



Louie Villanueva

Leader of the opposition

Gauntlet Q & A: Danielle Smith

Riley Hill

News Editor
Interview done with Tobias Ma

Danielle Smith is the current head of the Wildrose Party, making her the leader of her majesty's loyal opposition in Alberta's legislature. She's also a former newspaper columnist with the *Calgary Herald* and University of Calgary alumni. We recently sat down with Smith to talk politics, pot, pipelines and her relationship with former U of C professor Tom Flanagan.

The Gauntlet: You're a former U of C student. Tell us a bit about your time here.

Danielle Smith: I got a joint de-

gree. I finished my English degree, took a year off then decided to come back for economics. Some of my profs are still here. Dr. Frank Atkins was one of the main reasons I decided to pursue an economics degree.

G: How did you first get involved in politics?

DS: I got involved in politics as a student at the U of C. I joined the campus Progressive Conservative club in January of 1992. In April that year, I decided to run for the presidency of the club and I was successful.

It was a wonderful time to be leader of the club because there was a leadership race at the provincial level. I was originally a Rick Orman supporter, then a

Ralph Klein supporter on the second ballot. There was a leadership race at the federal level where I supported Jean Charest. There was the Charlottetown Accord, which was a countrywide referendum. And in the next year, there was a provincial election and a federal election. So I had five elections within the space of 16 or 18 months. I was pretty well hooked on politics at that point.

G: When did you first run for public office?

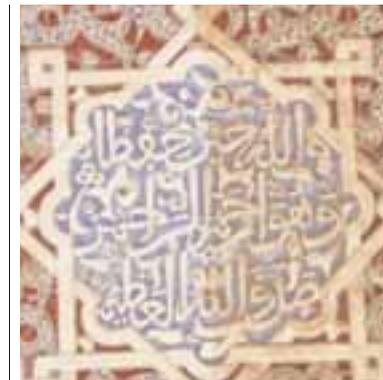
DS: I ran for political office the first time in 1998 when I ran for school board. I always knew I would find an opportunity to seek public office. I didn't know what level it would be at, but as

I looked at the issues that most interested me, I decided to run at the provincial level.

G: Do you still have a relationship with Tom Flanagan?

DS: Tom was a 20-year mentor of mine. It was very sad for us to have the break that we did. He made what were seen to be, by some, outrageous comments that couldn't be justified. As a politician, you have to have advisors who can express themselves in a way that is going to be acceptable to your members and to the public. His comments were just so unacceptable that I was no longer able to have him as a political advisor.

see DANIELLE SMITH, page 6



Religious discord

The dangers of misconceptions in a globalized world

Salimah Kassamali

Features Editor

Ityped "Islam" into the Google Images search engine. A display of violent images were shown: a cartoon of an assassin holding a knife under the words "stay quiet and you'll be okay," Adolf Hitler besides the quotation "I am fighting for the work of Allah," and a fanatic running through a crowded narrow street burning an American flag.

Such caricatures serve to over-generalize and humiliate the diverse community of Muslims that constitute one quarter of the world's population.

The current clashes between various religious groups have been brought about by ignorance and misunderstanding and this can prove dangerous in a world so interconnected by trade and globalization. His Highness the Aga Khan, leader of the world's Shia Ismaili Muslim community, calls this a "clash of ignorance" and it is evident, even here in Calgary, that most people are completely unaware or ignorant about Islam and the history of other countries outside of the Western world.

see RELIGIOUS DISCORD, page 8

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60 years

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Golden Spatula

Scott Strasser



"Any great warrior is also a scholar, and a poet, and an artist."
 Steven Seagal

Even though his initials are S.S. and he has a shaved head, Scott Strasser is not who you think he is. Steven Seagal. What were you thinking? His name is not Steven Seagal. It's Scott Strasser. Today is his day. Finally, after months of overlooking his countless accomplishments and contributions to the *Gauntlet*, we recognize him for his efforts, and you confuse him with Steven Seagal? Steven Seagal doesn't even have a shaved head. Don't you know anything about anything?

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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

Seeing through the holy see

The world has a new pope and everyone seems happy that he was not a Nazi and does not look like Emperor Palpatine. These are not Pope Francis's only qualities, of course. The Argentinian-born Francis is developing a reputation as progressive and genuine. He has been photographed assisting people from all walks of life, including unwed mothers, Muslim prisoners and the disfigured. Some of his statements offer the possibility of reconciliation with homosexuals, atheists and members of other religions or other Christian denominations like Protestantism. He has attacked the free trade economic system, saying, "markets and financial speculation . . . deny the right of control to states, which are themselves charged with providing for the common good."

Francis cuts an impressive media figure for a Catholic Church plagued by scandals and an inability to stay in touch with younger demographics. If he can keep his nose clean and the Mother Teresa act stays fresh with the public, Francis might be able to patch up the holes in his sinking ship and move the church forward. If he is successful, however, society will ultimately suffer.

The Catholic Church is so internally broken that no amount of public relations duct tape will repair its image or the damage it has caused. The introduction of this relatively liberal pope does not mean that the values which have powered the Vatican for centuries have suddenly changed; it only means that the church has remembered the power of surrounding a charismatic individual with mythology. This is not the first time the church has used this tactic — the celebrity of Jesus Christ and the canonized saints survives because of their (reputed) extraordinary personalities.



Francis's modest lifestyle and public displays of compassion do not result from new precepts — they are an attempt to emulate the church's oldest and most successful stars. Is this reboot bad? Good? Doesn't matter.

The cardinals' selection of Francis is not an attempt to appear relevant or cool — it is a return to the absolute grassroots of the church, which has always been a conservative and tradition-based organization, one whose very nature is to equate change with wrongdoing. And as we have seen, Francis has only mollified the Church's critics by backing off on condemnation of homosexuals, unwed mothers and sin in general. He has failed to direct the church into substantially correcting the sexual abuse rampant in the Catholic Church and much of the adoration he has received is a result of

inspiring but impotent rhetoric. For example, his condemnation of capitalist economics seems heroic given his personal rejection of wealth, but is in reality hypocritical considering his institution. The modern church's financial machine follows a steady pattern of donations followed by corruption and disaster, having been consistently mismanaged by greedy and incompetent clergymen.

To personally attack Francis as a fraud or a front is unfair. His political power is limited and his views seem genuinely progressive and socially liberal for a Catholic official. The humble way in which he has presented himself is worthy of admiration. So much of the public's enthusiasm for his persona, however, comes out of surprise after years of the clergy meeting our cynical expectations: abuse of both fiscal responsibilities

and altar boys as well as hypocritical judgement regarding changing social norms.

Sadly, the public's enthusiasm for Francis testifies to the hypnotic power of organized religion. People want to respect the church so badly that they have rallied around the new pope, forgetting he represents a group that has always presented misleading intentions and ignored its own teachings. The Catholic Church's traditions have been tainted by the stench of greed and bloodshed as far as back as medieval times, when Crusader knights brought civilization to the inhabitants of Jerusalem by slaughtering them, or when women and children were burned alive by Spanish inquisitors. Society should let this ship sink, not applaud because a new public relations magician might keep it afloat with a few civil remarks about gays and atheists.

