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• News 5

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Pakistani students clash over religious scholar • News 4

NEWS

CFS: NATIONAL LOBBY GROUP GETS TOUGH WITH STUDENT UNIONS

President Lucas takes office

New Concordia Student Union president doesn't believe in 'half-assing it'

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

Heather Lucas has already made her mark on the Concordia Student Union's presidential office.

After taking over as CSU president when Prince Ralph Osei's resignation took effect on Aug. 25, Lucas gradually plastered her new office in Post-It notes. Dozens of the fluorescent, color-coded squares now cling to picture frames, cork boards, a computer screen and an assortment of other office supplies.

"I definitely have a different leadership style [than Osei]," said Lucas. "I'm a little more organized, a little more structured—and I'm not saying [Osei] wasn't—there is just a higher level of work ethic I expect from the other executives because I don't believe in half-assing things."

Lucas is still learning the ropes at her new job, but the former VP Services is also carrying out her old duties while a replacement is being trained. In addition to having the tall order of campaign promises to fulfill, including the fight against impending tuition increases, this year's CSU executive has gone through an elaborate shuffle.

In April, newly elected VP Finance Nikki Tsouflikis left her post. Zhuo Ling, who was elected to serve as a John Molson School of Business Senator, was then appointed to replace Tsouflikis.

Lucas vacated her post on Aug. 25 when she took Osei's place, leaving a vacancy at VP Services. *The Link* has since learned that Arts and Science Senator Georges Alexandar will likely be filling that vacancy. As a result of these changes, nearly half of the CSU executives were not elected to their current positions.

"It's not an ideal situation, but



CSU President Heather Lucas believes Quebec University students could strike during the 2011-2012 school year. PHOTO GAUL PORAT

it's the situation at hand. These appointments all happened within our bylaws. I don't think it hurts [the CSU's] credibility," said Lucas.

The neo-liberal Republican

Lucas arrived at Concordia University three years ago after transferring from the University of California's Riverside campus. She was born in Texas but Lucas spent most of her life travelling the globe with her father, who works as an engineer for Boeing.

"I grew up in Asia," said Lucas. "I lived in Japan, Singapore and in the Philippines. I also lived in San Francisco and Los Angeles. I have a diverse background and I'm basically able to get along with anyone."

After her first year at Concordia, Lucas was elected VP Internal for the Arts and Science Federation of Associations'. During her term as VP Internal, ASFA passed

a series of accounting reforms designed to correct sloppy accounting practices that resulted in about \$15,000 of misplaced funds during the 2008-2009 term.

The new CSU President, a self-described Republican, has had to divorce her personal politics from her slate's left leaning platform.

"My personal beliefs will not have an effect on what the students want," said Lucas. "Who cares what party I'm a part of? I'm here to do what the students want me to do, whether it's marching down the streets or doing something crazy that I ideologically disagree with."

Forecasting a student strike

On Aug. 30, Lucas met with Concordia University President Judith Woodsworth to discuss Woodsworth's proposed tuition increases.

"I made it clear that we will fight against her and the adminis-

tration as long as they support tuition increases," said Lucas. "Quebec's tuition is affordable because of [the province's] student movement. And we intend to keep it that way. We'll go to every protest we can and get as many students behind us as possible."

When asked about the possibility of a student strike, Lucas said it was "unlikely" for the coming school year.

"There's a very high possibility of a student strike in 2011," continued Lucas. "There's not much else we can do within the confines of government. If we all chose to strike at the same time there won't be any students to pay tuition. That will force a compromise."

Perhaps Lucas' biggest challenge will be mobilizing the student body, as less than 10 per cent of Concordia students turned out to vote in March's CSU general elections.

"We need to give students

something they can connect to," said Lucas. "Concordia is an ethnically diverse school and we've addressed that with an ethnically diverse executive. Our referendum to build a student center didn't pass, but we want to keep pressing for one. Students need a place of their own on campus."

With her plate already full, Lucas will also face obstacles within her own student government. After former CSU President Osei's presidential decree authorizing a loan of \$45,000 to the Concordia Volunteer Abroad Program was only openly opposed by one CSU Councilor, a number of councilors allegedly voiced silent opposition to the decree after it was endorsed at an Aug. 23 meeting.

"I think they're new and unfamiliar with Robert's Rules of Order. They could also be shy and we'll work on that," said Lucas as she scribbled a note onto a Post-It and stuck it to her desk.

Pakistani Student Association shaken by resignations

Two VPs resign and accuse president of religious discrimination for blocking speaker

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

Earlier this month, two Pakistani Student Association VPs resigned from their posts accusing the association's president of religious discrimination.

In July, the PSA along with the Canadian Council for Muslim Women booked Durre Ahmed—a religious scholar, author and lecturer—to speak at Concordia University.

"Dr. Ahmed was scheduled to speak at Java U [on Aug. 5]," said Saad Sarfriz, one of the PSA VPs who resigned. "Just a few days before, [PSA President Yassir] Aziz found out that she is an Ahmadiyya Muslim. The night before the event, around 11 p.m., Aziz cancelled the speech without consulting with me. Aziz and [PSA VP External] Mohammad Malik told me Ahmed was an infidel."

Ahmadiyya Muslims are a sect of Islam considered heretical by the Pakistani government. In Pakistan, four million Ahmadis face institutional discrimination on a daily basis. Pakistani federal laws prevent Ahmadis from calling

themselves Muslims, using the traditional Islamic greeting or publishing religious materials.

On May 28, suicide bombers attacked two Ahmadi mosques in Pakistan, killing nearly 100 people.

"Aziz told me it would be unethical to allow a non-Muslim to speak about Islam," said Sana Khalil, the former PSA VP Internal, who resigned due to the cancellation. "That kind of narrow mindedness is very sad to me."

Despite the PSA's last minute cancellation, Ahmed spoke at the Java U in Concordia's Hall building on Aug. 5. The CCMW hosted the event without Aziz's support but Sarfriz said the PSA's attempt to cancel the event negatively affected turnout.

"We were expecting over 100 people to show up," he said. "Only about 40 came. By the time Dr. Ahmed spoke, she had heard about the Ahmadi controversy. I apologized but it was very embarrassing for the PSA."

Aziz told *The Link* his attempt to cancel the event had nothing to

do with Ahmed's religion.

"I respect [Ahmed's] religion," he said. "These allegations are just personal attacks against me. I cancelled the event because of security reasons. We booked the event at the last minute and didn't follow the right security procedures. Ask anyone at the Concordia Student Union."

Aziz consulted with CSU VP Clubs and Outreach Ramy Khoriaty a few days before the event.

"I asked [Aziz] if there would be any security problems a few days before the event," said Khoriaty. "He said no. A few days later he came back and said there would be a risk of [violence]. I told him the PSA couldn't host the event but the CCMW could. We can't run the risk of a Concordia club being liable if something bad happens."

"I don't think [Aziz] is guilty of [religious discrimination]," he continued. "If he was, then the CSU would definitely take action. That kind of behaviour is unacceptable."

Shaheen Ashraf, a board mem-

ber of the CCMW, has a hard time believing Aziz's cancellation was for security reasons.

"[Former PSA VP] Sana Khalil called me and asked me if Ahmed was an Ahmadiyya Muslim," said Ashraf. "I said yes, but that doesn't matter because this is about education, not religion. Then she told me that President Aziz wanted to know what sect of Islam she was from. After he found out, he cancelled the event on Facebook saying it was because Ahmed could not make it to Montreal. That was a lie."

Ashraf called Concordia Security on the morning of the talk to ensure that security would be at the event. The speech was held without incident.

After Ahmed's speech, former PSA VP Sarfriz wrote two emails to members of the PSA. The first detailed his allegations against Aziz. Sarfriz received support from some members but troubling emails from others.

"I received some email telling me I would be punished in hell," said Sarfriz laughing. "Others told

me I would get what was coming to me later in life."

The second email, written on Aug. 5, was a letter of resignation. The following day, Khalil resigned as well.

The CSU VP contends that neither resignation was due to religious discrimination.

"One of the executives resigned because the PSA is really busy right now," said Khoriaty. "The other because she had to move away."

On Aug. 30, *The Link* obtained a copy of Khalil's resignation letter. In the letter Khalil wrote that she decided to leave the PSA because it was "full of intolerance for other religious views."

Khalil is now living in Ottawa studying for her Masters in Social Work.

"I was afraid to speak out because of [PSA executive] might start rumours about me and try to ruin my reputation," she said. "But I'm not afraid anymore. They have already done that, and someone needs to speak against this narrow mindedness."

LIVE at Concordia

University to recognize volunteer work for first time

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

Ten years ago, Valerie Millette began volunteering for Meals on Wheels.

"I'd like to say I woke up one day and decided to save the world," said Millette. "But that's just not the truth."

Millette was looking to gain experience and for something to put on her CV. Somewhere along the way, she made a career out of it.

In 2008, Millette along with Concordia's Dean of Students office, various student groups and university staff, along with the support of University President Judith Woodsworth, founded the Concordia University Volunteer Initiative Committee.

"The initiative was a way to promote volunteering and recognize what was happening," said Millette. "We also wanted to recognize volunteers through the

Volunteer Recognition Awards."

On June 1, the group's collective efforts paved the way for Live Concordia, a bonanza of volunteering information and opportunities headed by Millette and a team of student volunteers.

"I just want to show them the diversity of volunteering opportunities at Concordia, in Montreal and abroad," she said.

As of this year, students looking to volunteer through Concordia can expect a leg up from the university. Concordia is the first university in Quebec to recognize the work of student volunteers.

Through the co-curricular record, students will have an official document describing the activities they participated in throughout their university careers.

"There are hundreds if not thousands of student volunteers at Concordia," said Jasmine Stu-

art, the co-curricular program director. "They all contribute to a vibrant life on campus and they are all learning something outside the classroom that needs to be recognized."

