

THE

LINK

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REFUGE FROM THE STORM

After a contentious election that saw both teams crying foul on the other, *Action* and *Your Concordia* have decided to work together to change the electoral system.

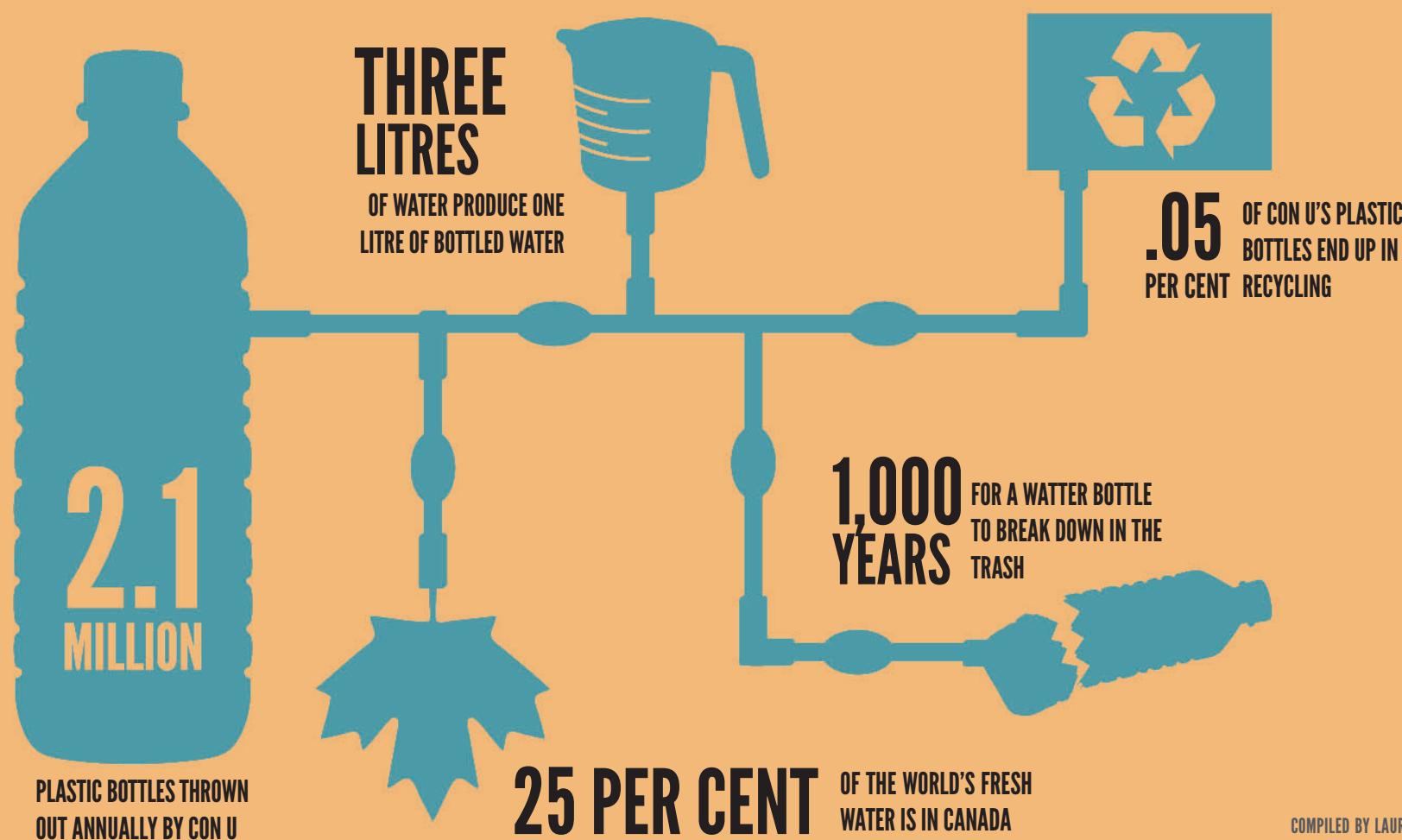
Fold the cover to see what it looks like when students unite for the union.



See Your Water Fountains Improve in September

CSU LOVE: Action and Your Concordia Put Differences Aside

Kicking the Bottle



Concordia Announces Plans to Remove Bottled Water From Vending Machines

• LAURA BEESTON

Concordia University's administration announced on April 6 that it would begin the process of phasing out water bottles from vending machines on campus.

"This is step one," said university spokesperson Chris Mota. "The discussion is going to continue to develop. It doesn't end here, and even this step will take us up to three years to deal with."

Phase one is a \$100,000 project that involves repairing, replacing and retrofitting existing water fountains and will see the university "do as much as humanly possible" so that by the end of the next academic year bottled water can be removed from vending machines. Over a three-year period, 63 water fountains will be replaced and 144 will be upgraded to accommodate reusable drink containers.

The move makes Concordia the first university in Montreal to begin the ban on the bottle.

Putting out the announcement after undergraduate students

voted overwhelmingly in favour of banning the sale of bottled water on campus in a referendum question two weeks ago, Mota explained, "it would have been completely inappropriate for the university to say anything [before or during the election]." She said the decision had been reached internally earlier last month.

The bottled water issue gained momentum on campus last November after the administration clandestinely renewed a five-year exclusivity contract with PepsiCo. that saw students protest outside the MB building, eventually staging a sit-in.

At that time, acting university VP Services Roger Côté had just stepped into the services dossier after former VP Michael Di Grappa left the position. Over the last six months, Côté and other administrators organized a public forum and began consultations with student leaders, Sustainability Concordia and facilities management.

"There was some thinking to do," said Mota. "And there are

some who will [see] it as too little, too late, but I don't think so at all. It is an informed decision."

After a year of water politics, student leaders on campus are also pleased with the university's decision.

"It's a really fantastic step on Concordia's part in showing some leadership in sustainability," said Laura Beach, the founder of the TAPthirst anti-water privatization student group. "But that said, it's only one small step towards a more sustainable food and beverage system."

"What I'd really like to see in the future is more dialogue between students and the administration, especially leading up to the expiration of the PepsiCo. and Chartwell's contracts. I'd really love to see an enforceable environmental purchasing policy before then as well."

Though the bottled water cull can only take place in vending machines and is not applicable to existing contracts with other suppliers at the moment, the uni-

versity has made an agreement with PepsiCo. that would see the food and beverage agreements expire at the same time.

With both the PepsiCo. and Chartwell's contracts set to run out in 2015, Beach said that keeping the "really great dialoguing with the community," specifically between students and administrators, is necessary "to ensure the inclusion of all stakeholders in this decision-making process and to come up with some good criteria for those contracts."

The next step for the school is a communication and education campaign to promote the incoming water infrastructure and encourage the community to think about what—and how—they drink.

"It's a big education process to wean people off the bottle, but if people are independent of it, they don't realize that they don't need it," said TAPthirst member Michael Heinermann, who found out about the announcement through colleagues last week,

Hoping to see communication channels and mechanisms be-

tween the student body and the administration improve as the phase-out continues as well, Heinermann explained that TAPthirst is happy with the decision, but would like to see more immediate outcomes of Concordia's commitment to the bottled water issue.

Planning on working with the Concordia Student Union's CUSAcorp branch, JavaU and places like Café X—establishments who still sell bottled water on campus—Heinermann anticipates that student outreach will continue to take the lead in making a bottled water free Concordia a reality.

He said he believed that the student involvement on this issue is the driving force behind the recent decision to phase out the bottles.

"The PR [from the university] didn't mention the referendum, and didn't mention that it passed with 70 per cent of students in favour of the ban, which I found to be disempowering," he said. "The students who have always been behind this movement should really be acknowledged."



PHOTO LAURA BEESTON

Show Me the Money

Student Union Pays ASFA \$10,000 After Ticket Gaffe

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

An event one Concordia Student Union executive called "cost neutral" on March 14 will instead set the CSU back \$29,000.

After failing to sell 950 of the 1,000 tickets it purchased for a conference called Youth Action Montreal, the student union decided to give away their remaining tickets, incurring a \$19,000 loss.

On Thursday, ASFA members called an emergency CSU Council meeting to settle their grievance. Council unanimously voted to buy the association's remaining 465 tickets and give them away, costing the union an additional \$10,000.

The move to give away nearly 1,000 tickets initially infuriated members of the Arts and Science Federation of Associations, who

had withdrawn \$11,000 from a special projects fund to purchase 500 tickets to the conference.

They planned on recuperating the money by selling their tickets at cost, but ASFA President Aaron Green told *The Link* that became impossible once the CSU began giving tickets away.