That Francis seems interested in working towards a more tolerant church is reasonable from a pragmatic standpoint. This is only because the Catholic Church's core denomination won't be going anywhere in the next 10 years, whether out of loyalty or the genuine belief that God chooses his voice from this group of essentially wretched old men.

It's unfortunate that people equate the Catholic Church with the Catholic religion. As an institution, the church has proven itself unworthy of salvation, and declining attendance and donations over the last several years attest to a trend of dissatisfaction with its reputation amongst casual attendees. Francis is only delaying the inevitable — he might be the church's new nativity star, but he's stacked at the top of a sloppy mound left in the woods for him by his associates and predecessors.

Gauntlet Editorial Board

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Students win big at ICBC

Riley Hill
News Editor

Several Haskayne students won big this December at the Inter-Collegiate Business Competition.

The ICBC is the largest business competition open to undergraduate students in the world. It features eight different events meant to test students' business skills in categories like finance, accounting, ethics and marketing.

University of Calgary students Kirsti Ley and Bharbara Parparken won the gold medal in accounting; Harrison Kim and Brian Osiowy won gold in finance, and Hardave Birk and Andrew Kim won silver in business debate.

"[ICBC] shows that on a level playing field, Haskayne students are as good or better than anyone else in the world," said Robert Schulz, a U of C business professor who has coached the U of C team for all 36 years of the ICBC's history.

The U of C placed second overall this year. Out of the competitions 36 years, the U of C has placed first or second 34 times. Concordia University has traditionally been the U of C's rival for the top spot.

Schulz attributed the U of C's success to several factors.

"Our students work hard," Schulz said. "We have skills imbedded in our BComm program and I spent hundreds of hours with Olympic coaches 30 years ago, improving my coaching."

The competition was hosted at Queen's University in Kingston.

Do the new signs in MacHall break campaign rules?

The link between new PR campaign and upcoming referendum

Riley Hill
News Editor



Students back from winter break will notice some new advertisements scattered throughout MacHall.

"60 years of student investment in your MacHall," reads a banner hanging in the south courtyard. "As a student, YOUR investments support great services like the lost and found," reads a sticker in front of the MacHall information centre.

Why would the Students' Union go through the trouble of designing and putting up these ads you ask? It has to do with the referendum to increase student fees.

This March, students will vote on whether to increase SU fees by \$35 a semester. This money would be used to pay for the redevelopment of MacHall, with construction starting next year.

The SU doesn't have an official position on whether students should vote for or against the new fee. But they clearly have a preference. They want you to vote yes.

Why else would they lure you into the concert hall with chocolate covered Rice Krispy squares to watch videos about how important MacHall is to the SU? Why did these videos stress the sense of ownership students should feel for the building? Why do the new ads put "your" in all caps?

MacHall is important to the SU — especially when lease agreement negotiations with administration



Michael Grondin

Two of the signs in MacHall.

are underway — because it's the source of most of their revenue. Because they want students to front the money for another redevelopment, they are encouraging you to take pride in the building. So they stress that it's "your" MacHall.

It takes little stretch of the imagination to view these myMacHall signs as a campaign in favour of a "yes" vote. They are there to convince students to be proud that MacHall is in the SU's hands. From this perspective, students should do what they can to keep it under the SU's control.

MacHall is the best, so we should all vote yes.

Here's the problem. If this is true, the SU violated their own rules.

Under SU campaign finance regulations, any group that advocates for or against a decision going to referendum can spend a maximum \$150 on their campaign.

How much was spent on the myMacHall public relations campaign? SU vice-president operations



Michael Grondin

and finance Eric Termuende said it was under budget. But that budget was pegged at \$12,000 when Student Legislative Council met on Nov. 19.

A number of groups approved this \$12,000 figure, including Student Legislative Council.

Would you say these signs encourage you to vote "yes" on the referendum this March? Because if they do, the SU spent up to \$12,000 of YOUR money — or 80 times the allowed amount — on a political campaign sold under the guise of "environmental branding"

When confronted about this, Termuende insisted the campaign was created only to inform students about the money they've paid into MacHall over the years. To inspire a sense of pride.

Maybe I'm forgetful, but in the

three years I've been at the University of Calgary, I've never seen anything comparable to this campaign.

But the idea, Termuende said, came before there was any talk of a referendum, so any connection between the two is indirect.

The referendum might have been announced in November, but consultations for the MacHall renovation began before Termuende took office. Given the history of undergrads funding redevelopments, it's hard to believe that no one in the SU had a referendum in mind in 2012.

These myMacHall advertisements seem very much like a "yes" campaign for the upcoming referendum. The SU should make clear why they thought spending so much money on the campaign was appropriate.

Riley Hill's local column runs once a month.

Who was drunkest in your family over the holidays?



"They don't really drink."

– Hossein Gilanmorad, second-year engineering



"Nothing really crazy happened with family."

– Jason L'Heureux, second-year engineering



"Me."

– Jessica Zwaagstra, third-year nursing



"Me too."

– Brittany Teulon, third-year nursing

campus quips

Medical school warns students to get flu shots amidst rise in H1N1

Riley Hill

News Editor

Professors at the University of Calgary medical school are urging students to get their flu shots amid a surge of H1N1 influenza cases across the province.

While seasonal spikes in influenza are nothing new, Alberta has been hit particularly hard this year due to the return of H1N1.

U of C medical professor Dr. James Dickinson warned that even young, healthy students are at risk of contracting and spreading the virus.

"Influenza attacks younger people, then they are the mixing vessel that transmits the virus onto other people," Dickinson said. "Young people often get a quite severe attack."

Over 1,000 cases of H1N1 have already been reported in Alberta this year, causing 9 deaths.

The virus made international headlines in 2009 when the World Health Organization declared an H1N1 pandemic. Sixty-four Albertans died from the virus that year.

To fight its spread, Alberta Health Services vaccinated tens of thousands of Albertans in

2009. But Dickinson said those vaccinated for the virus four years ago are not immune to the strain spreading through Alberta this year.

"We can only guarantee the effectiveness of the vaccine for one year," Dickinson said. "As time goes on, the effectiveness tapers off."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that up to 153,000 worldwide were infected with the virus in 2009, causing between 2,500–6,000 deaths.

Students can get vaccinated at the Wellness Centre



Michael Grondin

Flu vaccinations are being given out across the city.

Students' Union approves hike in tuition and residence fees over holiday break

Riley Hill

News Editor

During a University of Calgary Board of Governors meeting on Dec.13, the Students' Union voted in favour of changes that will raise the price of tuition and residence fees in September 2014.

In May 2014, tuition for full-time undergraduate students will go up by one per cent, or \$53 a year. This is the maximum tuition hike allowed under the post-secondary learning act, which ties any rise in

tuition to the consumer price index.