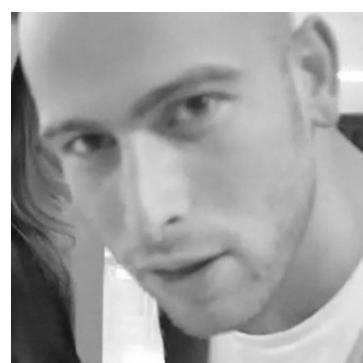
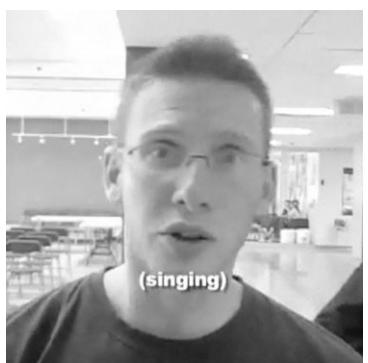
Most American universities have a similar program and some even award credits for the student volunteers. Seven other Canadian universities have implemented some form of the co-curricular record.

Live Concordia is still awaiting the influx of students that will arrive in September. In the meantime, volunteers will help expand the initiative's resources. This summer, Vanessa Bohla has been making pamphlets for community centres that don't have the means to publish them.

"When you get a thank you from community organizers, it just feels great," said Bohla.



Valerie Millette is spearheading the Live Concordia initiative.
PHOTO CHRISTOPHER CURTIS



Three students and a baby get in on CUTV's Box Populous experiment, a virtual soapbox that has gone viral within Concordia University. PHOTOS CUTV

Crazy like a box

CUTV wants you to speak in its corner

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

Media democracy will now be available at the push of a button.

Hit the bright red knob, speak into the camera and you're online. Concordia University Television's Box Populous is a virtual soapbox, where students can record what's on their mind into an arcade-style console on the seventh floor of the university's Hall building.

When they are done recording their piece, the video is screened for inappropriate content and is posted on CUTV's website.

"CUTV developed a similar idea years ago," said Noah Leon, the former CUTV member who created the station's first box last year. "Except it was basically a guy sitting in a cardboard box with a camera. The technology has evolved since then."

Before Box Populous, CUTV's most dominant visual presence

on campus was confusing. The station had set up about a dozen muted television sets between escalators in the Hall building.

Most students would walk by, catch a quick glimpse of a silent talking head and continue their trip up the escalators.

"There wasn't any interaction between students and media on campus," said Leon. "Obviously we recognized it was a problem and wanted to change that."

Leon constructed the first box out of recycled wood he found in a dumpster, a mini DV camera and a laptop. He fashioned the wood to resemble an arcade console, slapped on a coat of paint and Box Populous was born.

"It's almost like a polling station," said CUTV station manager Laura Kneale. "But people get creative with their opinions too, like beat-boxing women in hijabs. It's pretty experimental."

The box has gone viral within Concordia, catching the eye of the university's Dean of Students Office, which gave CUTV a grant to build a second one. CUTV's second Box Populous is under construction and will make its debut at Loyola Campus some time this fall.

Since earning a 9 cent-per-credit fee levy increase during the Concordia Student Union's November byelection, CUTV members have aggressively recruited and trained staff from both the university and the community at large.

CUTV also regularly holds workshops on editing, writing copy and shooting video that are open to the public and they have also lent their studio to special education groups, such as the Giant Steps camp for autistic youth, to teach filmmaking.

"The idea behind Box Popu-

lous and our general mandate is to make media accessible," said Kneale. "We really want to connect with people through media."

The station's news team has also worked to established its presence outside Concordia's walls, covering the coroner's inquest into the Fredy Villanueva shooting, the police brutality riots, the G20 protests and assembling their videos into a weekly 22 minute show broadcast online.

"Our goal is to get two weekly shows going and eventually to produce five shows a week," said CUTV production coordinator Laith Marouf. "We want to get something going on public access television but we won't do it at the cost of giving up any editorial control. We have a good thing going and we don't want to spoil it."



The new Box Populus will allow students to record themselves saying whatever they want to. PHOTO GAUL PORAT

Briefs

Concordia to host film festival

Concordia's Hall building will be a venue for the 23rd annual Image + Nation Film Festival, running Oct. 28 to Nov. 7. Dedicated to the promotion of international LGBT cinema, the festival will screen local and international movies. Past venues have included the Centre Imperial, Cinéma NFB and Cinéma J.A. de Sève.

Weed isn't wack

A new study from the McGill University Health Centre has proven what stoners have said for years: weed is like, totally helpful, man. The study found that cannabis reduces and relieves the suffering for those in neuropathic pain.

We'll smoke to that.

Chew on this

On Sept. 15th, Concordia will host a series of foods samplings, workshops and video viewings called Concordia Eats 2010. The event will feature 50 participants from local farmers, community groups, stores and restaurants. Show up hungry.

Wireless woes

As of Sept. 7, those who use Windows as an operating system with third party software to connect to Wi-Fi will be unable to connect to the Concordia network. Those inconvenienced can visit wireless.concordia.ca for instructions on how to reconfigure their systems to connect.

Giving back

The University of Quebec in Rimouski will give 10 Haitian students scholarships in order to contribute to the country's relief efforts in the wake of the devastating earthquake that rocked the island in January. The scholarships were given to students who exhibited academic and personal strength and will last three years.

Hitting the pavement

Students raise \$9,000 for Pakistan

• CLAY HEMMERICH

University students from Concordia, McGill and the Université de Montréal garnered support for those in Pakistan suffering from a catastrophic natural disaster.

The team of students raised more than \$9,000 to aid the victims of one of the worst natural disasters in Pakistani history. The flood has displaced 20 million people and killed over 1,000 individuals so far.

"We're trying to just keep [the campaign] going until the whole disaster is [alleviated]"

—Jaffer Hassan,
Fundraising student

All funds are being donated to the Sungi Development Foundation, which specializes in rebuilding communities; the Nur Foundation, which supplies food and shelter to flood victims; and the Liaquat National

Hospital.

On Aug. 26, a team of students hustled through the pouring rain collecting donations to help rebuild Pakistan. People passing by the corner of McGill College and Sherbrooke Street West gave smiles of approval, tips of the hat and some change as they ran for shelter.

Once the streets cleared of all potential donors, the team finally relented and regrouped at the Second Cup where the initiative, which does not have a set name, was born.

According to Jaffer Hassan, a founding member who is studying film studies at Concordia, the Pakistan flood relief campaign was created without any affiliations with non-profit organizations or the university. It was organized simply because Hassan and his group felt like action was due.

"A friend of mine called a meeting with myself and seven others to do something about [the disaster]," said Hassan.

"Everybody talks about doing something and it never happens."

Their efforts have been increasingly successful as they have attracted more volunteers. According to Hassan, seven out of 10 people who notice their green banners have been giving aid to Pakistan.

"We were actually very surprised about the amount of support we have been receiving," said Hassan. "We were expecting a daily average of \$400 to \$500 a day, but we ended up receiving about \$1,100 to \$1,500 a day."

"We're trying to just keep [the campaign] going until the whole disaster is [alleviated]. We're just trying to [instill] more awareness to people in Montreal," Hassan continued.

"Our aim these past two days was to make the froshies aware of what's going on. We don't expect them to give money, but we expect them to be drunk and happy, but also aware."



A student volunteer collects donations on McGill College Street.
PHOTO CLAY HEMMERICH

Concordia to stop paying for prayer space

University offers conditional loan to Muslim student group

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

By the time Concordia University stops providing a Friday prayer space for the Muslim Student Association, there will still be 10 days left of Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting.

"Our budget is so stretched right now," said Concordia University spokesperson Chris Mota. "We can no longer afford to rent a prayer space for the MSA."

Concordia provides the MSA with a room on the Hall building's seventh floor as a daily prayer space for up to 100 people. The university also rents a room at the Masonic Hall on Sherbrooke Street West for the nearly 800 students and faculty that attend Friday congressional prayer.

As of September, Concordia will no longer pay the \$15,600 it costs to rent the space each year.

"We've had a contract with the university since 2001," said MSA president Rasim Hafiz. "They've renewed our agreement about the Friday prayer space every year with no problem, but this year it got a little hostile. They just said no without hearing any of our proposals."

Concordia contends that there was never a contract between both parties.

"We had an understanding that renting the Masonic Hall was temporary until other arrangements could be made," said Mota. "There was no contract as far as I know."

In August of 2009, Concor-

dia's Dean of Students sent a letter to the MSA warning them that their agreement with the university would expire in August 2010. The MSA along with members of Montreal's Islamic community began pooling their resources and fundraising to buy a building downtown. A building was found but the provincial government blocked its sale because they considered it to be a heritage site.

"When our people heard of that we decided to help them out," said Mota. "We sent them a letter on July 20 offering to advance the funds necessary to rent the Masonic Hall for an additional year."

Mota added that the loan would be given to the MSA on the condition that the associa-

tion actively raised funds towards renting their own prayer

"The university has an obligation to the 6,000 Muslim students and faculty at Concordia."

—Prince Ralph Osei,
Former CSU President

space.

"We can't spend all our time fundraising," said Asma Omar, the MSA's VP External. "We're students, we're busy. Concordia needs to take the initiative. We would be willing to help but it's the university's obligation, it's a service they're supposed to provide."

The Concordia Student Union has thrown its support

behind the MSA's cause.

This summer, former CSU President Prince Ralph Osei sent a letter to the university's administration requesting they meet with the MSA and the CSU to settle the prayer space issue.

"The university has an obligation to the 6,000 Muslim students and faculty at Concordia," said Osei. "\$15,000 isn't even a dent in the university's budget. Judith Woodsworth is making a pitch for students in India, Pakistan and China to come to Concordia. Most of those countries have large Muslim populations and those students must have their spiritual needs met."