"There was zero consultation about that move, and that's unacceptable," said Green, who is also a CSU councillor. "How can I sell these tickets when they are giving them away for free next door?"

"[Thousands of dollars] of ASFA's members associations' money could be lost due to the CSU's irresponsible and inconsiderate actions," Green wrote in a motion to council.

The lack of communication between the student associations nearly cost ASFA one third of its

special projects funding.

"This affects our clubs and their end of the year events, their graduation events there all compromised at this point," said Green during the meeting.

"We didn't consult with ASFA that's true, that's a mistake that we made, we take full responsibility for it," said CSU VP Clubs & Finance Ramy Khoriaty.

Even with the giveaway in place, the student union is having trouble parting with its remaining 1,400 tickets. But the CSU and ASFA aren't the only student associations struggling to unload tickets to Youth Action Montreal—a conference that will feature speeches by David Suzuki, Kofi Annan and Stephen Lewis.

CSU President Heather Lucas said the Student Society of McGill University, which also purchased

tickets to the event in bulk, is having a tough time selling Youth Action Montreal to its members.

Even the giveaway, Khoriaty said, hasn't dramatically improved the conference's prospects.

"We're going to table more and try to get as many students to the event as possible. This is an important event," said Lucas.

Another possible point of controversy has been the way in which the CSU purchased the \$20,000 worth of tickets. Under CSU standing regulation 90, the union's executive does not have the right to approve a financial transaction in excess of \$4,999 without the approval of its Council. According to Green, Council was never consulted about the ticket purchase.

"It may have come up in an executive report, but as far as I know, Council never voted on this in a

motion or anything," said Green. "I asked a number of other councillors last week and they all seem to agree."

President Lucas, however, contends that Council approved the expense when it voted on the union's budget in 2010.

"My interpretation is that we had approved everything that we had set out for the year when our budget was approved," she said. "But in the future we will definitely bring something of this magnitude to Council."

The \$29,000 dollar expense incurred with the Youth Action Montreal tickets will be taken from the already overloaded speaker series budget—which has more than doubled its projected expenses.

Despite the ticket setback, the CSU is still projecting a budgetary surplus of about \$50,000.

Fit to Be Tied

Vote for FASA VP Clubs & Services Results in a Draw

• JACOB ROBERTS

As student election season comes to an end, one last wrinkle appeared in the proceedings as the Fine Arts Student Alliance voted for their representatives. The ballot for the VP Clubs & Services resulted in a tie, which led to a recall election, which took place on April 7, and saw Drew Barnet emerge as the victor.

"Apparently, it was a substan-

tially greater turnout for voting than in the past. I have yet to meet [opponent] Andy [Filipowich], but I think it became somewhat of a competitive thing and it was up to both of us to rally the voters," Barnet said.

Filipowich thinks that the tie happened because "A lot of fine arts students were interested in voting and there were two very strong candidates."

Filipowich did take issue with some of the voting procedures.

"Some of the concerns that I brought up about the voting was that there was no way to verify who was a fine arts student until after the ballot was cast," Filipowich said.

Although students needed to present proof of ID and enrollment at Concordia, their votes were counted as a single group. According to Filipowich, students were separated into departments only after the ballots had been cast, effectively losing any way of

differentiating between mainstream voters and those who will be directly affected by the results of the FASA election.

Filipowich was confident that the system would be improved and that the issues will be addressed on Monday's FASA council meeting.

"We are a newer organization, we have a lot of great things coming forward, we passed a brand new constitution two weeks ago and I think that there's some-

thing that we can work out of [...]. We can come out with a great system so that next year the elections can run really smoothly and so that there will be no problems."

FASA President Paisley Sim also believes there are flaws with FASA's voting system, but agrees that changes will be made.

"Because we had a tie, we're going to make some necessary changes. More changes for FASA, hooray," Sim laughed.

A Union for the Union

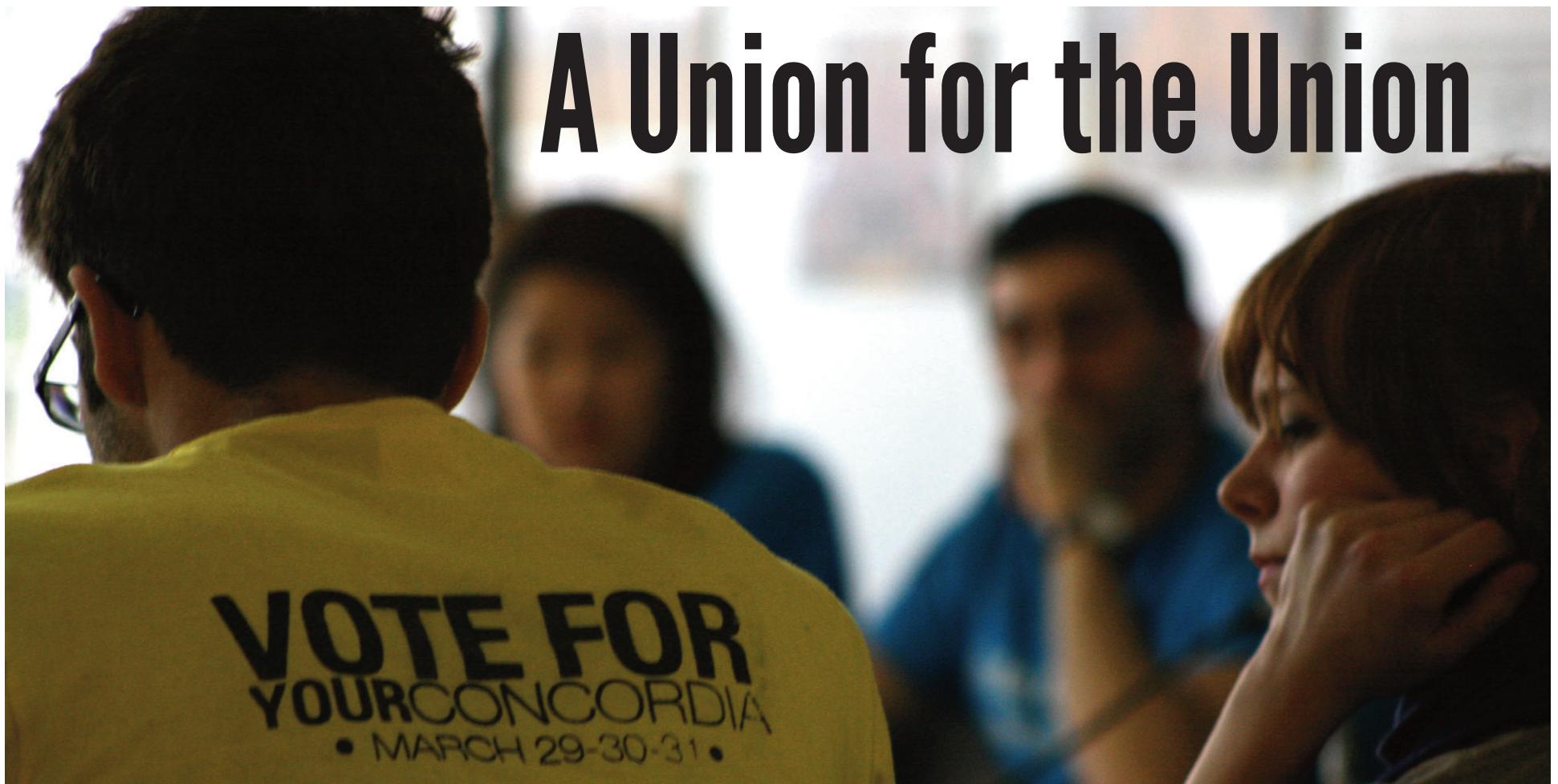


PHOTO PIERRE CHAUVIN

Action and Your Concordia Vow to Work Together Towards a More Democratic Student Union

*"We also both recognize that we have to work **together** going forward."*

*"We believe that any contestations would cause further divisiveness **without changing the outcome of the vote**"*

*"Both [parties] are very concerned about the current electoral system, which is based on a '**winner-take-all**' slate and affiliation system."*

*"This initiative would not be possible without the help and cooperation of the current 2010-2011 CSU Executive team ... **we look forward to Heather and Amine's input** as former and current CSU Presidents, and their help with this current process."*

*"A student union is as strong as **the involvement and commitment of its members.**"*

-Joint Statement Released By Khalil Haddad & Lex Gill

• ADAM KOVAC

Though the 2011 Concordia Student Union election was among the most divisive and controversy-filled in the university's history, on April 8, leaders from the *Your Concordia* and *Action* slates vowed to work together to reform a system both agreed is broken.

