chugh

Features Assistant • @ashtag00

Embarking on their latest tour to promote their new album *Grinning Streak*, the Barenaked Ladies are celebrating a career that has spanned a quarter century.

“We talked a lot about 25 years and how do we approach it,” lead singer Ed Robertson says. “Then we said the best way to do it is to make a new record and go out on the road. Probably the best way to celebrate 25 years is to have a really great 25th year. And ultimately, I’m super proud of all the work we did in our 25 years.”

Robertson says their latest album is evidence of how the band has fine-tuned their craft over the years.

“I never made a record as easily as this one,” Robertson says. “It was totally spontaneous in the studio. We used a lot of live off the floor band performances, and there are a lot of first takes on this record.”

An example Robertson uses is the song “Smile,” which is the first time he sang that song in studio. Robertson says their producer had a hard time finding anything wrong with the track and wanted to go with it.

“A lot of the record had that feel,” Robertson says. “Nothing got in the way of a creative atmosphere and a collaborative performance. The stars aligned. It’s cheesy to say, but that’s what happened.”

And speaking of stars, not only has the band had success on Earth, but they are also one of the first

groups to venture onto the extraterrestrial circuit. They performed the song “ISS” — which stands for “Is Somebody Singing” — with Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield, which was dubbed the first space-to-Earth musical collaboration.

“Chris has been a friend for a long time,” Robertson says. “He dropped me a note. ‘I don’t know how your record is doing on Earth, but it’s sure getting a lot of playing time here on the space station.’ So we have been in touch and been pals for a long time. Given the chance to write a song with him and to perform it with him on the ISS, and us here on Terra Firma, now that was exciting.”

The Barenaked Ladies are playing at the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium on Jan. 21.

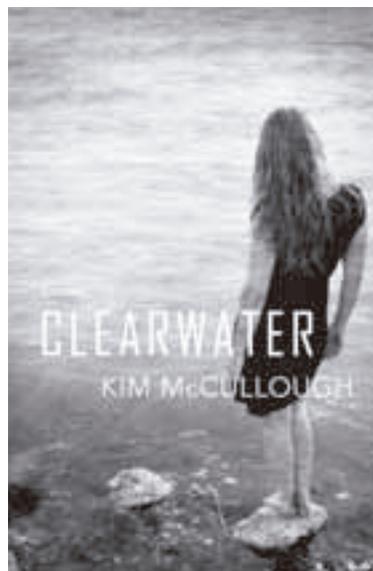
Book review: Kim McCullough’s *Clearwater*

Justine Wright

Gauntlet Entertainment

Calgary author Kim McCullough’s debut novel, *Clearwater* is a good read for teens and young adults, mostly because it resembles a season of *Degrassi*. The novel follows Claire Sullivan and Jeff Carson, two teenagers living in a troubled small town in northern Manitoba. They struggle with abuse, drugs, drinking, suicide, relationships et cetera. There’s rarely a moment where a new bomb does not drop soap-opera style.

Like daytime television, this book features a cast of female leads who are static, cliché and perpetually falling apart. Characters like both Claire’s and Jeff’s mothers simply stand around and blend into the background until it’s time to move the plot forward. Claire’s mother is a typical neglectful mother who isn’t there for her kids, while Jeff’s mother is a passive housewife incapable of leaving or standing up to her husband. Claire’s brother, Daniel, has a drunken aboriginal wife who wants custody of their



courtesy Coteau Books

child but cannot take care of herself — much less anyone else. Granted, these women are side characters, but even the main characters like Claire and her sister, Leah, are portrayed as emotional and physical train wrecks with very little reprieve in their self-wrought misery.

This is not to say the book is poorly written. The language is strong, the chapters are well paced, and the tension is thick. However, for a book

driven by characters and their dialogue, the characters just aren’t engaging. The dialogue too often comes across as wooden or lacking subtext and the characters often speak like they are dispensing morals or describing the book’s overall theme — when they aren’t shouting lines that are expected on a soap opera.