The MSA has consulted with a lawyer and plans on meeting with Concordia's administration in September.

Another nail in Dorchester's coffin



Demolition crews take down the final wall of a friary on René Lévesque Boulevard West. The building was attached to a 116-year-old Franciscan Church that burned down in February. The Church of Saint Francis of Assisi was one of the few remaining Victorian-era buildings on René Lévesque Boulevard. Most of the houses lining the street were destroyed in the 1960s when Dorchester Boulevard, as it was known back then, was widened. The Franciscans deserted the church in 2007. By the time it burned down, squatters inhabited the once towering buildings.

PHOTO CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

For more photos visit thelinknewspaper.com

Concordia Bookstore starts renting textbooks

Program saves student money, time and the planet

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

After a successful pilot program this summer, Concordia Bookstores will be renting textbooks to students this September at 40 per cent of the books' full price.

"We sell textbooks new, used and in eBook format. Now we are going to be renting them to students," said Ken Bissonnette, the Operations Text Manager for Concordia Bookstores. "We are always looking for ways to make it easier, cheaper and cleaner for students to get books."

With 100 titles and over

1,000 textbooks ready to be rented, Bissonnette said that the new program could reduce the number of counterfeit books made with photocopied pages.

"We got our hands on a copy of one of those books last year," said Bissonnette about the counterfeits. "The quality was terrible. They sell for about \$35, so now we are going to offer a real book for the same price."

Apart from the Concordia Bookstore, students can also buy and trade books at the Concordia Student Union VP Loyola and Advocacy Hassan Abdullahi.

change.

"It's not like it was 15 years ago when we were the only ticket in town and you needed to get your book here," said Bissonnette.

Already popular in the United States, rentals are new to Canada. Along with Concordia, the University of Toronto ran a trial program this summer.

"Renting seems to be the cheapest and most sustainable alternative," said Concordia Student Union VP Loyola and Advocacy Hassan Abdullahi.

"The rental idea still hasn't sunk in with me and I don't

think it has with the majority of students," said Abdullahi, who worked as a manager at the Inter-Faculty Book Exchange last year. "But it will eventually get there. It's a good thing."

With the rentals expected to circulate for four or five semesters before being worn out, Bissonnette said that there was no vandalism or abuse of textbooks during the summer trial.

"We got one book that the student may have dropped, it was dinged on the corners," said Bissonnette. "But some of the books were pristine, like they were never opened."

"We are always looking for ways to make it easier, cheaper and cleaner for students to get books."

—Ken Bissonnette,
Operations Text Manager
for the Concordia Bookstore

A year of petitions, 170,000 students at risk, The CFS looks to stop the loss

Windsor students look to quit national student lobby despite tough new rules

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

A year after the first petitions were printed at 14 universities across Canada to leave the Canadian Federation of Students, a national lobby group that many felt was ineffective and interfering in local student politics, no university has successfully left.

Five referendums held at universities that had successful petitions were not recognized as legitimate by the CFS—under the Federation's bylaws, the CFS must agree to the referendum question and date. The CFS never gave its consent to the votes.

The only referendum allowed to stand was held at the one student body that voted to stay: the Alberta College of Art and Design.

The University of Regina Students' Union has been promised a referendum in October; however, the legality of the promised vote has already been called into question.

Six universities are currently in limbo, having submitted legal petitions while receiving no dates to bring a referendum to the student body.

Only one university of the 14, Kwantlen University, never submitted a petition.

How did the CFS react to the attempts to leave the Federation? They made leaving harder.

James Cocola, the chairperson for the University of Victoria Students' Society, was at the CFS' Annual General Meeting in Ottawa from May 22 to 25.

"My board sent me to oppose motions that we felt made the referendum process more difficult," said Cocola. "We tried to stop further changes to the referendum rules because it's gotten to the point where it's next to impossible to hold a referendum under the rules the CFS has."

The UVSS went to Ottawa to stop five motions: a ban on online referendums, the doubling of quorum for a referendum vote to 10 per cent of the student population, the doubling of petition signatories to 20 per cent of the student population, the approval of counter-petitions, and new rules that required more personal information from petition signatories.

All the motions passed.

"There weren't a whole lot of debates because schools like Concordia and McGill were not there," said Cocola.

After Concordia's undergrad-

uate and graduate students voted with McGill's graduates to leave the CFS at their general elections in late March and early April, the student delegations from both universities were not welcome at the CFS Annual General Meeting.

"As it stands, the rules to enter the organization are much easier than the rules to leave," said Cocola, pointing out that only five per cent of students need to vote to join the CFS.

After a petition from undergraduate students at the University of Victoria was submitted to the CFS in Fall 2009, the CFS refused to provide the student union with a referendum date.

Cocola said he was now concerned that the rules he flew to Ottawa to oppose could be used against him.

"We should not be following any rules that were put in after our petition passed, but I fear that they will try to impose the rules," said Cocola.

With the new rules in place, the possibility of new petitions being considered and approved is remote.

"If I was a new school looking to hold a referendum, it would be

an ominous task to follow everything they have laid out. It would actually be next to impossible," said Cocola.

The University of Windsor Students' Alliance is currently facing the impossible.

Students at Windsor will begin a defederation campaign in September by collecting signatures for a petition. They will be the first university to operate under the new rules.

"I think that the rules are absurd," said Robert Woodrich, UWSA's VP University Affairs. "At a school like Windsor it is very difficult, almost prohibitively so, to collect signatures from 20 per cent of students."

The stricter rules approved at the CFS AGM in May were given added weight when the Ontario component of the national lobby group approved nearly identical rules at its own AGM in late March.

"Everything passed as proposed and almost always they were basically a reflection of what was passed at the last national meeting," said Woodrich. "The justification was that this is only housekeeping, we are only changing our bylaws to reflect the na-

tional bylaws.

"However, the Ontario component is not beholden to the national component and it can have dissimilar bylaws."

A commuter school without large gathering areas, the bulk of the University of Windsor petition's signatures were to be gathered during Welcome Week when large numbers of students were on campus. That cannot happen due to the new rules.

"The only uncertainty surrounds the referendum question itself," said Woodrich. "Unfortunately, because CFS-O just changed its bylaws we don't know which referendum question they will allow to be asked."

"I have a feeling they won't provide their updated bylaws until after our Welcome Week," said Woodrich, adding that it was a political game.

"CFS does nothing on our campus except for undermine our stance on many issues. All we want to do is leave. We don't wish harm on any other student bodies, we just want out. They are making that very hard for us," Woodrich continued.

"It's incredibly antidemocratic."

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THE LiNK

Rebuilding from the ruins of war and AIDS

Concordia students in Uganda are increasing their presence with people and money

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

Thomas Prince stepped out of a plane and onto African soil for the first time in his life last year.

"It was real," said Prince. "You weren't stepping through a gate into a modern airport. We were on a field just a few hundred feet away from cows. You smelt the manure, you smelt farmers burning their fields for the upcoming harvest and you felt that thick humid air hit you the second you stepped out of the plane."

Prince was in his second year at Concordia University. He had hit a rut, was feeling burnt out and needed to leave the city for a while. That's when Prince applied to volunteer in Uganda for the summer of 2009 through the Concordia Volunteer Abroad Program.

Once in Uganda, Prince was part of a construction crew that built a house for a local family.

"You get your hands dirty," he said. "You're out in the sweltering heat all day and it's exhausting but it's a good kind of tired. You feel fulfilled at the end of the day."

Today, Prince works for CVAP as an administrative assistant.

"CVAP gives Concordia students a chance to help people," said Concordia Student Union VP Sustainability and Promotions Morgan Pudwell, who was appointed to a committee that over-

sees CVAP's operations. "And for students to travel, it's an inexpensive way to really immerse yourself in a country's culture."

On Aug. 13, CVAP, which gets its funding through a 35 cent-per-credit fee levy, secured a \$45,000 loan through a presidential decree from former CSU President Prince Ralph Osei. The money will go towards building a \$125,000 residence for Concordia volunteers in the town of Gulu in northern Uganda.

"[The residence] will save CVAP in hotel fees," said former CSU President Prince Ralph Osei at an Aug. 23 Council meeting where council endorsed the loan.

Each year CVAP sends up to 50 volunteers who pay \$3,000 each to Uganda, a country ravaged by AIDS and recovering from a civil war that has killed thousands and displaced millions of Ugandans.

Volunteers work on construction sites, but also in classrooms and in offices.

"Sometimes the help a volunteer can give is as simple as teaching locals how to use email," said Prince. "We had an artist in our group who helped design teaching materials for a classroom. He painted alphabet cards for children learning to read. There's a diverse set of things you can do with whatever your skill set is."



Volunteers help rebuild local infrastructure in and around Gulu. PHOTO ELEONORE GAUTHIER

'I have to fight this'

Concordia student go out and walk for a cure against Leukemia

• JASMINE PAPILLON-SMITH

Alyssa Brandone was 11 when she was diagnosed with Acute Myelogenous Leukemia, a disease she fought with everything she had and ultimately defeated.

"I remember my brother coming to me at night and we made a pact where he was going to make his hockey team if I made it through this," she said. "I really wanted him to make that hockey team."

Brandone went into remission after her first chemotherapy treatment, but she had to

continue with the treatments to remain in remission.

"I made it thanks to the support of friends and family, who sent positive vibes my way," she said.

"I remember asking a lot of questions, like whether or not it was treatable and how long I'd have to spend in the hospital," Brandone continued.

"That night I just broke down crying, and then I realized, I have to fight this."

Brandone, a second-year art history student at Concordia University, has dedicated a sub-

stantial amount of time and effort to raising money for Light the Night Walk, a fundraising event held all across North America to garner financial support for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Canada.

Coming into her third year as a participant, Brandone has been made an Honoured Hero and her team is already the biggest monetary contributor, raising upwards of \$25,000 in its first year and growing ever since.