"The past few days, there's been a lot of talk about how to move forward with the union," said CSU president-elect Lex Gill. "Right now, we need a really united student body. This is really a historic moment. I don't think that any point in the CSU's history, two direct political opponents have come together this soon after the election and said, 'Let's work together.'"

This desire to work together resulted in a joint statement, signed by both Gill and *Action* presidential candidate Khalil Haddad, which states, "Neither team will file any contestations of the election against the other party. At this point, we believe that any contestations would cause further divisiveness without changing the outcome of the vote, and keep us from getting to the work of serving students and reforming the CSU."

The statement pointed to specific areas of regulation and oversight that need reform, including "the CSU's bylaws and standing regulations concerning the slate and affiliation system, arts and science representation, electoral expenses, and reporting and access to financial documents."

Both Gill and Haddad singled out the slate system itself as a source for the divisiveness and negativity that has marked CSU elections, which this year included accusations of cheating and foul

play on both sides. Gill called the system "toxic," and pointed to the 2009 election in particular, after which some candidates have said they felt uncomfortable coming to the Concordia campus.

"The slate system has to go," she said. "It creates a winner-takes-all system, it pits people who would normally be working together against each other over normally small differences of opinion and tactics."

"We want to promote a culture of respect," added Haddad. "It's a vicious cycle of opponents running and fighting all the time. Despite everything that happened in this election, [we want to] focus on what we want to bring to students, and promote good values. I think this can send a very strong statement."

There is a precedent for a non-slate system in Concordia campus politics. The Arts and Science Federation of Associations switched to an individual-based model this year. The election was marked by a lack of candidates for some positions, with many vice-presidential spots going uncontested.

"The ASFA election, it was the first time it had ever been done," said Gill. "It hadn't been a very politically controversial year at ASFA, there was no major difference of opinion or catalyst of change that was necessary. Perhaps it wasn't competitive because of the new system, maybe it was not competitive because there wasn't much to compete over."

Haddad admitted that it was not an easy decision to not contest the results of the election. Though the vote was close, *Your Concordia* ended up winning the executive slate ballot by 336 votes, and won all the councillorships, except for those that represent the John

Molson School of Business, as well as one seat each for independent students and the Engineering and Computer Science faculty.

"We believe that any contestations would cause further divisiveness without changing the outcome of the vote, and keep us from getting to the work of serving students and reforming the CSU," said the statement.

"It was a very difficult decision," said Haddad. "The question is, do we want to look back at this moment and have no regrets? [...] The reason I wanted to be part of the CSU is to make that change."

Though the only *Action* slate members who will have a formal role on Council next year are those who will be sitting as representatives of JMSB, as well as the single councillors for independent students and Engineering and Computer Science, Gill expressed a desire to see all the members working together in the next year.

"I want to see all the members of team *Action* play a really active role in campus life. A lot of them are very involved in their own groups or associations [...] These are all people that are super engaged on campus. To bring these people together and have meaningful consultation and collaboration, these are the things we're looking for."

In terms of dialogue since the election, Gill and Haddad agreed that their conversations have been constructive, and hope to leave all acrimony in the past.

"We've talked quite a bit about the things that might have been contestations, [which are] being brought up instead in our report to council," said Gill.

Haddad added, "We don't want anyone to experience it again."

Stop the Music



French Singer Fired From Play After Controversy Over Violent Past

• JACOB ROBERTS

The announcement that French rock star Bertrand Cantat would be performing in the Théâtre du Nouveau Monde's production of the play *Sophocles* did not sit well with many Quebec residents and, as a result, the singer has lost the gig.

Cantat was convicted of manslaughter in 2003 after beating his partner, French film star Marie Trintignant, to death. Cantat served only half of his eight-year sentence.

"We were reacting on this special case—I'm not sure it should set a standard," said Guy Therrien, communications officer for the Action Démocratique du Québec party, on why his group opposed Cantat entering Canada. "He obviously had psychological problems; he was a very violent man. He waited for seven hours before calling the police," he said, in reference to the killing. "These were critical hours, and she lost

her life."

The choice to use Cantat originally came from director Wajdi Mouawad, a friend of Cantat's who had worked with him on previous projects. According to a press release from Lorraine Pintal, the Theatre Director of TNM, Mouawad's decision was an artistic one, based on wanting to combine the words of *Sophocles* with Cantat's style of rock and roll.

"Following this artistic choice, I could never have imagined that the presence of Bertrand Cantat, as a musician on stage, would raise a debate in the media, social and political, this massive," said Pintal in her press release. "While receiving many expressions of support for this project, we were also faced with strong statements of disapproval, even violence, [against] Wajdi Mouawad, Bertrand Cantat and TNM."

The debate over Cantat moved all the way to the upper echelons of Canadian government. After a majority vote could not be

reached, the Harper Government was expected to make the final decision.

"It took a debate in the National Assembly to decide on this issue. It's very telling about the political climate in Quebec," said Therrien. "There are issues that nobody wants to talk about or that they brush under the carpet, but in this case it was a fight for women."

The decision to exclude Cantat from TNM's production came on April 11, after several days of deliberation. In the end, Pintal's decision satisfied the upper workings of the government.

"As an artistic and general director of a theatre, I must be attentive to the great upheavals of the society in which I live and evolve," said Pintal in the press release. "So I was very sensitive to the controversy raised by the presence of Bertrand Cantat on our stage [...]. I regret that the art project by Wajdi Mouawad has generated such controversy that

goes beyond the mission and mandate of the institution, which is primarily to present powerful drama and meaning."

It was not an easy decision to make, but the ADQ stated that they were happy with the theatre's final decision.

"There's a limit as to saying, 'Yes, he paid his price.' We do believe in reinsertion, that someone who goes to prison can come out and rehabilitate, so they can pursue a normal life," said Therrien. "In this case we consider it a special case. He was participating in the [theatre] piece—in my understanding, about women's conditions—and the message was mixed. In Quebec, we don't have a high tolerance for anything that relates to violence against women."

At this point, TNM is looking to director Mouawad on whether to continue the production of *Sophocles* without Cantat, or move on to a different piece entirely.

JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT UNVEils REVAMPED PROGRAM

• JULIAN WARD

The Journalism Department at Concordia University has revamped its programs to reflect the evolving nature of the profession.

"We want our students to know how to do everything and have a real grounding in the social media," said Linda Kay, chair of the Journalism Department and an associate professor.

A mandatory class will be added starting in the fall semester for all first-year journalism students that embraces new journalism tools like Twitter and multimedia websites.

"We used to make it mandatory to take an Introduction to Computers [course] and then we stopped doing that because students were already pretty well-versed in computers. But now in this digital environment, we're adding things like social networking into the course [and making it mandatory again]," said Kay.

Students will also have the option of choosing a new concentration, "Specialization in Journalism - Multi-platform," which adds an extra 12 credits of journalism courses.

"We just felt like some students had their minds set to take the maximum number of journalism courses they could," said Kay.

For students who only want to take 60 credits of journalism courses, there are now two options to choose from—a textual specialization option and an audiovisual one.

Whether students take the 60 or 72 credit-hours option, they are now required to take 12 additional credits outside of the journalism department.

The department has never required students to take courses outside of the department before.

"[It] makes students really think about what else it is that they like and maybe want to minor in," said Kay.

Kay stressed how important she thinks it is for students to take a minor. She said employers like to see not only that a student has journalistic skills, but also that he or she has a specialization and an interest in something else as well.

The Endless Campaign



PHOTO JEAN-MARC CARISSE

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

"We have a message of hope. [Prime Minister] Harper has a message of fear."

Liberal MP Marc Garneau's blunt assessment of this year's federal election embodies the balancing act his party has employed since the last time Canadians went to the polls in September 2008.

For what has essentially been a 30-month-long campaign, the Liberals have scrambled across the country trying to inspire new voters while attempting to capitalize on a number of highly publicized Conservative blunders.

But for all their efforts, bus tours and town hall meetings, the Liberals have failed to gain much traction on their political rivals.

Since being elected to a minority government nearly three years ago, the Conservative Party has bobbed and weaved its way out of political defeat, escaping two potential no-confidence votes by proroguing parliament twice in a 12-month period.

The Harper Government finally lost a motion of non-confidence after it was found in contempt of parliament. It was the first time in commonwealth

history that a government was defeated for contempt of parliament.

Despite this historical loss and the electoral campaign it has triggered, an April 8 Nanos poll has the Liberals trailing the Conservatives by nearly 10 per cent.