During a presentation before the board, Students' Union president Raphael Jacob and vice-president external Connor Brown said the su is willing to approve small tuition raises tied to the CPI. They stressed that the su will vote against any fee increase through mandatory non-instructional fees or market modifiers.

Mandatory non-instructional fees were raised \$150 last semester and have gone up by \$450 in the last five years.

Brown and Jacob said the su's support came, in part, because of the school's financial losses following provincial budget cuts last year.

One of the slides in their presentation read "students recognize that there are budgetary pressures."

The only person to vote against the tuition hike was Michael Smith, the student representative on the board of governors. Smith said he could not vote for the increase in good conscience.

"I know that students' incomes are not going up by one per cent or

two per cent every year — they're staying static," Smith said. "I know for a lot of students, another \$50 is not something they can stomach."

Residence fee increases proposed by Ancillary Services last October were approved in the meeting. The cost to live in student family housing, Global Village, Cascade, Kananaskis, Rundle and Yamnuska will go up 5 per cent. Olympic Legacy Building fees will go up by 2-3 per cent. And in Olympus and Glacier Halls, up by 2-4 per cent.



Michael Smith

Student representative Michael Smith voted against the hike.

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Danielle Smith, continued from cover

G: What's your relationship with Preston Manning?

DS: When I got involved in politics in the 1990s, Preston Manning and Ralph Klein were both on their ascendancy. Ralph had just won the premiership and Preston Manning was just shy of taking official opposition status at

the federal level. The two political leaders had a lot of influence over my politics.

From Ralph Klein, you'll see that I have a very strong fiscal conservative streak. But that was also something that Preston Manning pressed for at the federal level. I think it was the influence of Pres-

ton Manning and the Reform Party that allowed the federal government to be pressed in the direction of getting surplus budgets.

The other thing I liked about Preston's politics was the grassroots populism. We, in my party, have put into practice a lot of the things he talked about.

I try to see Preston at least a couple of times a year to get his feedback on how he thinks we are doing.

G: I remember seeing you on the *Rick Mercer Report*. Rick asked if you believe in global warming and you called yourself a "climate realist." What does that mean? Would you stand by that statement?

DS: I think there is an expectation today on the part of Albertans, Canadians and our international trading partners that we do something to reduce our environmental footprint. That covers a whole range of issues.

I challenged our members last year to debate the issue of greenhouse gases because we never had a policy on it before. When your party doesn't have a policy on the issue, as a political leader, you're left trying to interpret what that means.

There is not 100 per cent agreement in my party on any policy issue. There certainly isn't 100 per cent agreement about the greenhouse gas policy we passed. But 75 to 80 per cent of my members passed a policy saying we needed to do something about greenhouse gases.

G: How would you handle the Northern Gateway pipeline differently than Alison Redford?

DS: I don't have many criticisms of the Premier's current approach on selling Alberta's energy resources and the push she has put on market access.

The Northern Gateway issue probably could have gone more smoothly if they had followed what we've seen TransCanada learn in the Keystone process and the Energy East pipeline.

On the Keystone Pipeline, TransCanada went down to the [American] states that were having issues, then worked on the ground changing the route to accommodate landowner's concerns.

When it comes to the Energy East pipeline, they're using an existing right of way, so 80 per cent of the line is on land that has already been disturbed. By using



Michael Grondin

Wildrose leader Danielle Smith in the CJSW studios.

this existing right of way, you're not disturbing landowners, you have less impact on the environment, you've already resolved your First Nations issues plus there is the economic benefit that will go to our Eastern Canadian friends. This not only includes being able to get lower prices for fuel, but also in using their refining capacity that provides good, high-paying jobs.

[Energy East] had a lot of the right elements. It uses the existing right of way plus the economic benefits. If we took those same ideas and then applied them to British Columbia, they really should have started looking at how they could build a pipeline using an existing right of way.

I don't know what's going to happen with the Northern Gateway project. I know it has nominally been approved, but with 209 conditions. And when you look at other pipeline projects in western Alberta, the MacKenzie Valley pipeline project took 44 years to get approved and it still never got built.

G: What are your views on gay marriage?

DS: I was a columnist for many years, so my personal views aren't secret. I wrote strongly in favour of gay marriage when the issue was at the forefront of debate in the early 2000s.

I would have to say that the country and Alberta are supportive of gay relationships and gay

marriage. The majority of Albertans are fine with it, even the majority of our own party members.

G: Any opinions on drug policy?

DS: It's a federal issue.

G: You must have personal views on the subject?

DS: The idea that someone would go to jail for possessing or smoking a bit of pot, to me, is overkill. So I've been in favour of decriminalization. But I have to tell you, that is not the view of my party and it's not the view of my caucus.

G: Have you smoked marijuana?

DS: Yes, once. It wasn't my thing; I kind of like wine. It seemed a little shady to be in the back of a car looking out for cops when I could have been in the bar drinking beer or having some wine.

G: A few years ago, Justin Trudeau boxed Conservative senator Patrick Brazeau. Would you consider boxing Alison Redford?

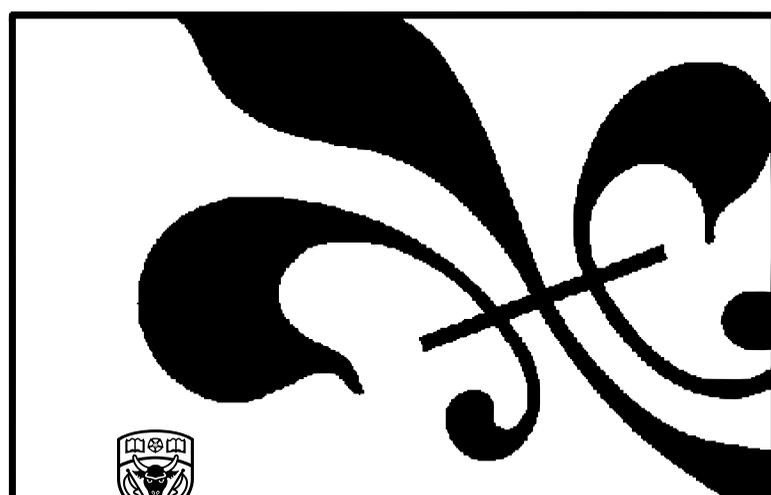
DS: [laughing] I was talking about that last week. I just started this thing online called liveexercise.com. They have this wonderful program called kembo kickboxing. I've been doing that for the past week and you're supposed to visualize who your opponent might be.

I've got some pretty good moves. I'm up for it if she is.

Interview condensed and edited



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MUSI 401 L01	Music and the Humanities	M/W 15:30
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Leaving the torch in the wrong hands

Canadian failure to condemn Sochi homophobia logical but cowardly

Kate Jacobson
Gauntlet Opinions



Over the break, the five coloured rings marking the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics started appearing on TV. The games draw nearer alongside the controversy created by the Russian government's remarks towards the LGBT community. With the opening ceremonies drawing closer, the opportunity for a boycott has slipped away much to the disappointment of many social justice activists.