These soap-opera relationships are frustrating. At first it seems Claire and Jeff will just be good friends and it is refreshing to read about two people of the opposite gender getting along without needing to be in love. Unfortunately, they fall into the romantic comedy yo-yo cycle of liking each other and then not liking each other because of a misunderstanding — then liking each other anyway.

Overall the book wasn’t too bad. It is an enjoyable read because of the author’s skilled use of language, but unfortunately the characters just take away too much of the book’s power. Despite that, I’m interested in reading McCullough’s next novel. If the power of her language is any indication, a sophomore novel may have a lot of potential.



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Swamp Thing
Firedogs
October 31, 2013

After settling down to listen to a nice heavy metal album — the cover featured a barely clothed pin-up girl with a pentagram belt, wrangling three leashed hellhounds before a mountain of skulls and guitars — I was shocked to find that nothing even remotely like that was coming out of my speakers.

Swamp Thing's latest album *Firedogs* is a rap album. The collaborative effort out of Toronto was put together by artists Timbuktu, Chokeules and Savilion, artists who have each

been on the scene for over a decade, working with other artists and groups before coming together to work on this project. *Firedogs* is the combination of the group's sound engineering prowess and lyrical skill. The group has brought in several other artists to make this album not only a demonstration of their skills, but of those of their friends and collaborators.

The opening track "The Altar," featuring D-Sisive, sets the tone for the album. It sounds like a collaboration between Linkin Park and Eminem, with a unique soundscape and creative, hard-hitting and smooth-flowing lyrics. Each track leads right into the next and brought the album together as a complete, unified whole. One of the sounds that comes up frequently throughout the album, as in the track "Damages," is a selection of vocal clips from what seem to be 1920s radio shows and newscasts. These clips soften the melody behind the beats in each track to balance the music with the harder lyrics over top.

Although the cover art is misleading, *Firedogs* is a feat of hip-hop sound engineering. Unique, endearing melodies, hard-hitting beats and smooth lyrics come together to form a cohesive, exciting Canadian rap album. *Firedogs* is an excellent showcase of Swamp Thing's talents.

Alexandra Mueller



Greg Rekus
Punkoustic
January 8, 2014 (Private Ear Recording)

Punk music and acoustic guitar has never been a good combination in my mind but Greg Rekus's latest album *Punkoustic* has proven otherwise. The Winnipeg-born singer's music manages to bring together the two genres into a sound that has the fast, hard vocals of punk and the full, rich sound of acoustic instruments, which appeals to a more general audience than traditional punk music but does not suffer for it. Rekus's music is something you

can either rock out to or sit back and just enjoy.

The unique feel of *Punkoustic* is achieved through a very punk influence in the lyrics and rhythm, combined with purely acoustic instrumental lineup including saxophone and fiddle. Each track on the disc is acoustic punk taken from a different angle in a new way. The opening song, "Abandon The Guilty," starts off with strong percussion and heavy guitar chords, in classic rock style, but gains a distinct punk flair with heavy and strong vocals. "Oil on the Ground" has a more prominent punk influence with a focus on deep, dark vocals but starts off with an upbeat guitar line which contrasts with the vocals but adds to the punk feel of the song. Later on the album the music shifts more towards a more acoustic style with "Please Don't Bury Me," which begins with frantic guitar chords, and then builds with blistering fast vocals and a fiddle solo.

In this album Greg Rekus has found a distinct sound that completely defies expectations. The sound is full and rich with distinct punk tones, but most of all it's enjoyable music.

Connor Sadler

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PARTYING WITH THE MEDIA PARTY

The *Gauntlet* encounters Ezra Levant again and talks mainstream media bias

Tobias Ma
Opinions Editor
@mobias



From Jan. 10-12, the *Gauntlet* attended the Canadian University Press's national student journalism conference, hosted by the *Gateway*, the University of Alberta's paper. NASH is a conference for the nation's student newspapers to share tradecraft, attend workshops and get drunk in hotel rooms, although which of these objectives it succeeded at I will not speculate on. One of the keynote speakers in attendance was Ezra Levant, conservative pundit, courthouse target of many an aggrieved party and the subject of an off-key interview we conducted back in October.