"We are behind in the polls but if you look at what people have said, just about everyone is saying [Liberal leader Michael] Ignatieff is having the better campaign," said Garneau, who is running for reelection in Montreal's Westmount-Ville-Marie riding.

"Mr. Harper is looking tense, he's not willing to let media ask him tough questions, and he's refusing to let Ignatieff debate him one-on-one, even though he's the one that threw down the gauntlet," he said. "So on one hand, we're winning the campaign. It's not reflected in the polls, but we're gaining momentum. It's like when the tide goes out, it seems to stand there for a while; then it comes back in."

Returning to his comparison of hope versus fear, Garneau criticized Harper's decision to pour billions into Canada's prison system at a time when reported crimes have been declining for

20 years.

"[Harper] is saying there are more criminals out there and be afraid of them, let's build more jails to put them in," said Garneau. "That's not the way we see Canada, especially with the crime rate going down. We want to carry a message of hope and focus on families."

The 'focus on families' is at the forefront of the Liberal platform. Appealing to young voters—the most untapped demographic in the 2008 election—the Liberals are pledging \$1 billion in post-secondary education annually if elected.

Under the 'Canadian Learning Passport,' every high school student in Canada would receive \$1,000 annually for four years to spend on college, university or CEGEP.

"I'm hoping [students] are going to stop for a second and look at the different platforms and say, 'My life can actually change if I make this particular choice,'" said Garneau. "We believe that young people should have the right to a post-secondary education. Many of them make the choice not to go because they find it hard to pay for it and because they come from

modest means. So they just put it out of their mind. We want to give them a chance at a better life because otherwise they might just turn away from it."

Beyond the appeal of attracting new voters, the Learning Passport may also resonate with Quebec students, who are facing dramatic university tuition hikes starting in 2012.

For their part, the Conservatives need to make inroads in Quebec, a province traditionally dominated by the Bloc Québécois, in their bid for a majority government. For the Liberals to even have a chance of winning a minority government, they also need to greatly expand their presence in Quebec's political landscape.

"The Bloc is a legitimate party, but if Quebecers want to get rid of Harper, voting for the Bloc won't do it," said Garneau. "There's only one alternative: vote for the Liberals so we can have a chance to beat them."

During the 2008 election, Prime Minister Harper took aim at seven federally-funded programs promoting Quebec culture abroad. Harper's call to eliminate the programs struck a nerve with Quebecers, who overwhelmingly

elected Bloc Québécois MPs, effectively blocking the Conservatives' shot at a majority government.

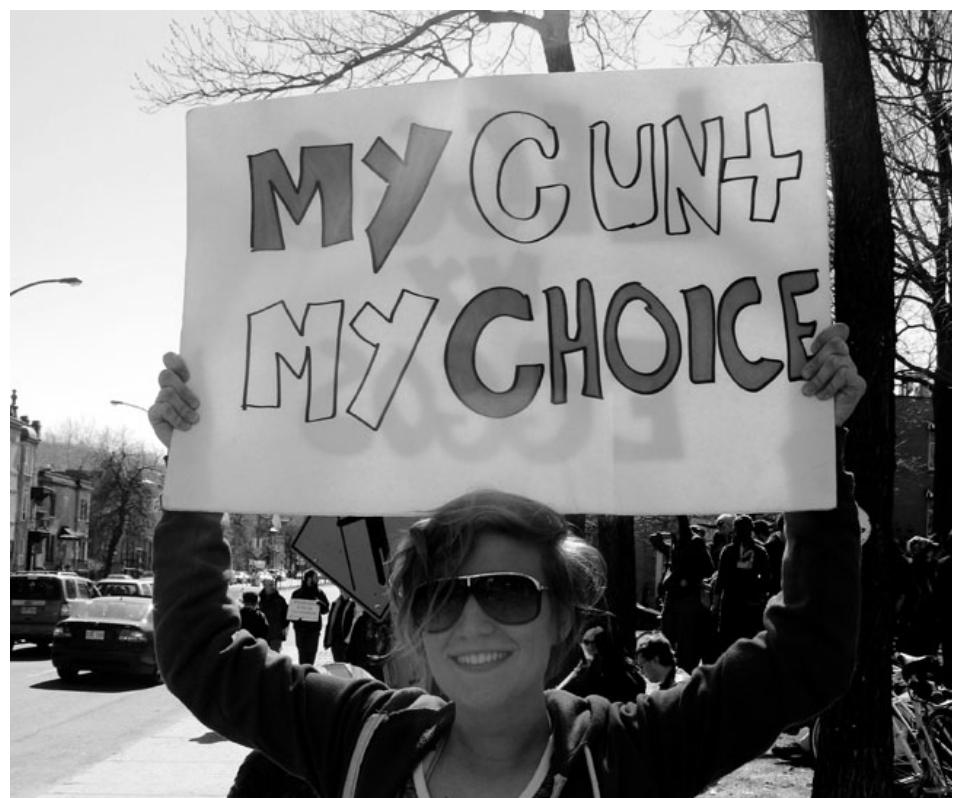
"Quebecers want to be understood, and that starts with identity," said Garneau. "Quebecers sent Harper a message in 2008 and that message essentially said, 'You don't understand Quebecers.'"

In Montreal, the Conservatives hoped to gain some footing by parachuting two of their marquee candidates onto the island. So far, polls have Conservative hopeful and Montreal Alouettes President Larry Smith being pounded by Liberal candidate Francis Scarpaleggia in the Lach-St-Louis riding. Former Justice Minister Martin Cauchon isn't faring much better. He trails NDP candidate Thomas Mulcair by 20 points in the Outremont riding.

The Liberals are also struggling to gain momentum in Quebec, as they have lost ground to the NDP and the Bloc Québécois in the latest Angus Reid Poll.

"There's plenty of campaigning left," said Garneau. "We have to earn Quebecers' trust. There's no way of short-circuiting that. You have to earn it."

Showdown on the Corner



Pro-Choice Group Set Up Camp in the Mile End

• LAURA BEESTON

The abortion debate is back again—specifically, in the park on the southeast corner of St. Laurent and St. Joseph Blvd., where an access showdown between pro-choice and pro-lifers is currently being staged outside of Montreal's Morgentaler Clinic.

The first to offer compassionate surgical abortion services in Canada, the clinic is routinely a site of protest and prayer by the Quebec Life Coalition. But this year, the QLC's '40 Days for Life Vigil to End Abortion' was met with pro-choice resistance from the local community.

On one side of the grassy park, five members of the QLC stand with their eyes closed, holding placards. Some members hand out rosaries and promotional material to passersby on the busy Mile End corner. On the other side, a pro-choice picnic of local activists, dog walkers and folks from the neighbourhood have been showing up every day between noon and 4 p.m. to stage a counter-protest with music, dancing and good times.

Standing off over the last few weeks, the two groups have very different ideas about the unborn.

"I've been a missionary for 10 years and decided to come here and show people who we are," said a member of the QLC named André, who spoke passionately about his Catholic beliefs.

"Some people say we're crazy. Oh yeah, they freak out when we approach them. But people are on the dark side and when they see the light they hate it. They hate it! These people are influenced by the devil, because, you know, abortion is killing. If you can't see that, you gotta be blind somewhere," he said, gesturing to one of the male pro-choice advocates, who was holding a sign that read, "Abort the Toronto Maple Leafs."

With little plastic fetuses lining the beads of his rosary, André—the self-proclaimed 'plus demonstratif' of the group—explained that the standoff has been relatively civil, and at certain points even playful.

"I will play rock and roll over their music [to get attention], as long as it's not devil music," he explained, adding that blaring Queen's "Another One Bites the

Dust" on the corner has proved to be an effective method of spreading the word.

"There are gays and lesbians on the other side, wearing upside-down crosses," he added, solemnly. "I know that they haven't met God yet, and that their ideas are wrong, but that doesn't mean they can't change. I talked to them, and even joked with them sometimes and keep telling them to try to be with the Lord. I'm trying to get them to join us."

But the other group, mere meters away, isn't interested.

"We keep telling them that Freddy Mercury is on our side, but I'm not sure they're getting it," said Danielle, one of the pro-choice demonstrators, with a smirk. Danielle explained that the communication between the two groups has been decidedly minimal—though the police did intervene earlier in the week to tell the pro-choicers not to block the pro-life placard, and there was an incident involving the sprinkling of holy water.

"In terms of the public [interaction], there's been a lot of support, people seem generally happy that

we're out here," she continued, explaining that "a broad range of people with a broad range of politics and interests, young and old," have come out to support their cause.

"Last weekend there was well over 100 people who came out to sit with us. We had games and delicious food, and it was really fun. Our side is always the sweet gay party. Their side is always miserable looking."