Public opinion on the matter seems firmly divided into two camps — those who believe athletes and staff from visiting nations should take the opportunity to engage in symbolic acts of protest, and those who believe the nature of the Olympics should be fundamentally apolitical. Unfortunately, the latter hope is nothing but a fantasy.

The strongest argument in favour of protest is that it's the safest way for pro-gay demonstrations to take place in Russia. Russian President Vladimir Putin may have made some questionable decisions over the years, and his current rhetoric is inflammatory, but there isn't a chance in hell the Russian government would risk the international retribution bound to follow should they jail a member of a foreign

sporting delegation.

Nor should Canadian meekness deter us from taking a stand. If our boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is any indicator, Canada has little historical trepidation with making the Olympics a political matter. But by refusing to boycott Sochi, the Canadian government makes clear that the wellbeing of LGBT Russians is unworthy of our country's concern. By failing to raise any form of outcry, empty as it might seem, the Harper government is portraying Canadians not as neutral bystanders but as apathetic to human rights violations.

History remembers the athletes who get to show up. Jesse Owens might have crossed the finish line first in 1936 to the consternation of white supremacists, but it's easy to forget that the same American Olympic team benched their Jewish athletes to pacify the Nazi regime. We often hear about the so-called politicization of the Olympics, that the sacrosanct spectacle of physical prowess is becoming wrongfully overshadowed by international politics.

This argument lacks compassion and common sense. In many ways, the Olympics exists as a political event first and a sporting event second. Our desire to see a ball or puck whacked around should never lead us to ignore real problems in the host country or our own.



The Olympics have often served as a boiling point for social evolution. In Mexico City 1968, a Czechoslovakian gymnast turned away from the Soviet flag as the anthem was played. She was later celebrated not for her gymnastics medals, but for her unwavering support for Czechoslovakian democratization movements in the face of a violent Soviet invasion.

Those same Olympics were

remembered for the black power salutes of American athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos, who raised black gloved hands clenched in fists to the sky during the national anthem as a symbol of protest against racial inequality. They were later expelled from the games even as International Olympic Committee president Avery Brundage blathered that the Nazi salutes he had permitted

in Berlin, 1936 were gestures of nationalism, and therefore more appropriate than the black power salute.

The 2008 Olympic torch relay was marred by protests at China's human rights record, and in 2012 current IOC president Jacques Rogge refused to hold a moment of silence on the anniversary of the Munich Massacre, despite prominent international pressure. The games have never been apolitical by any stretch of the imagination. I would be ashamed if they were: to be apolitical in the face of injustice means being passive and cowardly.

A boycott would not have changed the homophobia undercutting Russian society. But it would have been better than nothing. In the end, the Olympics are always political and the debate over whether to boycott Sochi had to happen, redundant as it was. The human rights of a group that has been marginalized in their own country are more important than winning a gold medal in hockey.

True, the comfort and support that gestures and little acts of protest can provide to a marginalized group are small and are often swept away in the games' quest for perfect physical specimens. With hindsight, these symbolic acts will appear futile and too late. But if we go to the Olympics, we should go with conviction — with LGBT athletes, staff and coaches unafraid of the hostility they might encounter.

OPINIONS

If you want to share your thoughts on this week's section or are interested in volunteering, contact Tobias by email at opinions@thegauntlet.ca or tweet us @gauntletuofc

Dean Tobey



Continued from cover, Religious Discord

The danger of misconceptions in a globalized world

By: Salimah Kassamali

Canadian high school history classes focus primarily on European history. Classes on religion or cultures apart from western society are not often embedded in the curricula. In university, religion is not a required option for many disciplines, and majoring in religious studies is, for me, unappealing — the department of religious studies at the University of Calgary, for example, is underfunded and job prospects are grim.

The U of C's department of religious studies, like most publicly funded religious studies across the country, faces major cutbacks in the years to come and class sizes are becoming smaller each year.

"We don't have a specialist person doing research [on Islam] and that is a budgetary issue," says Eliezer Segal, professor of religious studies at the U of C. Although there are classes on Arabic language and Muslim cultures, these classes are framed under the context of culture rather than religion — the pilot program was only made available this year in response to student complaints and initiative.

Even though Canada is proud to be a multi-cultural and ethnically diverse nation, educational institutions most often represent the view of the majority rather than the minority. Because Canada's founding fathers were of Christian origin, Christian theology has naturally underlined most frames of Canadian education.

"For the last 300 years, European culture has been functionally Christian and that has turned into an ideology that has permeated a lot of what is thought, particularly in social sciences," Segal says.

"The way we see the world, the way we've been brought up in a Western Christian society is not the only way. There are built-in assumptions and presuppositions that are not universally valid and not necessarily factually valid," Segal says.

The implications of such a lack of cultural and religious understanding are profound.

"Religion, contrary to what so many people try to tell us, is very

important in many people's lives and unless we understand how it works and what ways it works, we are missing out on something. There are patterns and dynamics we won't understand properly," Segal says.

Ali S. Asani, chair of the Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Department and Director of Islamic Studies Program at Harvard University, believes that such misunderstandings have even greater drawbacks.

"The world is marked with greater misunderstandings and misconceptions resulting in ever-escalating levels of tension between cultures and nations," Asani writes in his article titled *Enhancing Religious Literacy*.

Such misunderstanding has led to Islamophobia: prejudice and fear of Islam. Stereotypes of violence and terrorism have led to dehumanization and unnecessary fear of the world's Muslim population.

The reality of the Muslim community is much more complex and diverse. Islam has been established in Africa, Asia and Europe and among hundreds of different ethnic and linguistic groups. More Muslims live on the Indian subcontinent than the entire Arab world, and Indonesia has the largest Muslim population.

"The political and social contexts in which a Muslim practices his or her faith are just as important or, some would argue, even more important than doctrines and rituals in determining how contemporary Muslims experience and interpret their faith," writes Asani.

For example, the experience of a Muslim in Saudi Arabia, where strict religious doctrine has been formulated under Wahhabi ideology, is very different from a Muslim practicing Islam in more secular states such as Turkey or Indonesia. The experience of a Muslim living in India is also very unique, where ethnic strife between neighbouring Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs is commonplace. The Muslims in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries lived under extremely stifling conditions

under Soviet rule until 1991, often having to practice their religion in secrecy in order to avoid persecution. Muslims in the United States such as Malcolm X have also taken a different understanding of the faith as they have used religion as a subversion tactic against racial institutions.

The practice of Islam extends from Sufism, meaning a mystical view of Islam, such as the whirling dervishes, to the more secular practices of many who follow the Sunni branch of Islam. Such differences are often overlooked and oversimplified.