"My parents found out about [Light the Night Walk] through

a friend and decided to raise money, and we thought, next year we want to be number one," said Brandone.

"[The honoured heroes] are meant to be mentors and coaches to the rest of the participants," said Patricia Gilmore, Coordinator for Light the Night Walk. The walk will be held at Parc Jean Drapeau on Oct. 2.

Participants will be given balloons with LED lights inside, adorning the night with a five-kilometer procession of light.

"There is no fundraising minimum to walk. We are trying to

encourage people to raise money and have fun with it; it's a fundraising and awareness campaign," said Gilmore.

"The main idea is to get people registered and fundraising. The goal is to cure blood cancer."

Brandone is heading this year's Concordia team, which hopes to raise awareness and money while engaging in a bit of friendly competition with the McGill team, who raised \$10,000 last year. This year's fundraising goal in the Quebec region is \$3,000,000.

FRINGE ARTS

MUSIC: SAM AMIDON BRINGS TRADITIONAL MUSIC TO MONTREAL



Coast to coast to coast

Blog documents the weirder sides of the Canadian music scene



Weird Canada lends an ear to Canadian musicians

GRAPHIC DARYNA RUKHLYADEVA

• ASHLEY OPHEIM

Our Great White North, whether you know it or not, is bursting with a rich underground music scene.

For any music lover particularly interested in the Canadian scene, alternative blog Weird Canada is beginning to scrape the surface and upturn an immaculate collection of strange Canadian gems.

Edmontonian Aaron Levin is the mastermind behind the site, using the Internet to provide a much-needed space for musicians to get their music heard.

After working some time for a music blog called Waxidermy and landing a gig at a radio station, Levin recognized a common trend for small-name bands.

"I began to notice a bedroom, do it yourself scene in Canada [where artists] were all making this [great] music, but then they

would fade away really quick. I felt like this sort of scene kept on disappearing because there was no voice or media for it," he explained.

"My vision [for] Weird Canada was to capture [this] music scene in Canada, as no such blog or website devoted to Canadian music at this stage existed," he said.

Levin believes that Canada harnesses an interesting music scene because of our "economic isolation, physical enormity, and extreme climate [that] causes a psychic shift in our creative consciousness. As such, the scene here is audibly unique."

After getting the site up and running 18 months ago, Levin immediately saw a positive response from the public.

"People responded really quickly and I think the reason for that is that when you start a blog

and start writing about Animal Collective, Yeah Yeahs Yeahs, and !!! (Chk Chk Chk), these bands may not be aware of what you're doing," he said. "But when you start talking about someone [unknown] and you're the very first outlet for this artist, then immediately they share it with their friends and they all start talking about it and everyone is really excited."

The website also allows browsing of its archives by province. While Weird Canada covers music from every corner of the country, Montreal-based bands definitely have Levin's attention.

"I'm so enamoured by Montreal as a community and as a city," he explained. "I think Montreal has two really strong things going for it. I think, culturally, there is openness to new ideas. Also, there is a real density in Montreal that allows a sustain-

ability of different music scenes," Levin said.

"And so the music scenes begin to overlap and collaborate and draw influences from each other."

"And your living expenses are a lot lower," added Levin. A luxury that allows artists to be, well, artists.

Local bands—such as Pink Noise, Grimes, Sean Nicholas Savage, D'EON, Silly Kissers, Blue Hawaii, Futensil, Black Feelings, Dead Wife, The Peelies, Omon Ra II, just to name a few—have appeared on the site.

Tapes and seven-inch vinyl seem to be a preferred medium for budding musicians these days, with plenty of bands offering albums online for free or as a pay what you can download.

Transcending both economic status and geographic location, the Internet is transforming

music, offering new opportunities for musicians and more exposure across the country. Weird Canada has played an integral part in this process by harvesting a new platform in which artists can be heard and emerge out of.

"When I think about the future of Canadian music, I think that the middle ground is going away. [I think] that there is a shift towards a DIY aesthetic and music being treated as a vanity object."

As for Levin and the future of Weird Canada? "I'm embarking on two larger projects, one to create a national show listing and events calendar and another that I'm keeping secret."

Levin will be doing a talk with Pop Montreal at the end of September. Visit <http://weirdcanada.com> for more details about the talk.



Folk yeah!

Folk artist samamidon is making the old new again

• ASHLEY OPHEIM

Known for his impressive re-imaginings of traditional American folk songs and hymns, Sam Amidon—or samamidon, as he's known onstage—is keeping the folk legacy alive and bringing it to Montreal.

Resembling the music of folk legends, Amidon's work is rich with stories and imagery. His interpretations of old folk classics feel relaxed, intimate and ambitious.

Growing up in the small town of Brattleboro, Vt., Amidon learned to sing and play the fiddle at an early age, later adding the guitar and banjo to his flock of instruments. No stranger to the folk music scene, his parents Peter and Mary Alice Amidon are notable Vermont folk singers in their own right and traditional music educators.

Moving beyond Vermont, he now calls New York City home after living there for the past decade.

"The mess of [New York City] is amazing. You can pass through all this different music in different communities and really feel like you are passing through these many worlds in one night," he said.

Contributing to a number of independent music projects—including Doveman, Assembly

and Stars Like Fleas—Amidon is setting off on his first solo North American tour in support of his recent release *I See The Sign*.

"I am taking the Amtrak train from New York to Montreal," said Amidon. "I can't wait!"

Prepared for long hours alone and on the road, Amidon doesn't plan on staring wistfully out the window at the scenery whirling past, he has work to do.

"I have a show coming up at The Kitchen, [a performance art-based gallery] in New York, and am plotting for that. I'm going to be working on a fiddle lecture and power point presentation," he said. "I also have *The Decline of the Roman Empire* as a book on my iPod."

The recently released *I See The Sign* is Amidon's third major album, produced on the Icelandic music label Bedroom Community. He believes the product is proof of a development in his musical poise.

"I think [*I See The Sign*] ended up being more broke and dense in texture," he said. "Part of that was more confidence on my part."

This is his second release with Bedroom Community, a label based on the outskirts of Reykjavik.

"With my first release, *All is*



Samamidon embarks on his first solo tour. PHOTO SAMANTHA WEST

Well, I went [to the recording studio in Iceland] alone and a little scared. The volcanic rock and a certain kind of light makes you feel like you're on the moon," he explained.

"It's an amazing place to bring ideas," he added. "There is so much clarity to everything there, clarity and openness."

"By the time I recorded *I See The Sign*, going to Iceland had become very comfortable," he explained.

"I felt a little more involved throughout the process of this record and I think the result is a little more broad and playful."

I See The Sign looks to the past for inspiration and brings it to the here and now. Amidon is happy playing the in-between.

Samamidon plays with Winchester Warm at II Motore on Friday, Sept. 3. Show begins at 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$14 at the door.

spins

Danger
Mouse and
Sparklehorse
*Dark Night
of the Soul*
EMI



with Beck in *Modern Guilt*, Danger Mouse brings out an enhanced version of all his artists. In "Pain," Iggy Pop is full of electric youth. The song is a garage rock horror film; the drums and distorted guitar build suspense, while Iggy Pop channels Vincent Price's foreboding tone of voice. Perhaps the album's only setback is Angel's Harp, a song in which Pixies front man Black Francis bores your ears off. That small exception notwithstanding, *Dark Night of the Soul* is one of those rare collaboration albums that feels as strong as the sum of its parts.

—Christopher Curtis,

9/10

The
Gaslight
Anthem
*American
Slang*



SideOneDummy Records

Sometimes a band will come up in a certain scene despite not being directly sonically related to its brethren. The Gaslight Anthem, who are by and large a product of the punk rock community, do not play punk music, at least, not since their debut album, 2007's *Sink or Swim*. Their next album, 2008's *The '59 Sound* found them leaving the ghetto of punk for more mainstream pastures. *American*

Slang cements that transition. These guys have been both hailed and decried for their Jersey-lovin', Boss-apin' ways, but if you've got ears, you'll probably enjoy this no-weak-link ten-song selection which obviously was scientifically calculated to awaken in the listener a sudden and all-consuming urge to road trip across the U.S. of A., drunk on emotion and the fiery fuel of memories. Beware: wistful nostalgia in your rear-view mirror may be closer than it appears.

—Alex Manley,

8/10

Artbreak hotel

Hotel opens its doors, hosts art

• FARAH DAOUD

The Espresso Hotel on Guy Street will be transformed into an Arthotel on Sept. 3, becoming an unlikely venue for 16 films, visual art and performance pieces, dance and music for one night.

Taking place in various spaces—hotel rooms, the pool, the parking garage and the conference room—will change the hotel from a tourist haven to a vibrant microcosm of local art.

Crystle Reid, a recent Concordia theater graduate and the brains behind the event, explained that the pieces are varied, ranging from "serious pieces to spooky ones," and include some interactive art.

Spectators are welcome to move through the space at their own pace. All the pieces will be performed on repeat all night, so visitors can move freely from one room to the next, partaking in a choose-your-own-adventure evening of art and culture.

For Reid, Arthotel exists as "a place to connect and experiment with other artists," bringing people with varied interests together.

Reid said to expect heavy metal music from "Opera Suicide" and beautifully introspective theater from "in actu."

The Arthotel will host the work of Ryan Hurl, who will present a theatrical exploration of gender issues. It will also feature an interpretation from "Sheep in Fog", the winners of the Best Local English Production Award at the 2010 Montreal Fringe Festival last June.

To make the most out of the hotel, Reid said, the audience should "take advantage of the moment."

Arthotel will take place at Hotel Espresso (1005 Guy Street) on Sept. 3. The event begins at 8 p.m. and costs \$15 at the door.