Gauging popular opinion by intermittent honks of encouragement and thumbs-up from the passing busses and cars on St. Joseph, Danielle explained that the neighbourhood has really embraced the pro-choice group, who set up organically through Facebook and word-of-mouth.

"A lot of women come by, and they're 60 years old and they tell us, 'I was doing this 30 years ago.' And that sucks [that access to abortion is still an issue we have to demonstrate for]," explained Tave, another member of the pro-choicers, holding a sign that read, "My cunt, my choice."

"Abolishing abortion is just never going to happen. And yeah,

I would also like it if fewer people had abortions, but I have a more realistic approach, which includes safer sex education and access to contraceptives. But these are solutions the other party wants nothing to do with."

Explaining that the conservative, anti-choice movement in America is certainly present in Canada too—as evidenced by the "Unborn Victims of Crime Act," the private members' bill that passed a second reading in the House of Commons in 2009—the pro-choicers believe that the real threat for women and their reproductive rights comes down to access.

"It's not that abortion will be taken away [with legislature]," said Danielle, "it's the safety of the abortion that could be taken away."

"I feel like it's really fucked up, but we aren't really secure in our access," added Tave.

The pro-choice group in Montreal is organizing a rally on April 17 in the park between noon and 5 p.m. Everyone is welcome.



The Hive Has Arrived!

>> see fringe arts • 13 for more

Choosing Your Voice

Grad Students Elect GSA Slate, Award Two of Four Fee Levy Groups

• ADAM KOVAC

Next year, this school will be yours—in a manner of speaking.

Two weeks after the *Your Concordia* slate took the Concordia Student Union elections, the *Your Voice* slate took a majority of seats in the Concordia Graduate Students' Association elections.

"Obviously, I'm pleased," said GSA President-elect Robert Sonin, who ran on the *Your Voice* slate, and was acclaimed last week after running unopposed. "A lot of the people on Council are people who have experience, either on Council or as executives, so it's a pretty professional group."

Sonin expressed a desire to continue some of the projects that were started by this year's GSA Council, which included participation in the WHALE protest against tuition hikes.

"I think we'll be maintaining all the services the GSA has already, and improving them," he said. "Of

course, we're going to be fighting tuition increases as best we can. We're going to try and make better links with other student groups, especially the provincial ones."

The election itself was a big success in terms of voter turnout. Chief Returning Officer Roddy Doucet acknowledged that there was a larger turnout than the previous year.

"There was definitely a higher degree of notoriety on campus," said Doucet. "[There was] about 28 per cent growth in our voters. Definitely more people getting involved, it was the largest amount of candidates we ever had, overall. [...] We had record numbers in engineering and [the John Molson School of Business], for sure."

The GSA election stood in stark contrast to the slate-dominated CSU elections, which saw a contentious battle between *Your Concordia* and Action end earlier this month.

"We don't really have as much

of a slate system as the CSU has," said Doucet of an election that saw *Your Voice* take three of six executive seats and eight Council seats, while over a dozen seats went to independent candidates. "I don't remember there being competing slates [in my two years at the GSA]."

When the Levies Break

Also given to voters were fee levy questions for Sustainable Concordia, CUTV, the Frigo Vert and the Graduate Student Advocacy Centre. Sustainable Concordia got its \$0.50 per semester per student fee levy, and the Advocacy Centre was also successful, getting \$1.00 per semester, while the Frigo Vert and CUTV were defeated at the polls.

"We were obviously disappointed," said CUTV Station Manager Laura Kneale. "We've come a long way in the last year, and that's been recognized a lot by the people

around us, both graduate students and undergraduates."

Sonin expressed regret that the two levies failed to pass, but expressed hope at developing a better relationship with CUTV in particular, including emulating the Concordia Student Union's policy of permitting the station to broadcast Council meetings. Kneale echoed the desire to forge a closer bond between the station and the GSA, and also said that despite the result, the election raised awareness of the work that CUTV does among grad students.

"We did get out there a lot," she said. "We had people going to classrooms and talking to people from all faculties. Even during the night of the results, we talked to a lot of different people and asked them their opinions, and a lot of them were telling us that they were quite amazed by everything that's been going on at CUTV, which is really encouraging to see."

The successful campaign for the Advocacy Centre means that grad students will have a resource to turn to when they need help, either in school or outside of it, said Sonin.

"It's going to be help for students who need help for just about anything. If they're having trouble in school, [such as] bad grades that they want to fight, or they're having problems with landlords, we can do referrals, that kind of thing. Basically, someone to help you out."

Representatives for the Frigo Vert and Sustainable Concordia could not be reached at press time.

Despite the fee levy setbacks, the overall tone for the GSA moving forward is very positive, according to Doucet.

"If you were to apply a word to it, it would be expansion. It will be expansion of services that are offered, expansion of our engagement in the battle against tuition increases."

NEWS COMMENTARY

Mad as Hell

And We're Not Going to Take It Anymore



PHOTO RILEY SPARKS

• RILEY SPARKS

Ah, springtime in Montreal. That wonderful time of year when the sun starts to shine, the terrasses fill with cheerful, buzzed students and the subtle smell of tear gas wafts through the streets. It's protest season.

This summer, we've got a whole lot to protest about. Your tuition is going way, way up. Over the next six years, it's going to increase by 75 per cent. And because out-of-province and international students pay the Quebec tuition rate plus an added percentage, this means everyone's tuition is going up. Just how much is up to individual universities, but if former Concordia president Judith Woodsworth's attitude about tuition is any indication, don't expect any sympathy.

When I first moved here, I thought Montreal students just loved to protest. But then I realized there's a reason why univer-

sity tuition in Quebec is so much more affordable than anywhere else in the country: Quebec students don't take guff from anybody. Coming from British Columbia, where the average student debt is an insane \$27,000, to Quebec, where at \$13,000 it's the lowest in the country, I'm thankful for the students here. Their hard work has so far kept my tuition affordable.

Unless you're just here at university for the toga parties and the lols, you don't need to be reminded of how important affordable access to education is. The simple truth is that fee increases are going to prevent people from going to school. Tuition has already gone up this year. International students, whose tuition has almost doubled over the last few years, have gotten the worst of it, but it's going to get a whole lot worse for everyone else, too.

Over the past few weeks, CEGEP students have been on the front lines in the ongoing fight

against tuition hikes. They've held one-day strikes and led noisy protests and occupations of the offices of Quebec Finance Minister Raymond Bachand and the Conférence des recteurs et des principaux des universités du Québec. As future university students, the CEGEP students are the ones who are going to be most affected by the fee hikes, but we're also going to feel the pain. We need to step in and help keep up the pressure on the government, and to tell Premier Jean Charest and Bachand to get their hands out of our pockets.

Unfortunately, words aren't really working. Bachand has already said the budget isn't up for negotiation, and that students need to pay a "fair share." Almost 250,000 people signed a petition calling for Charest's resignation, and his response wasn't much more than an awkward shrug. "I will certainly finish my mandate," Charest told Radio-Canada back in December. "And I want a

fourth one," he added, apparently oblivious of his comically low approval rating. So what do we do when our government stops listening?

At the March 31 protest against tuition increases, almost 3,000 students clogged downtown Montreal and generally caused a ruckus for most of the day. "This is just the beginning," said young protester Arnaud Theurillat-Cloutier, addressing the massive crowd. "We will block the streets and highways. We will paralyze Quebec if we have to."

This isn't an empty threat. I'm not saying we should go out and riot like the Habs just won/lost—violence is never appropriate and it's counter-productive—but we can still be a massive headache for the Charest government. To these folks, we're just dollars on a budget line. We can be a lot more than that if thousands of us keep taking to the streets and flooding into their offices.

By peacefully and regularly ex-

ercising our right to protest, we can make this issue so difficult, so politically-costly and so expensive to deal with, that it'll be easier for the government to just give in and say no to tuition increases.

That's exactly what happened back in 2005, when student protests and strikes forced the Charest government to drop plans for massive cuts to student bursary funds, and there's no reason we can't make it happen again. If the government doesn't back down, Quebec's myriad student associations have big things planned.

At the March 31 protest, as riot cops were charging after fleeing protesters, one young student turned around and yelled, "Why are you running? We outnumber them!"

There are a lot of pissed-off students in this province. We've got the numbers. We can paralyze this province, if we want to. Step it up, kids, it's gonna be a long summer.