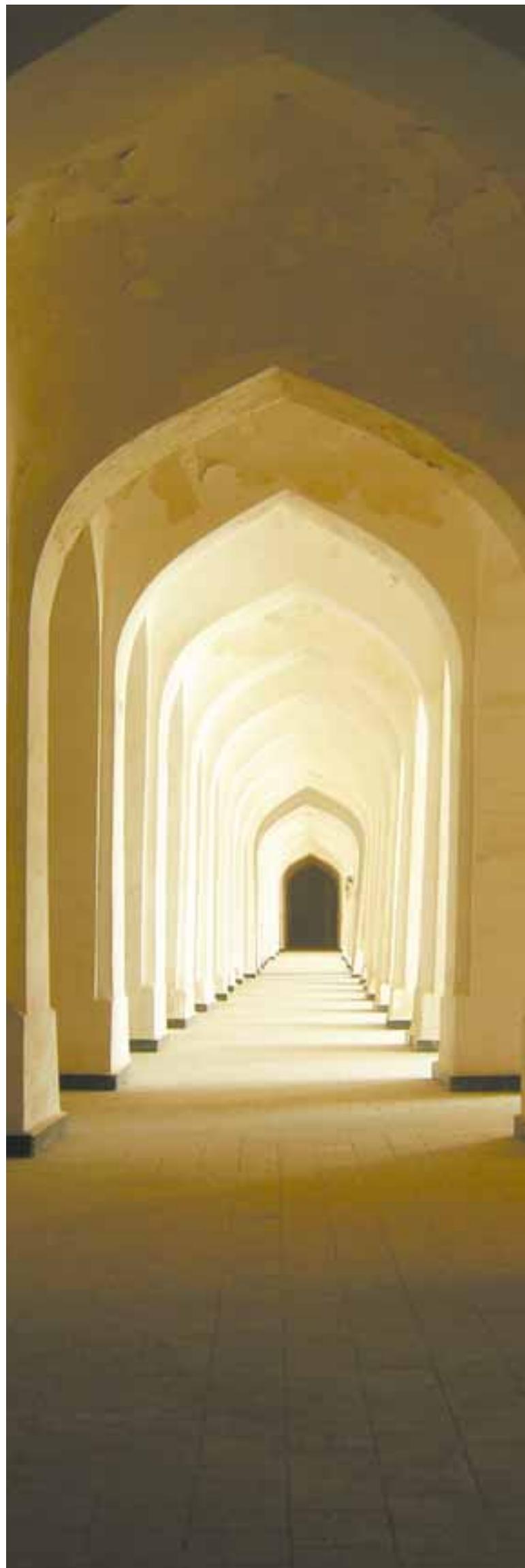
Without taking into consideration societal, economical and political circumstances, one can easily assume Islam is directly responsible for all actions of Muslims around the world.

"It also leads to the assumption that everything that happens in a predominantly Muslim country can be attributed to the religion. Thus many people commonly assume that Islam is the principle cause of a variety of ills that plague some Muslim majority countries, such as the lack of democracy, economic underdevelopment, unjust treatment and the marginalization of women," writes Asani.

As it would be unfair to blame Christianity for the slave trade or persecution of the Jews in the Second World War, it is unfair to blame Islam for all injustices in the 21st century, including the attacks of 9-11 or the London 7-7 bombings. You can not lay blame on a religion for the actions of a few individuals.

In the recent conflict in the Central African Republic between Christians and Muslims, for example, it would be unfair to assume that religion is the reason for such disputes and atrocities, for the cause is often more political, economic and social. The root of such disputes often lies in conditions such as poverty, corruption and lack of education.

Strife between various religious groups is also a recent phenomenon. Islam was not initially thought of as a "religion" as we understand



Bibi-Khanym Mosque, Samarkand, Uzbekistan

Salimah Kassamali

it today. Islam referred to a private act of faith — anyone who submitted to God's will was considered a "Muslim" by adherents of the faith.

"Since submission to God was a central precept in each prophet's teaching, a Jew, Christian or a follower of an religion who submits to the one God may be called a Muslim," writes Asani.

Historically, Muslim societies were peaceful communities. The Arab dynasty in Spain from AD 756 to 1031 is often described as a Golden Age of learning where libraries and colleges were established and literature, poetry and architecture such as the Al-hambra flourished. Many scholars including Asani believe that this was an era of interfaith harmony between Muslims, Christians and Jews.

In 1606 the Mughal Emperor

Akbar in India, as another example, was well known for promoting religious tolerance and respect for Hindus and Buddhists. Akbar did not force the Hindu population, over whom he ruled, to convert to Islam. Instead he abolished all tax they were forced to pay.

Such intellectual, artistic and culturally advanced pluralistic communities can be found throughout the Islamic world. The Fatimids in North Africa, the Ottomans in present day Turkey and even as far as Samarkand in Uzbekistan under emperor Timur were communities of astounding modernity.

Such views of pluralism today still exist in various Muslim communities, but there are other Muslim communities that hold a very narrow perspective of the faith.

The emergence of distinctive

rituals, such as the tenets of Islam: Salat, ritual prayer; Hajj, pilgrimage to Mecca; Sawm, fasting and self restraint during Ramadan; and Zakat, giving 2.5 per cent of one's savings to the poor, came about to distinguish Muslims from Christians and Jews.

"The conception of Islam as an ideal religious system, and later a civilization is the result of Muslims attempting to defend and articulate their faith and their beliefs within European colonial contexts," writes Asani.

The term "Islam," initially understood by Europeans, was thought to equal the same as the Christian conception of religion. However, this was not how most Muslims perceived their faith until interacting with European colonizers.

see DISCORD, page 12



Salimah Kassamali

Above: Ritualistic cleansing, Ahmedabad, India
Below left: Whirling Dervishes, Istanbul, Turkey



Salimah Kassamali

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Discord, continued from page 11

There currently exists two diverging views of Islam. The broader, universal meaning of “Islam” is a pluralist worldview, acknowledging that there are many ways to submit to God, many ways to be “Muslim.”

Such a perspective lent Muslim communities to be tolerant and respectful to different people of all faiths and traditions.

If one views Islam as an ideology, a doctrine of strict laws that serve to distinguish Muslims from non-Muslims, this can lead to a sense of exclusivity and superiority. A promise to return to Islamic orthodoxy can help elites control an unstable populace afraid of change in a rapidly globalized world.

“It is this utopist Islam, unpoluted by human context or any foreign influences, which some contemporary Muslim groups,

including the so-called fundamentalists, invoke today in their quest to re-create an ideal and imagined golden-age Islamic state as they respond to the failure of economic and political policies in many Muslim nations to deliver social justice,” Asani writes.

Such specific and narrow notions of Islam serve only to foster animosity and misunderstanding.

There is a lack of understanding of the diversity of Islam within the community of Muslims, by fundamentalists, for example, but also in the greater global community. Understanding the origins of faith, apart from social, economic, cultural and even religious understandings, would help to reduce animosity between believers of different faiths.

Salima Versi, a PhD student of religious studies at the University

of Alberta believes that a broad-based education is essential to overcome barriers to understanding.

“For me, that includes being educated in religious traditions [from a religious studies perspective, rather than a faith-based one] and broader notions of history that include the history of non-European peoples, including the Middle East, Far East and Africa, for example,” she says.

She believes this is best accomplished through well-rounded curriculum that encourages educators and students to engage with world history rather than just European and North American history.