FEATURES

BUGS, SPORTS & SIGNATURES: WHY SOME PEOPLE LOVE TO COLLECT



Gotta get' em all

Inside the obsessive world of collecting

• ADAM KOVAC

Most people put their Pokémon cards in a drawer, never to see the light of day again. Others end up waiting for Hall & Oates outside a concert venue, hoping to add a little “rock and soul” to their autograph stockpile. For lifelong collectors, it’s a thin line between a hobby and a way of life.

Sign language

Existing in a universe completely unlike our own, celebrities live more than just the high life. The real perk is the constant ego boost that comes from the knowledge that people you will never meet care about the minutiae of your existence: see Kanye West’s Twitter account.

For years, the cult of celebrity has manifested itself in the pursuit of autographs. Bryan Ulrich, the operator of the website thesignaturelibrary.com, has managed to turn that pursuit into an art form, passion and business.

“I got into it as a hobby, as somebody who appreciates and admires and reveres people with talent and who make contributions to pop culture,” he said. “I’ve never been about chasing autographs for the sake of autographs. It’s always been about their story and their adventure in life.”

Ulrich, a native of Toronto, sells items that range from posters and albums to guitars and clothing, each emblazoned with the autograph of the celebrity connected to them and each signature having been personally obtained.

On the website, Ulrich can be seen with his arm around almost every major figure from sports, music and film from the past three decades, but none is more striking than a photo of a smiling Ulrich standing next to a masked Michael Jackson. The two shared a symbiotic relationship in the

last year of the pop star’s life, which resulted in Ulrich possessing the single largest collection of Jackson signatures in the world.

“I cultivated a relationship with him pretty quickly. He was very cool to be around and super-generous,” said Ulrich. “He collected his own memorabilia, so he would get stuff from me—weird stuff or posters he had never seen of himself. I’d give him 30 or 40 things in one shot and he’d sign 20 or 30 and keep 10.”

As part of his business, Ulrich does take requests—he even tracked down Miley Cyrus for personalized happy birthday wishes for a customer’s daughters once. But he does have rules: he claims he will only get the signature of people he considers culturally important and interesting.

“If somebody asked me for Justin Bieber’s signature, well, it’s

not something that I’d like to do,” he said.

Bugger off

While the Kirk Douglas-signed Spartacus photo from Ulrich’s website may seem dated, it pales next to the objects in former Concordia professor Mark Bourrie’s possession.

Bourrie, a reporter on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, collects something far creepier than the politicians he deals with: trilobites, or fossilized bugs that are older than dinosaurs.

Although he does have specimens in his collection that are valued at up to \$20,000, the big part of why he got trilobite-fever is simple: they’re neat.

“I started collecting them because I thought they were cool. I liked that they had eyes—they looked like an animal,” he re-

called. “And they’re so old. When you put a bunch of them [next to each other] and look at them, you can really see the diversity of creatures when the world was so different. You might as well be looking at alien life forms.”

Despite the financial benefits that would come from dealing his trilobites, Bourrie is not ready to sell.

“I save just about everything I find,” he said. “I’d like to keep it all together, I’d hate to see it all sold here and there.”

Finding value

Beyond sentiment and money, psychologist Corinne Rowniak believes that there are several competing motives behind stockpiling objects, no matter what they are.

“It can be a kind of making memories,” she said. “Sometimes,

when people create collections, each item represents a time and a place. When the objects have more value, there’s a self-aggrandizement. They become important by acquiring something that’s worth a lot, as opposed to a collection like bottle caps.”

Robert Cresthol, a dealer in baseball memorabilia who also maintains a private collection, admitted that nostalgia is part of the reason he updates his stash.

“Baseball history is very colourful,” he explained. “There are a lot of baseball purists that get more of a thrill out of the world of baseball in the past than the present day game, which is tarnished by steroids and spoiled, rude athletes.”

The element of nostalgia in building a collection is one Bourrie agrees with. His collection was largely built not by buying and trading pieces, but by searching for fossils in areas undergoing excavation. He can recall where he found most of the specimens in his collection. To Bourrie, the thrill is in the chase.

“I think [finding a good specimen] is like winning something in a lottery or casino,” he said. “It’s a total rush. I can see how it would be addictive to win something. I should probably stay out of casinos,” he added with a chuckle.

If that kind of rush seems dangerous, Rowniak says it’s actually benign, as long as passion doesn’t turn into obsession. While compiling a large amount of slightly different objects might seem like a strange hobby to some people, it can actually indicate a healthy thirst for knowledge—albeit in a fairly limited field. Think of it as a mildly eccentric way of connecting to others, and that can’t be bad—even if it involves hanging out with Hall & Oates.



Brian Ulrich poses with just a few of the signed items from his website. COURTESY OF BRIAN ULRICH

LITERARY ARTS

SUMMER READS: Do any of these lists put you into the seats with book in hand?

Listomania

Top tens, tweets and old targets

• ALEX MANLEY

The Can Lit Blogosphere was set abuzz this past week by the appearance of two Top 10 lists—Ten Overrated and Underrated Canadian Authors.

Published by the *National Post* and written by Canadian literary reviewer-types Alex Good and Steven Beattie, the first was published to the *Post*'s site on Tuesday, the second on Wednesday, both appearing in the Saturday print edition of the newspaper.

Canadian author and Concordia Creative Writing professor Sina Queyras was voted co-Poet Laureate of the site, following a two-week online voting period in April. She has been active in discussing the matter via Twitter, and was willing to share her thoughts with *The Link* about the two lists.

The Link: You tweeted that both lists offended you. Which one did you find worse? Why?

Sina Queyras: Actually, I didn't say that. One thing I tweeted was "Poetry thinks overrated, underrated, best of lists don't make up for the paucity of rigorous, constructively provoking public discourse." Lists make great poems. Letterman makes great use of lists. To foster literary discourse? Not so much.

It must be frustrating as a writer to see fellow authors denigrated. But isn't the alternative—say, the National Post not writing about CanLit—worse?

Intelligent discourse about books is always a good thing. In general though, the *National Post* is currently picking up the slack on a lot of the national literary coverage and doing it with energy and style.

One of the overrated authors was Erin Mouré, a transplanted Montreal poet. She's hardly a household name the way fellow listees are. In fact, a quick Google search shows her to have the fewest hits of all the writers on the overrated list. Were you surprised by her inclusion? Can you be

considered overrated if you're critically acclaimed but generally unknown?

I wasn't at all surprised to see Mouré on the list. It's not the first time she's been a target. I did notice that these are writers who do well. And often do well outside of Canada. That seems to be a bad thing.

On the other hand, were you surprised that Margaret Atwood was left off the Overrated list? Given that she's one of the most famous and most lauded Canadian writers, you'd think that suggests the writers thought she was due her acclaim.

Atwood is another old target. As far as Atwood goes, I think I recall her saying once, many years ago, that she didn't understand why her work got all the attention it did and wouldn't be surprised if it suddenly vanished. Well, it

hasn't. Atwood is a public figure, well beyond her work, which is, yes, uneven, but the body of her work is formidable. If a writer takes risks there will be failures, or at least less successful texts. I can live with that.

You took issue with the homogeneity of the Underrated list (eight of the 10 authors on it had been published by two organizations helmed by Canadian scribe John Metcalf, Biblioasis, a literary press, and the magazine Canadian Notes & Queries). Do you see it as an attempt by the writers to push a particular breed of under-publicized authors onto the reading public?

I was quite prepared to see a new wave of voices that, perhaps, I wasn't aware of. There were a couple that I haven't read, but surely there is a new and diverse crop of overrated writers by now.

Finally, since so much of the discourse about these lists took place on Twitter, how is it that you came to tweet? And why do you tweet from the perspective of Poetry?

I started Tweeting to appropriate the voice of Poetry in the way so many of my peers seem to do. That is to say they speak as if they are Poetry, or as if Poetry is one thing. Poetry isn't any one thing. It certainly isn't what I think, or you, for that matter. It's no one voice, or perspective or style. Poetry is vast. It's complicated and unruly and unforgiving and irritating as much as soothing. My Poetry is a bit of a curmudgeon. But I hope not only.

You can check out the lists in their entirities at the National Post's website, and follow Sina Queyras's online exploits at lemonhound.blogspot.com/ and twitter.com/lemonhound.



The Top 10 overrated and underrated Canadian authors, as decreed by the National Post. GRAPHIC GABBY LEON

Quick read

L (and things come apart)

Ian Orti
Invisible Publishing



138 pp
\$16.95

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

Henry, the quiet and unassuming protagonist of author Ian Orti's *L (and things come apart)*, rents the flat above his cafe to an enchanting and mysterious woman by the name of L.

Henry's wife is cavalier about her extramarital indiscretions and is excited by the thought that her husband might catch her in the heat of lovemaking, even though he's long ago stopped caring about his marriage or of achieving intimacy with her. If things don't get more interesting, thinks Henry, they might just keep on going.

The customers in Henry's cafe are variously cantankerous, fearful for their sanity and frustrated by a recent transit strike and herds of wild mammoths that dot the snowy city landscape in pairs of two. If the sudden appearances of mammoths aren't enough to jar Henry out of his malaise, building fixtures spontaneously decide for themselves that they are in need of a change of scenery.

That this all began with the arrival of L might just be a coincidence, but while spending time with her, Henry begins to fear the thought of being without her.

Orti, who won the 2009 Exposine Alternative Press Award for his debut book, *The Olive and the Dawn*, infuses the mundane with imagination. Subtly unsettling, *L (and things come apart)* is a charming and intriguing read.

SPORTS

FOOTBALL: STINGERS WIN 40-23 IN EXHIBITION PLAY



RUGBY



The men's rugby team hosted Royal Military College in preseason action at Concordia Stadium on Sunday. Though the teams have established a relationship after meeting each other annually for the past five seasons, there was no holding back during Sunday's game. PHOTO ROB AMYOT

[see story, pg. 15](#)

The coach's take

"On the field today, we've got plenty of talent. We just have to come together a little bit tighter technically and a few of the guys have to see a psychologist"

—Clive Gibson,
Men's rugby head coach



Preseason success

Football team starts out slowly, gets job done

• DAVID KAUFMANN

The Concordia Stingers' football team overcame heavy wind and rain in its 40-23 romp over the visiting University of Guelph Gryphons during preseason action at Concordia Stadium last Thursday.