Seeing Levant and his crazy ways again was good fun. He called our roomful of student journalists immature lambs, entrenched in groupthink and blinded by elitism, masquerading as objectivity, that we feel university education entitles us to. And for the most part, we managed to prove him right.

He referred to us as privileged and asked how many of us have worked on a factory floor. The ballroom he was speaking to went insane. Protests blanketed the room. The uproar of boos and rattling tables threatened to spill the opened Budweisers I had smuggled to our table and clenched between my dress shoes. A young lady asked him why she has to pay \$30,000 in student loans if she is privileged. I guess it never occurred to her that living in a country where the government will lend you \$30,000 in student loans to receive a liberal arts education is a privilege in itself.

Levant smirked and polled us on the hot-button issues of the day. Abortion, same-sex marriage, gun control, the war on terror. The results were overwhelmingly progressive.

"You talk with each other, you eat together, you even sleep together," he said.

When he started asking us



News Editor Riley Hill preparing to arm-wrestle Levant. The younger man won.

Louie Villanueva

about what he called "the theory of man-made climate change," another young lady stood up and screamed that climate change is "not a theory." She had heard enough out of him, she said, and received a round of thunderous applause before storming out, taking a number of colleagues with her.

I don't agree with Levant on any of his solutions to what he refers to as "the media party," meaning a homogenous group of well-educated social liberals, usually white, who have led relatively lucky lives and get to run the media. The "media party's" existence served, absurdly, as his justification for building all five proposed oil pipelines in Canada — he reasoned that if the mainstream media is biased in favour of environmentalism, environmentalists are probably wrong.

But a simple show of hands at last Saturday's banquet suggested that socially liberal biases, if not already present, will be present in the journalism industry as this next generation graduate and find jobs. Some of these biases will be present in yours truly — I too was pretty similar to everyone there. Except I am not white,

and want to see the ascendance of gay rights, abortion and marijuana abuse so that North America becomes weak enough for a Chinese takeover. Jokes.

Judging by the number of people who attended the conference's workshop on crime reporting, student journalists must consider themselves a tough crowd. After all, journalism is a rough job and people hurt your feelings sometimes when you are nosy or do not have time to brush your teeth when a hot story is breaking.

But within 10 minutes of Levant's speech he had unravelled the room emotionally, a pathetic showing from a group of people dedicated to becoming dispassionate observers. And not only was booing and walking out on a keynote speaker unbecoming of journalists, it demonstrated we failed to research our guest.

Levant is the country's premier political troll and as we all know: don't feed the trolls. The sad part is that we were too politically biased to recognize that he had something useful to say this time . . . which was that the media industry is politically biased. Whether this bias needs to (or

even can) be removed is another debate, but everyone should keep it in mind when reading news. Let me give an example.

After the *Gauntlet* interviewed Levant in October, we spoke to David Suzuki, his arch-nemesis. While I was expecting Suzuki to be polite and Levant to be rude, the opposite was true.

Suzuki gave us nothing he had not polemicized many times before and addressed us condescendingly once the recorder was off. I scoured the Internet to see if any other interviewers had a similar experience and found that he has a reputation for rudeness and owns four houses, including one on an island owned by him and oil company. Moreover, his actual scientific background in climate change is limited.

The relevance of this information in light of his considerable achievements for environmentalist causes is debatable. But I could have run this data alongside the interview out of spite, and I would not have discovered it if he didn't piss me off.

The *Gauntlet's* readers would probably not have cared if I wrote a rant about Suzuki. But

the fact that I could have furthered a personal vendetta under the guise of objective reporting is frightening when considering that major news publications could act similarly.

To continue using Suzuki as an example, he was named the Most Admired Canadian by a questionably-constructed 2013 CBC poll. This poll strangely included names like Mike Duffy (famous for his part in the Senate scandal) and excluded the likes of Chris Hadfield, our celebrity astronaut. I'm unsure if the CBC would set up a poll to favour Suzuki, but they have motive. Suzuki is a former CBC journalist, having hosted an environmentally-themed show on the CBC called *The Nature of Things* for decades. He is also critical of Prime Minister Harper, who has been trying to strangle the CBC for years and is widely hated by journalists for his unfriendliness to the media.