PRINT MEDIA PARTY: CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

Designing a Sustainable Future

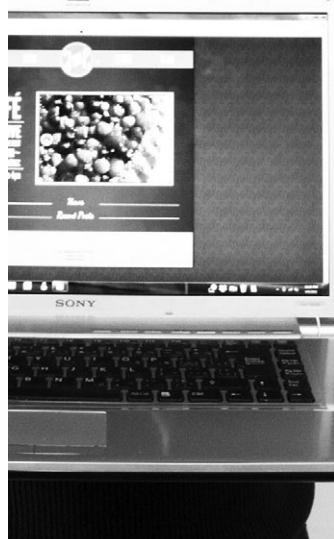


PHOTO COURTESY OF PK LANGSHAW

Second Year Design Students Put Theory Into Practice For The Hive Café

• ELI KERR

Design students from the DART 392 class have spent the past semester working together, planning and designing a much-anticipated student-run café at The Hive on Loyola Campus.

The inclusion of design students was one of the final steps in the project that has also seen contributions and involvement from business and anthropology students working towards sustainability.

The idea for the cafe had been on the table for some time, but last year, Alex Oster, the then-CSU VP of Sustainability, teamed up with Cameron Stiff to put the project into motion. Stiff is a Concordia graduate who served two years at Sustainable Concordia before becoming a freelance organizer specializing in the development of sustainable practices.

Stiff recalled having nowhere to eat at Loyola because of the lack of good food in the area. He hopes that the Hive Café will fill the void

of community space, while also providing sustainable food options.

Stiff believes The Hive can be an educational space surrounding sustainability and that, through the programming of student events, the café will "bring life into the space, giving a reason for people to be there."

PK Langshaw, one of four professors of the 392 class in charge of designing the space, puts an emphasis on sustainability and social design in her teaching. Langshaw recognizes that working within the parameters of sustainability can seem limiting, but that today's designers must be equipped to practice within this framework.

"I truly believe you can't be a designer now without having [sustainable sensibilities]," said Langshaw.

She explained that it is possible to achieve sustainable solutions with artful simplicity. The Hive's welcoming signage employs natural light instead of electricity.

"That's really exciting, that's the really subtle, not-so-obvious ways that sustainability works," she said. "It's actually quite complicated to do, as well."

The class started the semester by reading *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*, a leading guide in the field of sustainable design that provided the students with a theoretical reference to apply to their designs. "Material sourcing was a big concern with sustainability as a mandate," explained student Vivien Leung, a member of *The Link* staff who worked on the internal coordinations team for the project.

The team developed a material palette to coincide with the branding of the project. "We emphasized an honesty of materials [with] the use of wood, metal and glass," explained Leung, who defined material "honesty" as staying true to its nature and origin.

"Retaining an honesty of materials resonated with our message of sustainability. Knowing where

your materials come from is part of being sustainable," added Leung. The students made furniture for the project by repurposing old wooden crates to create stools with a rustic appeal.

The work completed by the students span a wide spectra of design, both graphic and industrial, that includes furniture, counter tops, typography, spatial layout, and a logo for the café.

Beyond designing objects and envisioning the space, students also took part in the systematic decisions of how the cafe would operate. An initiative that is of particular note is the planned implementation of a Mason jar sharing program, as opposed to the use of disposable cups.

"A lot of issues pertaining to sustainability are really just simple behavioral changes. Day-to-day consumption practices are what need to change as much as systemic institutional society wide changes," Stiff said. "Avoiding using disposable cups can make a huge cumulative impact."

The café will be using Mason jars that have the Hive Café's logo sandblasted onto them. Stiff added that he's excited to see how people react to the initiative, as it is a "really simple concept that has been artfully developed."

There's still no official opening date for the café, but everybody involved is looking forward to celebrating the project at an opening party on April 20.

Langshaw acknowledged the challenges and rewards of the project, which was as ambitious progressively as it was large in scale.

"This kind of course [that focuses on] outreach and sustainable projects is all encompassing [and] a challenge for the teachers and the students. When it works, it's amazing," she said.

Langshaw credited the hard work of the students in bringing the project to fruition and hopes they recognize the accomplishment. "Somebody is going to use this work. That's pretty awesome at a second year [level], I think."

Bright Futures

Intermedia/Cyberarts Students Offer an Illuminating Experience



JORDAN LOEPPKY-KOLESNIK, SWEATY LIFE

• REBECCA HISOTT

From Manhattan's crystal snowflake to the kaleidoscopic Polar Spheres outside of Place des Arts, light installations have transformed our day-to-day into living art.

With summer finally around the corner, we are reminded that light is a treasured diurnal force. It is appropriate then, that Concordia's Intermedia/Cyberarts students found a unifying theme in the exploration of light as both "medium and metaphor," a universal necessity and a conduit for creative expression.

Lumin seeks to explore the potential of illumination in various mediums. Hosted at Eastern Bloc, the exhibit showcases the work of sixteen undergrads in an IMCA

499 class and includes single and multi-channel video installations, photography, sculpture and sound, always returning to the use of light as a malleable and expressive creative instrument.

The exhibition's title is derived from "lumen," the unit that measures the power of light perceived by the human eye; consequently, the title emphasizes the artists' subjective response to illumination.

Funded by the Fine Arts Students Association and largely organized by IMCA student and contributing artist Kandis Friesen, Lumin presents a number of unique installations, each offering a novel take on luminosity. Graduating IMCA student Stephen Korzenstein describes the pieces as "intimate explorations of dreams, fears, identities and

personal histories."

Korzenstein's own work deals with "perspective and space," consisting of a three-channel video of himself in a coffin-like enclosure projected onto the ground. "[It's] as though you're looking into a closed-captioned video of someone buried below the earth," he said. "Because of where it's projected, it looks three-dimensional, like a *trompe l'oeil*."

Other works deal with issues as diverse as gender, perception, cultural inheritance and power dynamics.

Korzenstein describes Friesen's piece as an interactive pedagogical installation exploring her Mennonite heritage. "She's built a multi-channel piece in which the alphabet is translated into various Mennonite words, and it's done in

such a way that you can learn [from it]."

"Dimensional Ties," an installation by Sarah Bowes, features a video of the artist "weaving her body through a series of taut strings," while the strings descend from the wall and spread out along the floor.

Owen Kirby's "Studio Aquarium for the Electronic Musician" maps the movements of two goldfish in a fish tank and translates it into "a continually shifting electronic musical composition."

"Sweaty Life," by Jordan Loeppky-Kolesnik, is an illuminated sculpture with "pop art sensibility" that explores the idea of gender in sports by creating an "almost futuristic sports setting."

Lumin promises to unite a

number of themes and technologies under a single heading, offering an intriguing look at the range of creative technological applications.

Korzenstein acknowledged the difficulty collecting such a diverse range of pieces into a thematic whole.

"It's hard to exhibit everybody's work [with an underlying theme]. We're all using this medium to paint with, so to speak."

Nevertheless, light offers them a fluid canvas on which to inscribe an array of motifs and meanings; within such a broad spectrum, the pieces speak for themselves.

Lumin / Eastern Bloc / 7240 Clark St. / April 16, 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. / April 17-18, 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Journey Behind *Scorched*

Concordia Student-Actors Present Their Rendition

• CAITLIN LEROUX

Scorched is the English translation of the French play *Incendies*, which was made into an Oscar-nominated film last year by Quebec director Denis Villeneuve with the help of the playwright, Wajdi Mouawad.

This week Concordia student-actors will be presenting the play as directed by Vernice Miller.

Scorched follows the paths of immigrant twins Janine and Simon, who make separate journeys back to the Middle East to fulfill the dying requests of their mother.

"In *Scorched*, 'journey' represents the twins' voyage, their search for their origins, and the personal work they must do to reflect on their own humanity in the face of the legacies of poverty and ignorance," said Miller. "Similarly, the actors, in inhabiting their characters, have had to journey deep within themselves, to draw from the complexities of the emotional expe-

riences in their own lives."

The play, which is just picking up momentum in the theatre world, is based in two areas: a modern-day Montreal in 2003 and an unnamed land—likely meant to represent Lebanon—in the '50s, '60s and '70s.

In their travels, the two siblings begin to uncover their mother Nawal's unknown early life: she was a refugee and resistance fighter during her country's barbaric civil war.

When asked what she thought of the play, stage manager Megan Underwood replied, "The play is fantastic. When I first read it, it seemed almost like the story of a Greek-gone-modern-day epic."

Underwood went on to further explain that not only did Miller emphasize the notion of "journey" to the student-actors during the creative process, but she also included the influences of Greek mythology into her rendition of the work.

Miller, who is a well-established international performance artist,

has spent the last two decades exploring east and west actor training and its application to contemporary theatre practices in America.

An educator, writer, director and award-winning actor with a very impressive resume, Miller immediately took on the project after being approached by the department of theatre at Concordia.