“The development and implementation of these types of curricula can be encouraged in a number of ways, but in general, what is required is a re-thinking

of the basic assumptions behind existing curricula, moving away from a euro-centric position towards a more global one,” Versi says.

This type of work is being undertaken in various communities and institutions with varying degrees of success, from liberal arts based degrees in American universities, to the ethics and religious culture curriculum in Quebec, to some aspects of the International Baccalaureate program. The U of C should seek to learn and emulate successful strategies embarked upon by such institutions. The university should also aim to move towards educating all students with a global history and religious background.

“At the university level, which is my own focus, I feel that all undergraduates should have to take

at least one non-European history class, as well as an introduction to religion class, both of which I feel would help to address the current dearth of knowledge on both subjects that appears to be quite common among Canadian university students,” Versi says.

As we progress towards a modern and interdependent global society, education will be key to dampen the effects of a “clash of ignorance.” As pursuers of knowledge, we should responsibly and carefully tread into the future aware and respectful of cultural and religious differences. This will only come through greater understanding. The U of C and other educational institutions around the world have the responsibility to fully educate students about our diverse planet, creating leaders to guide our diverse communities into a more peaceful future.



Al-hambra palace, Granada, Spain

Salimah Kassamali



Palace of Mughal Emperor Akbar, Fatehpur Sikri, India

Salimah Kassamali



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Louie Villaneuva

U of C Operetta performing classic musical

Performance highlights 1950s songs ingrained in North American culture

Sean Sullivan
Entertainment Editor

For fans of musical theatre, the University of Calgary Operetta Company is finally putting on the classical Broadway musical *The Music Man* from Meredith Willson.

While the titles of such songs as *Seventy-six Trombones*, *My White Knight*, *Lida Rose* and (*Ya Got Trouble*) may not be immediately recognizable by some, director Colleen Whidden says these songs have become ingrained in North American culture.

"I think that people will come and go, 'Oh, that is where this piece is from,'" Whidden says. "Most people would have heard snippets, either in movies or in commercials."

The University of Calgary Operetta Company was started in 2006 by Whidden and functions as a course for students of the School of Creative and Performing Arts, but is also open to all university students and members of the community who are interested in auditioning.

The company has put on several full-length musical theatre and opera performances in the last eight years including *West Side*

Story, *Miss Saigon*, *Titanic: The Musical*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Children of Eden* and *Seussical*.

The Operetta Company's performances consistently feature large casts of up to 50 or more singers and actors and orchestras of up to 30 musicians. Colleen Whidden says she doesn't want to do anything halfway.

"I always pick musicals that have a big chorus," Whidden says. "If I'm going to do it, I'm going to do it [right]."

The Music Man is the story of con-artist Harold Hill, played by Mike Sorberger, who convinces the citizens of River City, Iowa to buy instruments and uniforms for a boy's band he has no intention of organizing. Things get complicated when he meets the local librarian Marian, played by Madeleine Suddaby, who sees through him.

"The storyline is classical musical theatre," Whidden says. "Boy from the wrong side of the tracks, girl repels boy, then they end up, of course, falling in love. Then the happy ending."

Suddaby, who was involved in the Operetta Company's production of *Guys and Dolls* in 2012, says the musical is one of those

shows most performers always want to do one day because of how well known the songs are.

Suddaby says, however, that the role of Marian, the stock "Ingenue" character — a young, pretty, optimistic female lead typical to older theatre — isn't a role she normally would consider playing.

"But when I read Marian I read her as feisty and very stubborn and incredibly intelligent," Suddaby says. "And not as easily mesmerized or hoodwinked as some people in the town."

Suddaby is one of a number of community performers who Whidden says bring professional experience into the productions for the benefit of university students.

"The music department really wants to branch out and get people involved in singing, dancing and drama, no matter if they take it as a course credit or if they don't," Whidden says. "There are people from kinesiology, from engineering. We have one from medicine, some who are faculty."

The Music Man will be running from Jan. 9 to Jan. 17 in the University Theatre. Tickets are \$15 for students.

For tickets visit: ucalgaryoperetta.ca.



Louie Villaneuva

Taking stand-up comedy off leash

Q&A with comedian and radio host Lori Gibbs

Scott Strasser

Gauntlet Entertainment

Over the winter break, The Gauntlet was able to sit down with stand-up comedian and radio personality Lori Gibbs. The Calgary based comedian answered our questions regarding her stand-up career and discussed her recent transition into the world of radio.

The Gauntlet: How did you get your start in doing stand-up comedy?

Lori Gibbs: Well I had 20 years of stage fright first. When I turned 40, someone said to me, "I hear you've always wanted to try stand-up," and I said yes. They asked me, "if you were on your death bed and you were looking back at your life, would you regret never trying it?" I said damn you, yes. And now I have to go try it. Through a friend of a friend, I ended up with my first gig at a healing retreat for church ladies in Caroline, Alberta.

G: But doing stand-up was something you always wanted to do, despite the stage fright?

L: Yeah. I always knew that I felt really good if I could make people laugh or cheer people up.

G: So how long have you been performing?

L: Eight years.

G: And during those eight years, what would you say has been the highlight of your career so far?

L: Probably filming my *Comedy Now* special in Toronto in 2011.

G: To you, what is the best part of being a comedian?

L: The freedom to do or say whatever you want to. I call it being off leash.

G: What is something about the lifestyle of a comedian that would surprise most people?

L: Well I don't think I'm a typical comedian, because I'm a mom with two teenage boys, who also is on the radio in the morning. I think a lot of comedians would just be going to bed when I get up for work at 4:00 a.m. It might surprise people that many of us have a totally normal, family-oriented lifestyle.

G: So you've recently forayed into a radio career in the past year. How did that opportunity arise?

L: Like a silver platter on my lap! I used to go to two different radio stations to promote the comedy shows I was doing. I would go on the air for 10 to 15 minutes, try to be charming and funny and get people to come buy tickets for my shows. One of the stations, (X92.9) said they liked

the chemistry I had with the other two guys and asked if I'd consider doing the morning show. It came out of nowhere, but I'm all about having as many adventures as possible, so I said I would. I did that for seven months, before they reinvented the show and I wasn't on it anymore. But I'd been bitten by the radio bug and decided to put some feelers out there and ended up at Up 97.7 on their morning show.

G: What skills overlap between stand-up and radio?

L: Improv is big. You have to have the gift of gab for both and I feel they complement each other. As a comic, I'm always subconsciously looking for the funny part of things. When I'm doing comedy, I love playing with the audience. Doing bits I know is great, but the adrenaline is even sweeter when it's spontaneous and not planned. I guess just being able to take a topic, and finding something amusing about it is huge for both jobs.

G: What comedians personally stand out to you?

L: I'm crazy about Louis CK! He's so raw and honest and goes deeper than any other comedian I've met. I could listen to him over and over. I also love Brian Regan, who manages to do hys-



courtesy Lori Gibbs

terical routines that are 100 per cent clean, which is a big challenge. I love Pete Holmes too, because he's so silly. I've never understood really dark comedians, because I feel leaving a comedy show should leave you lighter and more joyful. John Pinette is another guy like that, a performer that, when I watch him, can tell that they are really in the moment and passionate about what they're doing. I saw him live and almost couldn't catch my breath I was laughing so hard.