The CBC is generally a credible organization, but I am suggesting that we all treat news, even from supposedly safe sources, with a dose of suspicion and consideration for its presentation's context.

I doubt everyone at Levant's speaking event who got mad did so out of willful malice. I think he pinched a nerve that has gotten strained as the media world grows hyper-aware. Even after putting aside the philosophical debate over whether truly objective information can exist, the reach and number of sources of news has increased to the point that readers can choose publications that confirm their own beliefs. And because most newspapers are businesses first and foremost, they seek to create a product out of information. Such commodification can be as subtle as choosing what to report rather than how to report it.

What scared everyone at the conference was the reminder that we are about to join a field of professionals, ideally objective but in reality human, whose control over the perception of information is not always treated with the professionalism and objectivity expected of them.

A well-oiled machine

Shooting with the University of Calgary Firearms Association

Riley Hill
News Editor
@RileyHillyc



Recently, I decided to find out if the University of Calgary Firearms Association is dangerous and if its members are crazy.

By mid-December, I had talked with some of the executives. Club president Henry Lung is always a gentleman. Delano Civitarese, the club's operations director, has a country attitude that revolves around mutual respect and the first time I met UCFA vice-president communications Adam Strashok, he talked to me about Henry Kissinger. I don't like Kissinger, but I liked that he wanted to talk about him.

I decided to spend an evening at the firing range to find out if the club was really the menace that some fear it to be. On Dec. 30, I found myself early for one of their shoots. The first member approached me with a quiet gaze. His hand stretched out to shake mine and our conversation was friendly enough. Unprompted, another young man (most of the club is young men) quickly gave me a rundown of what he knew about guns. He began with a disclaimer of comparative ignorance. Then he managed to start listing various police forces that use the Beretta M9 as their standard sidearm. He talked more about the qualities of various ammunition as we strolled the shop.

"Of course, the .50 calibre is more of an anti-material bullet," he explained at one point. "The more

manageable .338 is a much better choice for any anti-troop needs."

He kept interjecting that he had never been in a gun shop before.

The club executives soon paraded in. Though the UCFA is just three months old, the executives already owned matching swag. Their pride in the UCFA was obvious. The letters on their backs reading "executive" were fading from shirts that had obviously been washed many times.

The executives handed out permission slips, explaining to us that if a haphazard round were to pulverize my shin, the Students' Union would have contracts proving that everyone here understood the menace posed by stray fire. I'm paraphrasing with the gore. But the executives seemed organized and prepared for the hazards that accompany young men packing military-grade weapons.

Once a crowd of around 25 showed up, we were led to a backroom for a quick rundown in gun safety. One of the employees led the safety lesson. He talked quickly and flashed a cocky, grim smile when divulging the bloody details.

"If your thumb is placed too high [behind the slide], it will absorb ten thousand pounds of force, effectively removing it," he yelled, his voice muffled by gunfire in the next room.

On the firing range, there were several guns laid out for us, each with a box of ammo sitting beside. The executives smirked at the horror overcoming some of the club's newer members. Being around assault weapons for the first time can be a nerve-wracking experience, especially when there are models such



Riley Hill

as the AR-15, which has been made infamous by recent shootings.

The AR-15 is a high powered assault rifle, a feat of engineering both beautiful and terrifying. While each of the rifle's powerful shots shook the firing range, the recoil on my shoulder was smooth. The same red dot scope I had used in video games a thousand times before was mounted on its barrel. And just like in video games, it was simple to point and shoot. The violent force spewed with each click of the trigger gave me a thrill. But the thought of this same rifle being aimed indiscriminately in a Colorado theatre scared the shit out of me. Some of the others seemed nervous.