When the students began their work on the piece, Miller asked that those who had been exposed to earlier versions of the play not share that information with their peers. Her approach values the idea that actors should access new material in a way that allows them to learn for themselves how to demonstrate the material—in effect, that they make their own way on their respective journeys.

Scorched / D.B. Clarke Theatre / 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. / April 14-17 / \$10 Regular / \$5 Seniors and Students



Peace Signs for the New World



PHOTO DANIEL SYLVESTER

Sharon Van Etten Treads New Ground With Help From The National

• COLIN HARRIS

It seems that young Brooklyn-based folk singer Sharon Van Etten's sound gets bigger with each album.

2009's *Because I Was In Love* was a record of intimate acoustic numbers supported only by Van Etten's voice and guitar, and last year's *Epic* filled out the music with a full band setup.

Working on her next record around a tightly-packed touring schedule finds Van Etten's Neutral Milk Hotel-meets-Cranberries sound expanding again, with help from The National's Aaron Dessner.

The two have been writing and recording since September, before taking a break in February for a European tour with their respective bands. Following the stint in Europe, Van Etten stopped in Austin for an intense few days of South by Southwest.

"It was a little insane, because we did seven shows in four days and I lost my voice by the last day," said Van Etten. "But it was a lot of fun, I got to see a lot of friends and a lot of awesome bands, too."

Working with Dessner in The National's studio allowed Van Etten the space to experiment, with guidance from the experienced indie rocker.

"He kind of pushed me out of my comfort zone because he likes to have noise, and he likes to add horns and strings which is very new to me," said Van Etten. "He imagines every song as having its own world, so it's fun to bounce ideas off each other."

This meant putting down the guitar for some songs, though it's an instrument that's been a defining aspect of the singer's young career.

"There are songs where I don't play guitar at all, and one where I only play one chord," said Van Etten. "It switches it up, it shows that my songs aren't dependent on a guitar."

"We're going to have more drone, creating a whole sonic wave," she continued. "Right now there's so many genres of songs [from the sessions with Aaron], I'm not sure what it's going to turn into."

With Van Etten and Dessner laying the groundwork for these

currently half-finished songs, guest musicians drop by to add what they hear fit. It's collaboration deeper than anything Van Etten has done before, with her past two records being written completely by her.

"I'm learning a lot about writing and about being sensitive to other parts, and I've realized that having more doesn't always make it better," said Van Etten. "It's much more fun and liberating and cathartic to have a band to rock out with."

The transition from solo artist to collaborator has been a gradual process, with Van Etten's strong, honest voice always transmitting the most intimate feelings. Now she has the world listening, and her intimate expressions of pain and joy seem to carry universal sentiment.

"I write from a very autobiographical, confessional place, so whenever I play I'm looking back on my life and what I was going through at the time," said Van Etten. "I try to write in a way that's general enough not to alienate people."

"It's a meditative state of going back to that place in order to per-

form the song proper," said Van Etten about recreating her music live. "It definitely helps me get through it again."

The New Jersey native's music will always come from emotional experience, regardless of its evolving instrumentation. The negative feelings are just as important as the good, and moments of despair and weakness are felt in her songs.

"I feel like people close themselves up when they feel something negative or are treated badly, as if it's wrong to feel something," said Van Etten. "There are a lot of songs out there that kind of glaze over a lot of serious emotions, making it seem that it's a selfish thing to talk about how you feel."

Being honest with yourself and accepting blame are essential elements to Van Etten's acoustic catharsis. She's more than the cliché girl with an acoustic guitar, proven with songs that balance power and delicacy in ways that hush the crowd.

"It's such an easy corner to be pushed into," said Van Etten about the bland categorization of female singer-songwriters.

"Maybe that pushed me into playing more electric guitar, but [my audience] learned that I can rock out, and that I can do more than write pretty songs."

"I work really hard on my songs and my melodies. I try to keep my lyrics simple so the melodies themselves evoke an emotion," she continued. "You can't control who likes your music, but I'm going to keep doing what I'm doing."

Things are going well for Van Etten, and there's no sign of her slowing down. Her third full-length record may surface by the end of this year, and it shouldn't be a surprise if it shuts down skeptics yet again.

Recording will resume later this month after wrapping up her first headlining tour, an experience that Van Etten is evidently grateful for.

"Every time there's a show that people come to and know who I am it blows my mind," said Van Etten. "Every day, it's pretty weird."

Sharon Van Etten / April 13th / Casa Del Popolo (4873 St Laurent) / with Hidden Words & Ruth Garbus / \$10 advance, \$12 door

Into the Threshold

The Void Celebrates Its Last Issue of the School Year

• ALEX MCGILL

Members of *The Void* are in a celebratory mood and want Concordia students to join them. The launch party for their final issue of this school year, thematically titled 'Thresholds,' is taking place on Saturday at Coatcheck, a new event and gallery space on de Gaspé Ave.

"[The launch] is going to be bigger and better than the two previous. We have bands coming in from out of town, [and] Wilcox & Promise, who DJed our first event of this year. Things are coming full-circle," said Jack Allen, *The Void*'s fiction editor. "I'm pissed I'll probably spend most of the night working the door."

Despite the failure of their fee

levy to pass in the recent Concordia Student Union elections, *The Void*'s staff is optimistic about the coming year.

"We're hoping to continue to widen the scope of our readership. We want to continue to improve our presence on and off campus to garner more submissions from all faculties," said Allen. "We'll probably give the fee levy another shot in the fall."

There are some editorial changes happening at *The Void* as well, with current Editor-in-Chief Cole Robertson graduating this year and Mike Chaulk taking over his position.

To celebrate a successful year and to thank everyone who has contributed to, supported, and helped out *The Void* in all capacities,

the party will feature readings by contributors Frankie Barnett, Rowan Cornell-Brown, Guillaume Morissette, Julie Tigranne, Leesa Dean and Emma Healey.

The readings will be followed by live acts Ell V Gore, Little Girls and Wilcox & Promise, capped off by the kind of dance party *The Void* launches have become famous for.

The event is pay-what-you-can and they suggest you come early to beat the line, as Coatcheck has a capacity of only about 150 people.

The Void 'Thresholds'
Launch / Coatcheck / 5445
de Gaspé Ave. / April 16 /
8:00



PHOTO MATTIE BOUCHARD

SHORT LIKE A BUTTERFLY, BRIEF LIKE A BEE

Salvatore DiFalco's Strange *The Mountie at Niagara Falls*

• ALEX MANLEY

When people get down to debating where to draw the border between poetry and prose, books like Salvatore DiFalco's *The Mountie at Niagara Falls* and other brief stories will certainly get caught in the crossfire.

The book, which features 101

micro-stories, is an interesting case study in things like marketing, genre overlap, tunnel vision and authorial intent. What makes a short story a short story and not a prose poem? When is a long poem really just a story split up by line breaks and stanzas? And, perhaps most importantly, who cares?

In this case, you'd be forgiven for

not caring—because no matter how you categorize these snippets, they're fun to read.

The book is something like the younger, wackier, stupider cousin of Jonathan Goldstein's wonderful *Lenny Bruce Is Dead*, in that it features stories with titles like "This Girl I Dated for Twenty-Two Minutes" or which make unapologetic

How Should a Writer Be?

Sheila Heti Attempts to Reconcile Personal and Artistic Selves

• SARA MCCULLOCH

A Künstlerroman is a novel that traces the development of an artist figure. Ideally, by the time the artist reaches creative potential at the end of the novel, he or she is isolated and living in a world of subjective thoughts and observations. But the ending leaves many of us asking just how this person is going to survive in real time.

Sheila Heti's *How Should a Person Be?* attempts to reconcile the two sides of any artist, but doesn't settle on an easy, straightforward answer. This is reflected in the structure of the novel—which is divided into four acts, since it was originally a play—that protagonist and author Sheila cannot seem to write.

Within the four acts are chapters, because this is also a book about not being able to write a play. So the novel lies somewhere in between fiction and nonfiction: all events and conflicts took place outside of the realm of this book, and Heti has made a concerted effort to weave memories and conversations into something that will allow both art, meaning, and—perhaps?—an answer.

Heti's strategy is effective since, unlike other central characters, Sheila isn't trying to fulfill any predestined purpose—she is far too flawed, humble and self-deprecating. She is a challenge to Lawrence Breavman (Leonard Cohen) and Stephen Dedalus (James Joyce), two artist figures who often take themselves far too seriously and try to control the entire universe with laurel wreaths around their heads.