G: How do you think the Calgary comedy scene compares with the rest of the country?

L: Well in Calgary you can actually find comedy every night of the week. You probably can't do as many shows as you could in, say, Toronto, but if you want to get out there and get stage time, it's there if you want it. There are a lot of people who are passionate about keeping the Calgary comedy scene going. I would say Calgary stacks up quite well against many other Canadian cities.

Celebrating 60 years of student investment in our campus



Eric Termuende
VP Operations and Finance



Sixty years ago our students began to set money aside to invest in a student centre. Yes, this history is older than the University itself, but the Students' Union (SU) is 71 years old and existed long before campus was located where it is today. Beginning in the academic year of 1953/54, the SU began to collect a building fee with the goal of constructing a student union building. Eventually, in 1967, undergraduate

students paid 55% of the cost of constructing MacEwan Hall.

This week the SU is launching a "60 Years of Student Investment" campaign to raise awareness that many of the memorable experiences outside the classroom are made possible through investments made by our alumni and the continuing stewardship of the SU. Many of these original investments in spaces throughout the student centre laid the foundation for successful businesses that help keep student fees low. These fees haven't been increased for 17 years - in fact, they decreased. It is important to me that the students know why we are successful, how we are successful,

and what success means to the students.

I've met many students that have no idea that some of their favourite events, programs, services and businesses are actually run by the SU. Here are a few examples:

- The Den
- BSD
- Clubs
- Volunteer Services
- That Empty Space
- The conference and events areas, including the Hall and Ballroom

Using colourful floor decals and banners hung in high traffic spaces throughout the

building, we're drawing attention the history of MacHall and SU to provoke an ongoing public conversation about the future of the building. I believe that students should understand where their fees are going. We are an extremely transparent organization that only wants a better student experience. I want students to know what they contribute to, what their voice means, and how they can use it to propel the union forward, making it stronger each year.

With a referendum question coming in the March elections - pending approval by the Student Legislative Council - I want students to cast an informed vote. Whether or not students chose to support the new fee will be up to them, but it is important to present some context about the role and history of our student centre. So if you're looking forward to BSD, thank your grandparents because campus traditions like these were built on a foundation of student investment.

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

Dinos mid-season report cards



Courtesy David Moll

Men's hockey best in the nation

Curtis Wolff

Sports Editor

The Dinos men's hockey team had to wait until Dec. 3, 2013 to make it official. After crawling up the Canadian Interuniversity Sport rankings one spot at a time throughout the first half of the season, the Dinos were finally recognized as the best team in Canadian university hockey in the most recent edition of the top 10 list.

Led by rookie sensation Chris Collins, the Dinos have dominated Canada West this season. Collins leads his team with 13 goals and 24 points in 16 games, trailing only fourth-year University of Saskatchewan forward Derek Hulak in the Canada West scoring race, and has fit nicely on a line with third-year playmaking forward Taylor Stefishen, who has racked up 20 assists in 14 games.

The Dinos's season-opening 13-game win streak culminated in a 2-0 win over the then-undefeated University of Alberta Golden Bears on Nov. 22 in front of a

big crowd at Father David Bauer Arena. Although they would suffer their first loss of the year to the Golden Bears in overtime the next night, the win allowed the Dinos to take full control of first place in the Canada West. A combined 17-2 thrashing of the University of Regina Cougars in a two-game series the following weekend secured their reputation as the No. 1 in the CIS.

The success of the Dinos has been aided by their explosive offence, which is averaging a torrid 4.8 goals per game. Ten Dinos have more than 10 points this season, including third-year defenceman Giffen Nyren, who is the top scoring defenceman in the Canada West with 18 points.

Not to be outdone by the skaters, the Dinos goaltenders have also excelled at the other end of the rink. The goalie tandem of Jacob DeSerres (1.50 goals against average, .941 save percentage) and Kris Lazaruk (1.62 GAA, .938 sv%) have backstopped the Dinos to their 15-0-1 record and lead the Canada West in the two major

statistical categories for goalies.

The Dinos have very few — if any — obvious holes in their overall game going into the second half of the season. During the remaining 12 games of the regular season, their main battle will be a mental one. The motivation for the first half of the season was to prove they were No. 1, but staying there will require just as much hard work and allow little room for unchecked egos.

The format for this year's University Cup may provide an additional challenge. The third place University of Saskatchewan Huskies are guaranteed one of the two Canada West berths as the event hosts, leaving only one spot available for the Dinos and Golden Bears, who are a cut above the rest of the conference.

If there's one date for students to circle on their calendars this semester, it is Sunday, Feb. 16 — the Dinos will face the Golden Bears in the final game of the regular season, a matchup that could decide who finishes the season at the top of the standings.



Dino-grade:
Tyrannosaurus

The Tyrannosaurus is the undisputed king of the dinosaur kingdom, an apex predator that fears no other organism in its ecosystem.

Women's basketball on a roll

Ashton Chugh

Entertainment Assistant

After a shaky start to the 2013-2014 season that began with an eight-game losing streak — including six preseason defeats — the Dinos women's basketball team have exceeded all expectations for the first half of their season. After closing out the first half of the regular season on an eight-game winning streak, the Dinos currently sit tied for second place in the Canada West prairie division with 16 points.

The Dinos have made many positive strides towards a championship season. They have outscored their opposition by an average of 14.3 points per game and their tenacious play has been further exemplified by

averaging 45.3 rebounds per game, which ranks fourth in Canadian Interuniversity Sport.

Head coach Damien Jennings's defensive philosophy has panned out for the Dinos. The Dinos have held their opponent's field goal percentage to a stingy 32.0 per cent, which ranks eighth in the CIS. As the old saying goes, defence wins championships.

Captain Tamara Jarrett has provided consistent leadership and scoring — she leads the club with 14.1 points per game. Guard Kristie Sheil's play has also been noteworthy, as she has provided a steady offensive output, averaging 12.3 points per game.

The Dinos have also been gracious to their home fans, remaining

unbeaten at home so far. However, the U of C faithful have not returned the love, as home games have only averaged 368 fans per outing.

The only sore spot for the Dinos is their field goal percentage, which sits at 34.1 per cent. However, their ferocious work ethic on rebounds has compensated for their shooting shortcomings.

Overall, Dinos fans have much incentive to support their women's basketball team. If the Dinos continue their torrid pace, they could find themselves in the hunt for a Canada West title.

The Dinos open 2014 against the Pacific-division-leading University of Northern British Columbia Thunderwolves on Jan. 9 in Prince George.



Dino-grade:
Troodon

These adaptable and clever dinosaurs are great team players. They work in feisty packs to take down larger prey.

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Women's hockey, men's basketball struggling



Courtesy David Moll

Curtis Wolff
Sports Editor

Player turnover is a harsh fact of life in university hockey. Last year's Dinos women's hockey roster featured the likes of Canadian hockey legend Hayley Wickenheiser and Russian national team star Iya Gavrilova, who led the team to a 23-4-1 record and first place in the Canada West conference.