One of the worst affected was Sadiq Vialliani, president of the

Mount Royal University Students' Association. He told me he knew a few of the club members. I found myself strangely amused watching him flinch every time the boom of an AR-15 stole the breath from his chest and jangled his eyebrows. This tension was short-lived. Every time a nervous volunteer finished his first couple of shots, he began to loosen up.

Even while shooting a Glock at a white, life-sized target in the shape of a human torso, it's easy to forget the destructive power of guns. But shooting is something that is fun on its own. And as far as I could tell, that's what the UCFA is all about: a love of guns and target shooting for the sake of guns and target shooting.

The fear of a campus gun club

is understandable. Linking guns and school life, even when safety is stressed, can be interpreted as distasteful for obvious reasons. Most of the members I met were friendly, social and encouraging. They just loved to shoot.

But a club featuring guns will draw certain personalities that we fear and sometimes misunderstand — the quiet, anxious, socially awkward types that, even if kind-hearted, end up coming across as weird. And this is what scares people about guns: the idea that a weird guy might get ahold of one, and what might happen if they do. But as far as I could tell, the UCFA poses no danger. Just some history geeks, military-tech buffs and weekend hunters. Let them shoot in peace.

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U of C to be renamed Calgary Polytechnic

Roger Mortimer

Gauntlet AP

Students returning from the holidays can expect some significant changes at the University of Calgary in the new year, according to university president Liz Luger. Among the first big changes? The renaming of the University of Calgary to Calgary Polytechnic.

"The rechristening of the academy to Polytechnic is long in coming," Luger explained December 31, 2013 at an Inbridge-sponsored New Year's townhall meeting at her palatial estate for her cadre of university executives, to which students, faculty and staff were not invited.

"Like our recent executive office upgrade, the name change will help better reflect our institution's true status," Luger insisted.

Luger also explained that changes in society coupled with soon-to-be-implemented provincial laws forbidding citizens to think logically or challenge their government, corporations and employers have rendered universities "obsolete institutions."

"Basically, no one needs to think," Luger said. "We don't need an educated citizenry. Good citizens just need to be trained for jobs to work cheaply without complaining. Other than that, it's all about image. That's

mainly what our I Sigh campaign is all about: image. Think Lululemon and Abercrombie & Fitch. That's the kind of student we at the new Calgary Polytechnic want to produce. We'll be the fifth best in Canada at that, hopefully, by 2016."

The Polytechnic's provost and vice-president (unacademic) Lou Sheriff received a standing ovation from executives following her speech in which she echoed the president's negative sentiments about universities, calling them a "throwback to the Middle Ages."

"While feudalism was good and we need more of that today," Sheriff explained, "students did things back then like read books and debate subjects. In short, they received a completely useless education. We've got to overcome such backward ways and innovate. Our first innovation is to change our name. That's pretty innovative, I think."

Ralph Lackey, Students' Union president, not allowed to attend the meeting but permitted to view the proceedings from his parents' basement via Skype, was asked his thoughts after the speeches. Like Sheriff, he hailed the name change as "innovative." He added that it was also a "game changer" for post-secondary education in Alberta.

"There is talk of building a private staircase at MacHall for SU leaders like myself and giving me a bigger

oak desk," Lackey said. "Innovations like these are reasons I favour renaming our institution."

Lance St. Francis, founder and president of the Calgary Non-thinking Student Society, on an internship serving cake and coffee at the gathering for executives, was also in favour of the renaming.

"It will cost about \$3 million to change stationery, cups, T-shirts and so on with the old U of C logo to the new polytechnic logo," St. Francis said. "The switchover will require the help of hundreds of unpaid student interns. By graduation, these interns will be fully prepared to become CEOs of major multinational corporations in which they will rake in millions, maybe even billions. I see nothing but dollar signs, so yeah, I'm all for it," he said as he poured a coffee for an executive with an approving expression on his face.