"We got off to a bit of a slow start [and] the weather didn't help," said Stingers quarterback Rob Mackay.

The Gryphons got on the board first when receiver Dave Honig found his way into the end zone to score early in the opening quarter.

Guelph then added a field goal in the second to take a 10-0 lead.

In that same quarter, Stingers running back Michael Donnelly broke away from the pack en

route to a 48-yard touchdown.

Slotback Liam Mahoney then picked up a 62-yard pass from Mackay for the team's second touchdown moments later.

Before the half was over, the Stingers added another touchdown and went into the break with a commanding 24-10 lead.

Once the third quarter came around, the Gryphons decided to make some noise as wide receiver Keith Walker responded with a touchdown. Giuliano Tropea and Brett MacDonald added one field goal apiece.

The Stingers quashed any hopes for a Guelph comeback as they added three field goals and a touchdown in the fourth.

[continued on football, pg. 15](#)

scoreboard



FOOTBALL

W 40-23 v Guelph thursday

MEN'S SOCCER

W 2-0 v McMaster friday

W 3-0 v Nipissing saturday

L 0-1 v Laurentian sunday

WOMEN'S SOCCER

L 0-1 v McMaster friday

L 0-2 v Nipissing saturday

L 0-3 v Laurentian sunday

Training camp routine, with a twist

Controlled scrimmage gives chance to identify pros and cons for men's rugby

• ALEX DI PIETRO

With his roster yet to be finalized, men's rugby head coach Clive Gibson decided to scrap having an official exhibition match against Royal Military College on Sunday and just called it a "controlled scrimmage" instead.

"I think what needs to be done is actually what we did today; two coaches who agree among themselves that this is good for both the sport and the athletes and to make sure we follow the rules," said Gibson after the scrimmage. "If it's a controlled scrimmage instead of a game and I can't give you a score, then so be it."

Gibson made sure to get RMC head coach Sean McDonough's approval before making the change.

The Stingers and the Ontario University Athletics conference RMC Paladins have a long history of holding preseason games against each other, making Sunday's game part of an annual routine.

"We've already been discussing a game for next year, but we're going to call it a scrimmage right off the bat," said Gibson.

Gibson held team practices all weekend, including one on Sunday

ahead of the encounter with RMC.

As a result of the game not being an official exhibition match, Gibson was able to give the nod to some players he would wouldn't have otherwise been able to use.

On hand for the start of camp was new assistant coach Shane Thomas. Gibson and Thomas only first met last May when they took part in a coaching clinic with various high schools in Montreal.

"Every coach was given one section [of the game] to lead and one section to be the assistant for and it just turned out that [Thomas] was leading a section about rucking and I was named his assistant," said Gibson. "Within three minutes of working together, we were finishing each other's sentences and it just clicked."

"When he takes a group off to one corner and I take a group off to the other corner, we can guarantee that when the two groups come together again, there's going to be cohesion," added Gibson.

One of the things coach Gibson was looking for on Sunday was to see if any of his newcomers could fill the boots of 2nd row jumper Marc Roche and scrum half Perci-



While the exact score is unknown, the Stingers bested their RMC rivals by at least 10 points. The two teams will meet once again this weekend in Kingston. PHOTO ROB AMYOT

val Graham, who both graduated last year.

While he was not pleased with his team's attempts at lineouts, Gibson was impressed with the play of second-year student and scrum half Marc Guibord.

Gibson admired that Guibord, an independent student from Wendover, Ontario, was able to get up to speed after only meeting his teammates for the first time during the morning practice. Gui-

bord was also a member of last year's wrestling team.

While Gibson is expecting the return of many of his veterans this year, the rugby team experienced a large turnover in advance of the 2009 season.

However, Gibson said the turnover was for the best as it allowed him to employ a new team system and for his players to heighten their level of chemistry with one another. He said

having the dome to practice in three times a week all last winter also helped his cause.

The men's rugby team will finish its preseason agenda with a game against the Université de Montréal Carabins on Thursday, and will then travel to Kingston, Ont. for a series of matches, including one against RMC. Afterwards, the team will return to Montreal to hold open practices and finalize its roster.

CONTINUED FROM FOOTBALL, 14



QB Rob Mackay (above) led his team to a preseason win over the Guelph Gryphons on Thursday. PHOTO OZGUR VEYSEL DEMIRTAS

While the Gryphons didn't get the win they were looking for, head coach Stu Lang saw this as a learning experience.

The Quebec league is known for having excellent talent and excellent teams. [This] was a good opportunity to test ourselves against some good players and it's

nice to play out of conference," Lang said. "So we're experimenting with a team we don't have to play with later in our league."

As for the Stingers, head coach Gerry McGrath was pleased with his team's overall performance.

"I thought our starters performed quite well. They got the

rust off after the first few series and played quite well. I thought [Mackay] was masterful in the second quarter," said McGrath.

Mackay passed for 192 yards. He sees this victory as a sign of things to come.

"It shows where we are right now," he said. "It was a good test

for us to let us know where our game is at the moment. Especially for our defence; they played really well today."

While the team was all smiles with the victory, McGrath was quick to point out some of his team's flaws.

"We've got to stay focused.

Today we had a few silly penalties, which cost us. Ball security was an issue. We fumbled a couple of times. Those things kill you."

The Stingers will open their season next Saturday on the road versus the Bishop's Gaiters at 7 p.m.

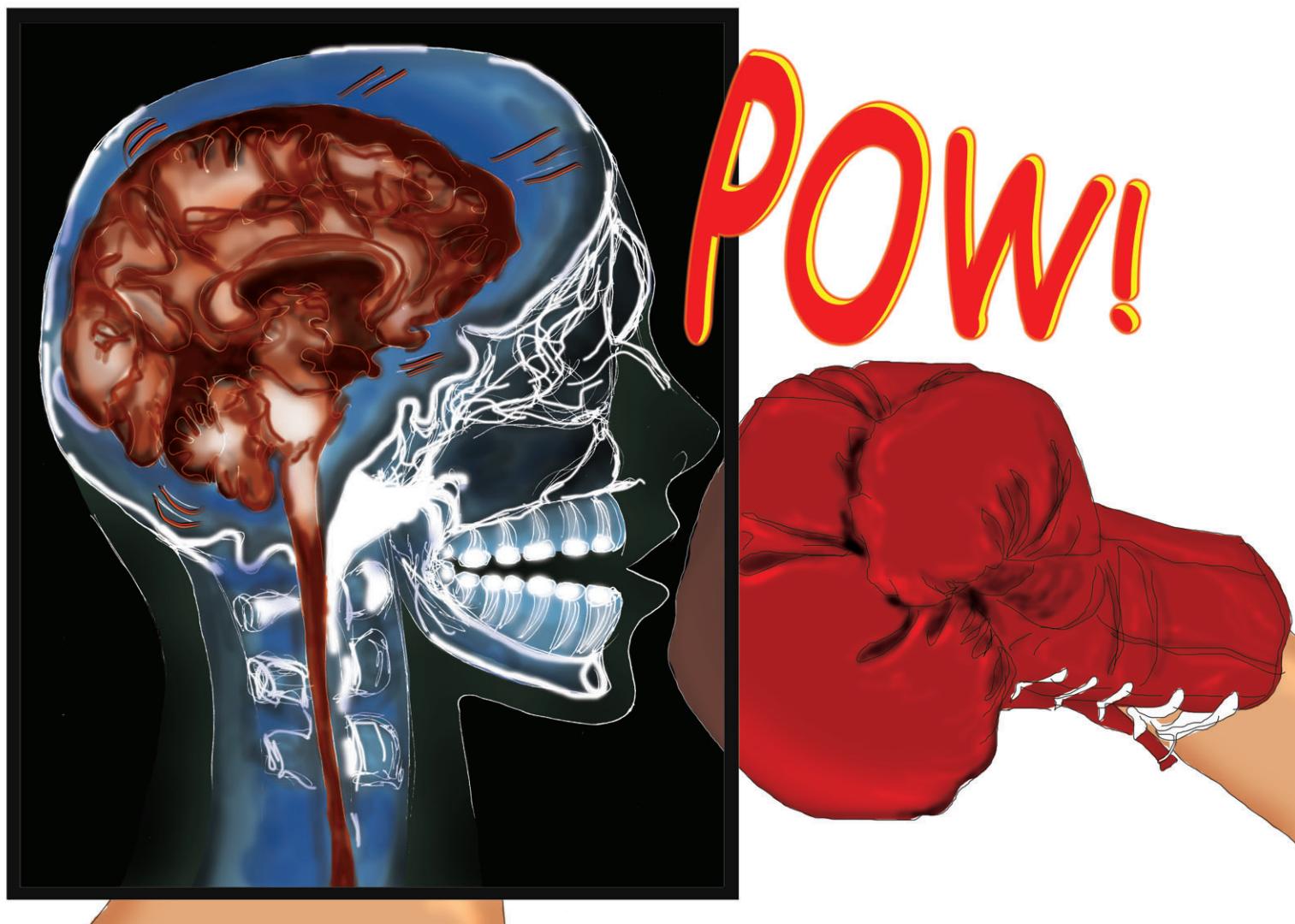
OPINIONS

THIS JUST IN: BIG MAC APPOINTED AS CHIEF OF POLICE



No fighting, doctor's order

The Canadian Medical Association patronizes mixed martial arts



Mixed Martial Arts may cause brain damage, laments the CMA. GRAPHIC DARYNA RUKHLYADEVA

• DIEGO PELAEZ GAETZ

Though I expect shameless, bold-faced hypocrisy from my political leaders, I expect better from the political leaders of our doctors.