The Dinos have struggled this season without the dynamic duo — Wickenheiser graduated university, while Gavrilova is training with the Russian team full time ahead of the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi. The team has

compiled a 7-11-1 record and are in sixth place out of eight teams in the Canada West conference.

Scoring has been an issue for the Dinos, as they are averaging only 1.53 goals per game. While fourth-year forward Janelle Parent leads the team with eight goals and 14 points, no other Dino has managed to score more than three goals or seven points this year. Wins will be elusive if the defence can't afford to allow more than one goal on an average night.

There are few bright spots on the team. Forward Jessyka Holt has looked good in her first year with the Dinos, as has rookie goaltender Hayley Dowling, who

is sporting a 4-2-0 record with a 1.21 goals against average and .936 save percentage. Dinos interim head coach Kelly Bechard — who is filling in for Danielle Goyette while she coaches Canada's Olympic team — may consider giving Dowling more starts down the stretch in an effort to spark her team.

The Dinos have 10 games left to turn their season around and fend off the University of Lethbridge Pronghorns for the final Canada West playoff spot. Their Crowchild Classic matchup against the Mount Royal University Cougars on Feb. 6, 2014 at the Saddledome could be a key game for ensuring a playoff berth.

Ashton Chugh
Entertainment Assistant

With a strong showing in the preseason — which included a victory against a NCAA Division I team — the Dinos men's basketball team looked promising. However, once the regular season began, their play began to tailspin. Going into the second half of the season, the Dinos have a record of 5-5, placing them fifth in the Canada West prairie division.

Before losing their final game of 2013, the Dinos were on a five-game win streak. The Dinos have not been stellar in any major statistical category. However, they do rank fourth in the nation in three-point shooting at 38.9 per cent, and are also fifth in defensive rebounding at 29.3 per cent. The Dinos have outscored their opposition by a margin of 1.8 points per game, but will want to improve on this key statistic if they hope to win more games in the second half of the season.

The Dinos do look to be playing with heart. However, they are not putting their energy towards productive aspects of the game. They average 21.9 fouls per game, leading to easy free throw shots for their opposition. The Dinos also need to take better care of the ball, as they average a ghastly

16.4 turnovers per game.

One bright spot has been the play of fourth-year guard Jarred Ogungbemi-Jackson, who is posting 21.2 points per game, which ranks fifth in Canadian Interuniversity Sport for that category. Ogungbemi-Jackson is definitely a crowd pleaser at the Jack Simpson Gymnasium due to his ability to get buckets.

Despite the shortcomings of the Dinos season, playoffs remain a possibility. They sit only four points back of a playoff position, ground that can be made up with more consistent play. The Dinos have shown they can make noise in the Canada West, but the onus is on them if they wish to be seriously considered for a Canada West title.



Alison Seto



Dino-grade:
Alamosaurus

The Alamosaurus was a true survivor, existing long after the demise of the other species of long-necked dinosaurs.



Dino-grade:
Triceratops

Big and brutish, but not a dangerous force in the dinosaur world.

Former Dinos captain scores with Sharks

Bracken Kearns called up to San Jose, first Dino to score in NHL in 30 years



Courtesy San Jose Sharks

Curtis Wolff
Sports Editor

A rash of injuries to the San Jose Sharks forward corps opened the door for Bracken Kearns to make the most of his third National Hockey League call up.

The former Dinos captain, who finished his four-year university career in 2005, potted his first NHL goal on Dec. 29, 2013 at the age of 32, flying into the slot and sliding a loose puck past Anaheim Ducks goaltender Frederik Andersen.

Scoring in the NHL is an exceedingly rare achievement for a Dinos graduate — Kearns became the first Dino to go on to score an

NHL goal since Terry Johnson in 1983-84 for the St. Louis Blues. Johnson played for the Dinos in 1978-79.

Kearns scored in three consecutive games over the winter break. On Dec. 31 he tipped a slap shot past Jonas Hiller in a rematch against the Ducks, and started the new year off with a goal against Oilers goaltender Devan Dubnyk.

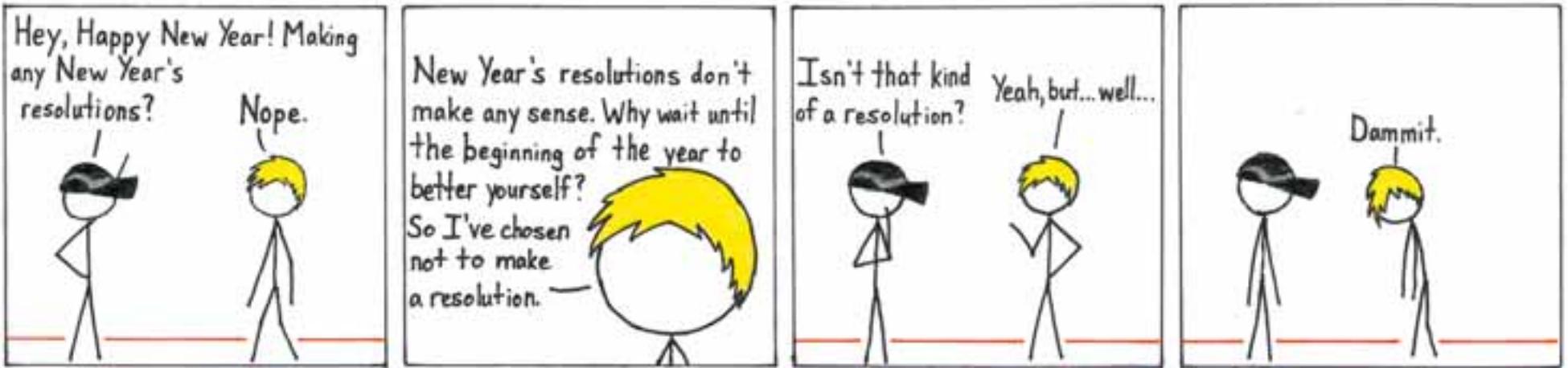
Kearns is currently centering the Sharks's third line. He has impressed his coaches with his work ethic and faceoff ability, and has seen his ice time increase steadily in the last three games. He has earned time centering the team's second powerplay unit.

Since leaving the Dinos, Ke-

arns has slowly worked his way up the North American professional hockey circuit, spending time with two teams in the East Coast Hockey League, six American Hockey League teams and a five-game stint with the NHL's Florida Panthers before joining the Sharks. When the Sharks ran into injury troubles during last year's playoffs, Kearns was called up for seven games.

Kearns will continue to make the best of this opportunity while the Sharks await the return of players like established NHLer Raffi Torres and rookie sensation Tomas Hertl from injury. If he continues to impress the Sharks, he could end up as a permanent option for the team going forward.

DRIFTERS WITHOUT PENCILS -JAN ONG



IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING -DAWN MUENCHRATH



KEEPIN' IT REAL -SALIMAH KASSAMALI



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