When asked about other upcoming plans at Calgary Polytechnic in 2014, Luger mentioned two crucial undertakings. The first is a \$147 million project to install large boulders on the campus that will be sculpted by 223 artists flown in from Spain into likenesses of Luger and other Polytechnic executives "for posterity." The second is a \$2.1 billion gated community for executives, their families, "and their de-

Superhero emerges on U of C campus

Scott Strasser

Gauntlet AP

It's a bird. It's a plane. Nope, it's Metro Man.

With the power to withstand cold in a single jacket, this enigmatic superbeing stands atop his perch at the stairs of the University LRT station. It is his concrete fortress, his vantage point from which he surveys all.

Said to originate from the distant planet Metropolis, legend states that Metro Man was sent to Earth to ensure that students were well read in current events. His efforts to blend in as a simple man handing out newspapers have apparently not fooled the student body, who appear to see through his disguise.

"We all know he's a superhero," said second-year linguistics student Sylvia Buttersworth. "One

scendents," that she expects to be completed by 2016. "The project should be finished in time for our I Sigh celebrations that year and our rise to the status of the fifth most-image-conscious higher education institution in Canada," Luger said.

However, Luger admits that all these extravagant plans are not without their costs.

"This will all entail some belt-

time when I was walking to the train station, my Uggs lost traction and I slipped on those icy steps. Out of nowhere, an arm reached out and grabbed me. Metro Man had come to my rescue. He didn't even drop any of his copies of *Metro*."

Metro Man's distribution superpowers have led to a surge of newspaper reading by U of C students.

"I used to just play *Candy Crush* on my iPhone when I took the train home," said third-year business student Chad Johnson. "But now, Metro Man has rejuvenated my passion for reading the local news."

It is unknown for how long Metro Man will continue to dish out newspapers to U of C students. But for now, you can take comfort in knowing that if you are ever struck with the urge to read the news, Metro Man will be there, with a newspaper and a smile.

tightening on campus, layoffs, fewer courses and higher tuition and non-instructional fees," admitted Luger over caviar and wine during the post-speech New Year's party for executives. "But, as we are all in this together, and student leaders approve of everything we are doing, we are optimistic we can reach our goals. It's an exciting time to be at Calgary Polytechnic ... I Sigh!"

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#run

The Students' Union General Election is on the horizon, and you have an opportunity to join the race. If you're interested in making connections with your faculty, influencing university policy or looking to gain professional experience, the SU could be the place for you to make a mark at the U of C.

The Student Legislative Council (SLC) is made up of 23 students who are elected each year, for a one-year term. The executive team, made up of the president and four vice presidents, are full-time salaried positions and keep regular Monday to Friday office hours in the SU office. There are also 18 part-time

positions, known as faculty representatives. SLC meets once a week to address new issues and represent the student body in the areas of quality of education, quality of student life, affordability and accessibility. The

“ Depending on the position you run for, you could be the next voice of students within a faculty, across campus, in our city, province or across the country... ”

election also includes races for one university Board of Governors representative and two representatives for the U of C Senate.

What kinds of things could you do as an elected official? Depending on the position you run for, you could be the next voice of

students within a faculty, across campus, in our city, province or across the country. You may have a chance to make an impact on issues that affect the entire student population like affordable housing, text book costs, sustainability, or the creation of student study and lounge spaces.

To get a feel for how SLC works as a team, drop in to a weekly meeting. Meetings are held in Council Chambers (across from the Lost and Found in MSC) on Tuesdays at 6:30 pm. For a more in-depth look at the time commitment and daily tasks, get in touch with one of our current Elected Officials. They can answer your questions over email, or if you're

looking for something more hands-on, ask if you can do a "job-shadow" for a couple of hours. A list of the current student leaders is available online: <http://su.ucalgary.ca/page/affordability-accessibility/SLC/71st-student-legislative-council-executives>.

Are you ready to make your mark?

Nomination packages will be available Jan. 27, online and at the SU main office. Completed nomination packages must be dropped off in person to the Chief Returning Officer during nomination days, Feb. 10 to 12, between 12 and 4 p.m.

For more information about running in the SU Elections, visit www.su.ucalgary.ca/elections.