The Canadian Medical Association, the largest doctor's association in the country, advocated a ban on mixed martial arts fights at their most recent delegate convention on Aug. 25.

On the surface, banning mixed martial arts is hard to argue against. The sport is, after all, based entirely on painfully incapacitating your opponent. It is gratuitous, often brutal violence for the purpose of entertainment.

Arguing for the right of two men to beat the living hell out of

each other may seem unbecoming of a "modern man." However, advocating a ban on mixed martial arts is treating all fighters like they are boorish, childish figures who need the firm hand of self-righteous groups like the CMA to save them from themselves.

Take, for example, another article on the agenda of the CMA convention: tanning salons. The CMA, to their credit, did also advocate a ban on the use of tanning salons—for those under the age of 18.

From 1980 to 2004, the rate of malignant melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, in young women in America rose by 50 per cent. Melanoma kills over 8,000 people annually in the U.S. alone.

Why is it that tanning beds, which are linked to skin cancer by just about every reputable medical association on the planet, are allowed for consenting adults, but mixed-martial arts is not? What makes some sad, leathery-faced middle-aged person more capable of making their own decisions than a prizefighter—particularly when their decision is much more likely to be fatal?

No, the CMA's decision was not based on things like facts. They didn't even approach the Ultimate Fighting Championship series, the largest mixed-martial arts group in the world, about its policies for fighter safety.

Their decision was based on the CMA's patronizing view of

fighters as the helpless, brain-dead messes they're supposedly trying to save them from becoming.

Advocating a ban on mixed martial arts is treating all fighters like they are boorish, childish figures

Of course, the decision might have been an attempt to piggy-back on the press the government of Ontario recently received for legalizing the sport in the province. Ontario, unlike the CMA, studied the issue for over two years and spoke extensively with the UFC before making their decision.

I suggest that the CMA stick to

advocating measures that actually impact a majority of Canadians. Banning organizations like the UFC from Canada serves no purpose except to drive organized prizefighting underground, much like the alcohol prohibition of old and the drug prohibition of today.

Without proper enforcement of safety protocols, the sport would, ironically, devolve into the savage bloodsport fantasy that the CMA is perpetuating to try to ban it. Should the CMA really be suggesting measures of social control that have failed spectacularly on a larger scale?

The CMA is, after all, a group of doctors by trade, not politicians.

A rant en route

The collective motion edition

• LAURA BEESTON

We live in a city continually beset by the grind of downtown transit, but it might not be our fault.

It might be any one of the infinite variables in the trio of transportation: cyclists hating on pedestrians, motorists hating on cyclists, pedestrians hating on motorists. It is clear that commuters in Montreal are endlessly frustrated with each other on a daily basis while trying to get to and fro without incident or collision.

Great steps are being made outside the downtown core—look at Projet Montreal's redevelopment scheme of Laurier East or Parc La Fontaine in the Plateau. However, the initiative to pare-down the number of car zones in pedestrian-heavy and traffic-riddled downtown streets hasn't quite hit its stride in the heart of this city, where we arguably need it most.

The closing of McTavish Street, though hugely popular during frosh time and yet another reason why the proverbial grass is always greener on the other side, seems a misstep

given the lawlessness of Milton Street and University Street. The downtown bike path, forever on the brink of being over capacity from Berri Street to Atwater Avenue, is actually a place that messengers and serious cyclists avoid for good reason.

For pedestrians and students who want to sit in the sun amidst the concrete jungle, we can't even get a nod from the government to close Mackay Street for a freaking half-day of community congregation, and all hell breaks loose in terms of organizing cars, cyclists and pedestrians every time a festival sets up shop, which is often.

Who is planning how we get around this city? Why is it still so dense and dangerous?

In 2002, during the Montreal Summit, the Ville de Montreal set up what they dubbed the "Master Plan" to set out a vision for this city. Ambitious as it may be,

there is much to be done to improve the quality of public space.

Downtown needs more attention, but perhaps the attention is skewed by the mass conversation in which people discuss the green space movement in the Plateau that's keeping it from expanding beyond.

Corporate press and alt-news darlings alike are responding to the streamlining and one-way transformation of streets with gripes and driving discontent, instead of getting behind traffic-calming initiatives.

Is it possible to live in a Montreal that doesn't dig up the same corner nine times in three

years? Is it possible to find a common road and more effective plan for the plurality of ways people drive in and out of town each day?

I can only hope that, one day, commuting from point A to point B would not require dodging pylons, cars, people and having to search for a different way home.



Getting from point A to point B has become a marathon journey. GRAPHIC ALANNA WONG

Nah'msayin?

Dreaming and driving

Here's something alarming. Dream catchers hanging from rearview mirrors. I see these on the highway all the time and it's god damn terrifying.

So it got me to think, not only are you falling asleep behind the wheel. You are falling asleep behind the wheel so often that nightmares have become a problem.

How is that any safer than

drunk driving?

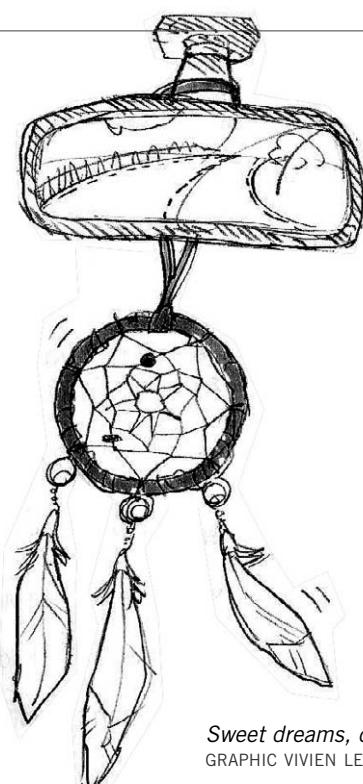
"Hey Bill you know what the worst part of driving is?"

"Traffic? Head on collisions? Homicidal hitchhikers?"

"No, it's the night terrors. I can't stop getting all these night terrors when I drive."

"Oh just get a dream catcher, stupid."

—Christopher Curtis,
News editor



Sweet dreams, driver.
GRAPHIC VIVIEN LEUNG

Notice something that just doesn't make sense? Got an axe to grind? Send in a rant to Nah'msayin? 300 words max.

opinions@thelinknewspaper.ca

Chief Big Mac

Montreal's new top cop to crack down on gangs, low blood pressure



• BUCK NASTY

There is a new sheriff in town and his name is Officer Big Mac.

On Aug. 19, Montreal Mayor Gérald Tremblay announced the appointment of Officer Big Mac as the city's new chief of police.

"The choice wasn't easy but in the end I had to go with my gut," said Tremblay to a chorus of laughter and applause at a city hall press conference.

Tremblay said that in early August he had narrowed down the list of potential candidates to two: Officer Big Mac and Marc Savard.

Savard ran the city's north end and had received the backing of the brotherhood of police officers and community groups across the Island of Montreal in his bid for chief of police.

"Savard would have been a great choice," said the Mayor. "I mean the guy is the perfect logical fit for the job. But does this city need the same old flavoured cops? Big Mac's head is literally made of deliciousness. I get weak



You don't wanna be in the back of chief big mac's patty wagon. GRAPHIC ERIN JASIURA

in the knees just thinking about his meaty head."

The day's announcement was not without naysayers, however, as one reporter openly questioned Officer Big Mac's credentials.

"Does he have any relevant crime fighting experience?" asked

the Mayor rhetorically. "Let's just say he was the chief of police of a little place called McDonaldland. He's caught em' all, the Hamburgler, Captain Crook, the McDonaldland strangler..."

Officer Big Mac rose through the McDonaldland police ranks in

the 1970s. He famously declared war on inferior fast food sandwiches and low blood pressure when he was appointed McDonaldland chief of police in 1983.

To this day, his biggest achievement remains the arrest and subsequent imprisonment of

notorious burger thief the Hamburger.

"I bet you think the Hamburger case was a joke," said Big Mac to a reporter. "Well let me tell you something, smart guy. When your head is made of delicious meat, secret sauce and sesame seed buns, the Hamburger is no fucking joke. He eats people like me, he steals them and he eats them."

Officer Big Mac also told reporters he planned on completely revamping the police department, starting with the canine unit.

"There will be no more canine unit," he said. "I can't run the risk of working with dogs. No matter how well trained they are, I'm still made of ground beef and cheese."

The Mayor also announced the formation of a new gang busting squad, called The Beef, to be headed up by Big Mac himself.

"There are a lot of people out there who want us to get rid of gangs with investigations and arrests," said Big Mac. "Well that's not how we did it in Macdonald-land. I will riddle these streets with bullets if I have to. I will make it so that no one is ever afraid of gangs in this city again."

"And if any of you can't keep your mutts on a leash, I will put them down myself," concluded Big Mac.



[Letters @thelinknewspaper.ca](mailto:Letters@thelinknewspaper.ca)

The CSU opposes increased tuition

During the Quebec Ministry of Education's hearing on education, Concordia proposed a 144 per cent increase in tuition fees to meet the Canadian average—\$5,329 per year.

The administration's decision to increase tuition neglected any sort of discussion between the actual students; hence, the CSU is forced to take a pragmatic position against increases in tuition fees.

The debate over tuition fees revolves around quality, adequate funding, and accessibility. It

has become rhetoric for university administrations to call for a tuition fee increase to address the issue of underfunding.

The real questions remain unanswered: are Quebec universities truly suffering from underfunding or bad governance? Should students be overloaded with insurmountable debt, or could other revenue streams be sought to compliment tuition? Is competition between universities healthy or destructive?