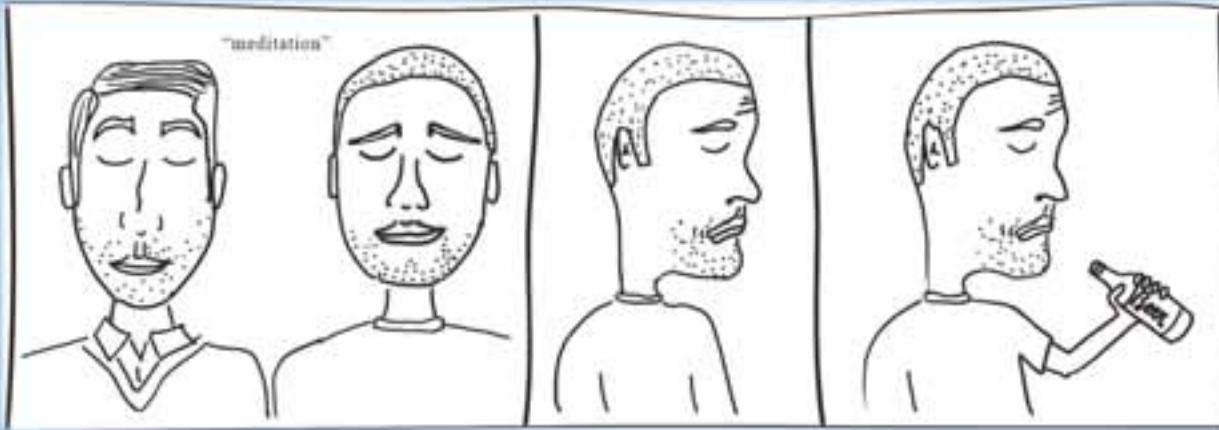


The Students' Union advertisement is provided by the SU and published without Gauntlet editorial revision.

RIGHT HO, JAMES! -JAMES STEVENSON

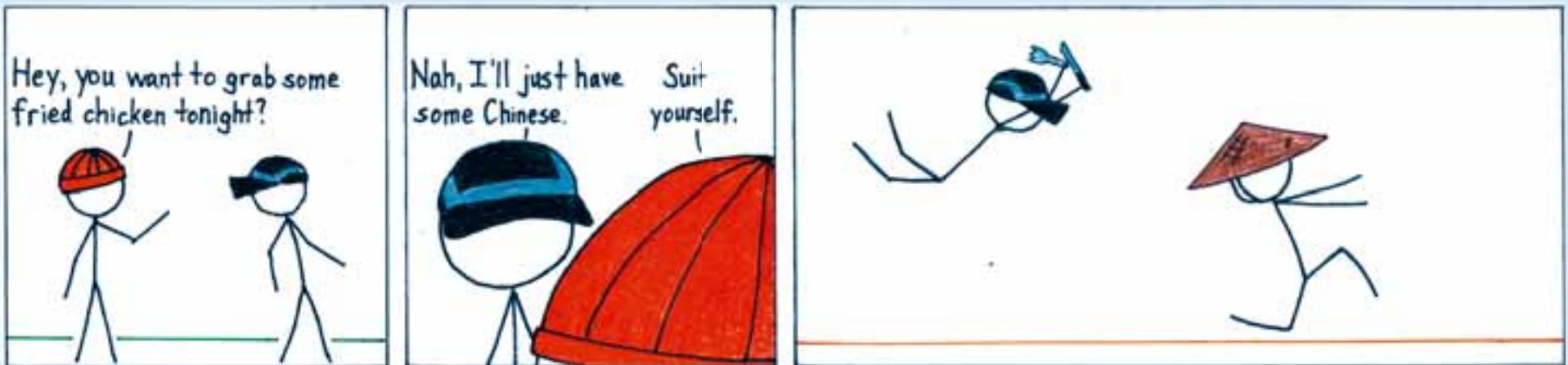


BEGINNER -KALEEM KHAN & BRONSON GELHORN



IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING -DAWN MUENCHRATH

DRIFTERS WITH PENCILS -JAN ONG



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