According to the federal Ministry of Human Resources and Skills Development, highly skilled occupations will represent nearly 70 per

cent of new jobs from 2006 to 2015, as Quebec transitions to a knowledge-based economy. The Ministry of Education has observed that from 1990 to 2007, jobs occupied by people with university education increased by over 109 per cent, while jobs occupied people without a high school diploma has dropped over 41 per cent for the same period.

University graduates' employment rate is 88.1 per cent against 61 per cent for people without a high school diploma. A 2004 Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation study estimated that university graduates paid 33 per

cent of income tax while receiving 9.1 per cent of government aid.

In 2009-2010 Concordia required its undergraduate students to pay \$855.70 per year in auxiliary fees—\$266.08 more than the Quebec average! While the administration is calling for higher tuition, what guarantee do we have that the extra fees will not end up funding other provincial ministries, or line the pockets of those calling for students to pay more, more fore even more?

A higher education is necessary for today's worker to be competitive in the job market. In a

recent study on accessibility to post-secondary education, the Quebec Ministry of Education stated, "not surprisingly, tuition fees have a negative effect on the probability to register."

The Concordia Student Union believes in affordable and accessible quality education where students are not selected on the basis of social standing but on their willingness to learn and help build a better world. The time has come for you to join your student union in its efforts to preserve your rights.

—Adrien Severyns,
VP External and Projects

The Link's letters and opinions policy: The deadline for letters is 4 p.m. on Friday before the issue prints. *The Link* reserves the right to verify your identity via telephone or email. We reserve the right to refuse letters that are libellous, sexist, homophobic, racist or xenophobic. The limit is 400 words. If your letter is longer, it won't appear in the paper. Please include your full name, weekend phone number, student ID number and program of study. The comments in the letters and opinions section do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board.

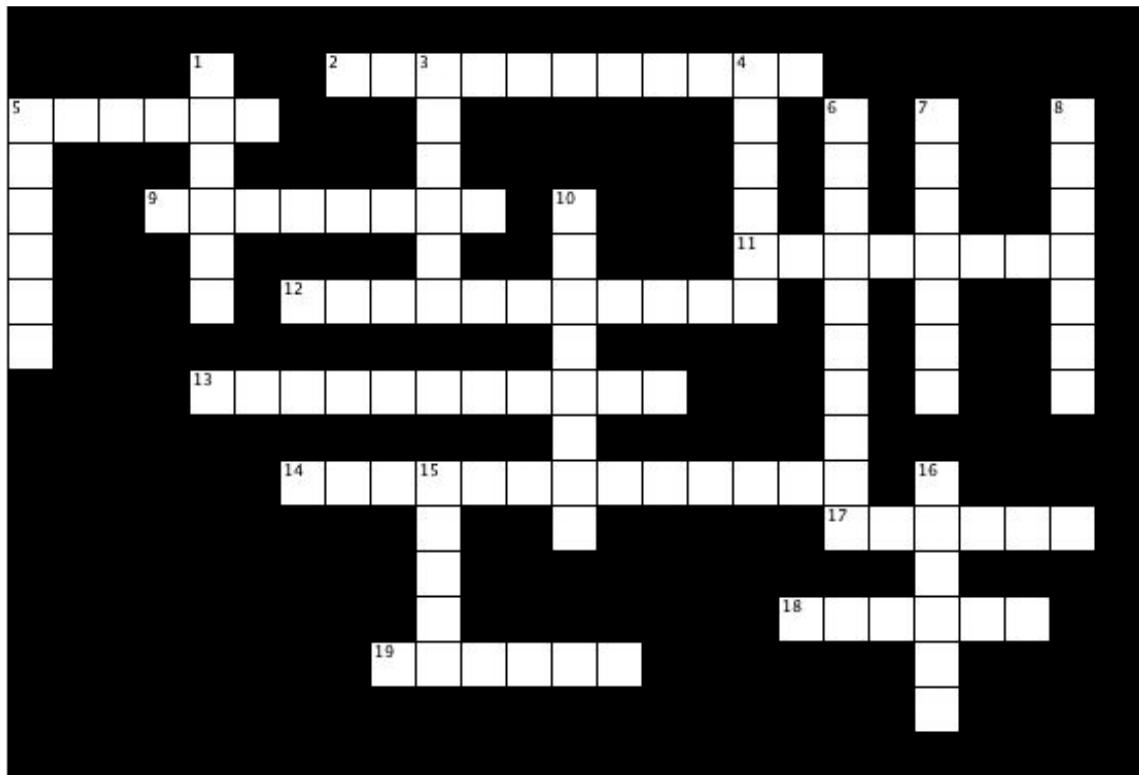
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THE "ETCETERA" EDITION • R. BRIAN "TOTALLY AWOL" HASTIE

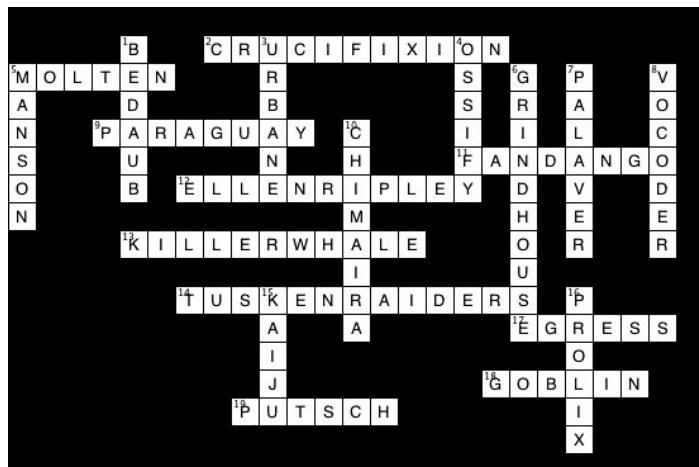
**Across**

2. One of the most painful methods of execution involving plywood, nails and stepladder.
5. A completely melted object is referred to as this. Volcanoes leave things in this state.
9. South American country bordered by Brazil to the east, Argentina to the south and Bolivia by the northwest.
11. A Spanish courting dance.
12. The orca are huge fans of sea lions and seals, but only while digesting the poor things in their cavernous bellies. Their name is also a misnomer, as they've never actually killed any humans. (2 words)
14. Tatooine's sand people, in George Lucas' world. (2 words)
17. The act of leaving or exiting.
18. A legendary evil creature or the band behind the *Spirited Away* soundtrack.
19. To attempt to overthrow a government.

Down

1. To overdecorate or to soil something with anything thick and dirty.

3. Polished or smooth in manner.
4. To harden or to become bone.
5. Charles... or Marilyn, if you're too young to remember the family.
6. Subgenre of film that groups together exploitation and B-movies, shown in groups, most famously along 42nd street in New York in the late 70s and early 80s.
7. To talk idly.
8. Bruce Haack, Giorgio Moroder, Daft Punk, Phil Collins, Teddy Riley. These performers
10. A mythical Greek monster made out of different parts of animals, or a metal band from Cleveland, Ohio. Nothing remains!
15. The Japanese word for "strange beast" or "monster." Alternatively a genre of film popularized by *Godzilla*—the real one, not that Matthew Broderick one.
16. Unnecessarily long.

issue 02 solutionz**Corrections**

In "Dawson College to vote on CFS membership," (Vol. 31, Iss. 2, Aug. 24) *The Link* reported that the Rassemblement d'associations étudiantes was created after losing a lawsuit to the Canadian Federation of Students. In fact, the RAE agreed to change its name to settle and avoid a copyright lawsuit and the CFS dropped its damage claim. The RAE is

the same legal entity as CFS-Québec.

In "Time to grow up," (Vol. 31, Iss. 2, Aug. 24) *The Link* reported that the Concordia Student Union was a member of the Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec.

In fact, the CSU is a member of the Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec.

The Link regrets the errors.

editorial**Assigned and undemocratic**

Over the summer months, the Concordia Student Union has been playing a game of musical chairs without giving students a voice about who's sitting where.

After the resignation of President Prince Ralph Osei last week and VP Finance Nikki Tsouflikis in April, the CSU executive will not hold much of a resemblance to the Fusion slate elected by students in March.

After a new VP Services is appointed—*The Link* has learned that Arts and Science Senator Georges Alexandar is the top candidate for the position—three of the eight executives running the student union will be unelected to the position they are filling.

While newly appointed president Heather Lucas has said that her credibility or that of appointed VP Finance Zhuo Ling is not in question because both were elected by students, they were not elected to the positions they are currently holding.

During the last election, Fusion's 40 candidates heavily outnumbered the Community slate's eight. Students didn't have much of a choice but to vote for Fusion in March, so if I were Lucas, I would not lay all claim to the credibility of the CSU on the election results.

Besides, Alexandar and Ling climbed the student political ladder by default—they ran unopposed for their positions and both will likely be appointed to the only executive positions they will ever hold.

But, who are these new appointees making major decisions about the quality of our university experience? Why are we allowing people who are strangers to the CSU election process be responsible for the student union's finances? What do we know about these executives, seeing as they have not gone through electoral scrutiny?

It is hard to put faith in our leaders, when we don't know who they are and what they stand for.

Although no individual on the CSU should be blamed for reacting to the situations that forced Osei and Tsouflikis to resign, undergraduates should not be forced to rely on leaders who avoided the democratic process through little known rules and regulations.

According to section 11.4 of the CSU's bylaws, empty seats on the Council of Representatives may only be filled through a byelection. Despite the fact that executive members of the CSU are not technically a part of Council, they should still go through a similar electoral process.

A byelection is a necessity. The members of the CSU who control the finances and internal tasks of the organization need to be vetted and approved by voters. Individuals who haven't gone through that process should not be unilaterally given the opportunity to make major decisions for undergraduates.

Representing Concordia students is a privilege and a responsibility. The students who are given the power to speak for Concordia should be elected and not appointed by the insular world of student politicians.

—Clay Hemmerich,
Opinions Editor

THE LiNK

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