Sheila is, at times, stagnant, stuttering, and confused. Heti grounds Sheila's questions in real life, while recording her best friend over breakfast, or giving a blowjob. Sheila is no golden girl poet set high up on a pedestal; she is far too real and aware for that. In fact, she and Margaux (artist Margaux Williamson, friend to Sheila and to Heti) reflect

on the art world, but mock pretentious performance and question the identity of the artist.

But Sheila doesn't shy away from making the same mistakes as those other artistic counterparts. Like Breavman and Dedalus, she does try to use private recordings of her conversations with Margaux for the play. Breavman gets away with this by rewriting dialogues and scenes in his favor, and then makes the sources of those lines read themselves, essentially.

These characters never respond, but only passively comment on how he has rewritten them. Breavman is happy because writing is a way of controlling the unpredictable universe. Sheila is not so lucky: Margaux, hurt and deceived, rejects Sheila. Margaux is human, not some character to be interpreted. Sheila's characters are not tools to help her grow and develop, but are seminal figures in the story, and their perspectives must also be considered. This, in part, is why Heti blurs the distinction between fiction and nonfiction: the characters are real people and not just tools to advance a plot-line.

So, with no plot or plan, does Heti ever answer the question? No, but does anybody ever answer this question? Heti has crafted a novel that presents life as it is: disordered, random and, on a bad day, meaningless. We piece together unrelated events in an effort to find some significance and purpose in life. If you were expecting a self-help book, look elsewhere. How a person should be is up to them, ultimately.

HOW
SHOULD
A PERSON BE?
/ Sheila
Heti /
A n a n s i
Press / 288
pp /
\$29.95

fun of Brian Mulroney.

The Canadian constitution (emotional, not political) may be a mystery to some, but it's pretty well summed up within these pages, *Mounties and Niagara Falls* notwithstanding.

We name our dogs Wolf and Moose; we name our boys Dougie and Charlie, we swear at each other

casually on poker nights, and when our authors write short story collections subtitled and other brief stories, inevitably one of them will be about underwear, entitled "Boxers."

We're a shifty lot, we are.

The Mountie at Niagara Falls / Salvatore DiFalco / Anvil Press / 142 pp. / \$18.00

MMA: GETTING FIRED UP



PHOTO COURTESY OF FIGHT LAUNCH

A Night of Profanity, Screaming and Language Politics

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

At some point in my adult life, it will no longer be appropriate to conceal a bottle of gin between my pants and pelvis in order to get drunk at a prizefight. That thought, or some variation of it, crossed my mind as I awkwardly waddled past the usher at Montreal's Bell Centre.

Like so many other fight fans, I've been suckered into watching backwoods Mixed Martial Arts with the promise of adrenaline charged thrills and momentary fits of insanity. But even a sucker knows to bring provisions. The gin was a fail-safe, an insurance policy in the event that every fight was pure garbage. It was a way of drowning the potentially terrible card into a night of screaming and profanity.

Before walking to my seat, my friend pointed towards a mullet wearing man and yelled "Holy shit. You're Miguel Torres." Torres looks like a mulleted version of former child star Ralph Macchio. His limbs are comically skinny, he can't quite grow facial hair and he has the skin of an eight-year-old boy.

To the everyman, he kind of just looks like the guy from *My Cousin Vinnie*. But among MMA fans, Torres has a cult-like following. He turned pro as a teenager and knocked his first opponent out in less than 10 seconds. For the bulk of his 20's, he tore people apart fight-

ing on regional shows for no money. Now he splits his time between his native East Chicago and Montreal where he's training to make a run at the Ultimate Fighting Championship's bantam-weight title.

Torres raised a plastic cup of whiskey and smiled at us. "Sweet Jesus," I thought. "If Torres is shooting straight whiskey, we don't stand a chance. The circus is in town, no fights tonight boys. Only staggering drunks, wildly swinging punches at each other's faces."

"What's up? These guys are trying to get me drunk," said Torres. "You fighting for the title soon?" I asked. "One more win and I get a title shot." We shook his hand, basked in his mullet glory and walked to our seats.

The arena was almost empty. There were maybe 1,200 fans scattered across the lower bowl. The smell of thick, sweaty marijuana smoke filled our section of the Bell Centre. Cuing into the invitation to break rules, I poured myself some gin and watched the fight.

A pink-haired lightweight from Victoriaville had taken his opponent down and was throwing sporadic hammer fists. "Ground and pound!" a man behind me yelled. "Ground and pound!"

The man went off about why Quebecers are innately tough and built for hand-to-hand combat. I turned around to catch a peek at

him. He was wearing a Harley Davidson t-shirt that said Ground and Pound in bold type.

By the time the next bout came around I recognized one of the fighters, Mike Ricci. About a year ago Ricci was invited to a 16-man lightweight tournament run by Bellator, one of the world's largest promotions.

In the tournament's opening bracket, he was knocked unconscious with a thundering left hook to the jaw. The knockout sidelined him for months with a brain injury. After a year of recovery, Ricci finally came back to the regional show.

Ricci set the tone early, landing a few leg kicks and jabs. He then took his opponent down and began to work an arm lock, cunningly using the submission attempt to pass his opponent's guard and advance to the mount position. From there, Ricci cut the man's forehead open with a barrage of elbows, stopping the fight less than three minutes in.

Just as the bout ended, a few drunks go into it across from our section. Security jumped in and dragged the men away from each other. "Dirty animals," someone yelled.

The night began taking an almost barbaric tone. Spirited cheers devolved into fits of screaming and heckling. Another scrum broke out in the section above us, sending a

can of Coors Light rolling down the steps.

At some point in the evening, I made the unforgivable mistake of cheering against a Quebec-born fighter loudly, in English. This, I would soon find out, did not play well with some of my fellow audience members.

"Shut the fuck up," yelled a Mohawk-sporting teenager. "We're in Quebec, speak French."

I couldn't hear the kid very well, but he and my girlfriend began to argue for a few minutes. Eventually, his friends got involved and started grunting at us, challenging us to a fight.

"I'll fucking kill you," yelled another teen with frosted tips and a loud tribal t-shirt.

"You're going to kill me?" I asked.

"I'm going to kill your idiot friend."

"Don't do that, he hates when people kill him."

"You wanna step outside?"

"You'll have to call your mom and ask her for permission to fight. I won't fight you without parental consent."

"Fuck you."

"Vive le Québec Libre."

In the card's main event, former UFC fighter Patrick Coté was met with roaring applause from the arena. Coté hadn't won a fight in nearly three years. He fought for a

UFC title in 2008 but tore the ligaments in his knee while throwing a kick at the middleweight champion. The injury crippled him for over a year and he never fully recovered.

He looked old, slightly overweight and lumbered around the ring awkwardly.

His opponent, Kalib Starnes, had also fallen on hard times since leaving the UFC. Once a promising middleweight, Starnes was released from the promotion after refusing to engage with an opponent during a televised fight. He would spend the next few years bouncing around the regional circuit, collecting small paycheques, never stringing more than a pair of wins together.

Coté was dominated early in the fight as Starnes nearly choked him out on several occasions. By the end of the first round, Starnes began to tire and Coté mounted on offence. His punches were laboured and rarely connected but he threw enough of them to land the occasional glancing blow. Soon, Coté also tired and the fighters went after each other slowly, almost cautiously.

After Starnes badly missed a takedown attempt Coté landed on top of his opponent and won the fight on points.

The few hundred remaining fans gave the former contender his due.

"I almost forgot what it feels like to win," he yelled to the crowd.

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FEDERAL ELECTIONS: WHAT YOU HAD TO SAY



PHOTO MEGAN DOLSKI

Earth Day 2011

Make This One Matter

• MEGAN DOLSKI

April is Earth Month, and next week on April 22, the world will be celebrating Earth Day for the forty-first time.

Earth Day prides itself on offering an opportunity for positive action and results. Six million Canadians are expected to join one billion people in over 170 countries participating in events and projects that will address environmental issues. Earth Day will be the largest civic movement in the world, and is supposed to be a catalyst for change.

While our population is becoming increasingly aware of our environment and the issues that plague it, after all these years has it really changed anything?

For Earth Day to be truly suc-

cessful, people don't need to be looking at the big picture. People need to understand that environmental issues that can affect them, do affect them and will affect them one day.

While there are tons of local events and projects on Earth Day that bring the event closer to home, maybe people need to take the cause even closer to home than that. They need to make it mean something enduring.

The problem is that the momentum created by the billions who support Earth Day is confined to a 24-hour period, and after that, the people who hopped on the environmental bandwagon just hop right off.

Practicing the environmentally friendly way to live via online guidelines is great—but it doesn't do much if your attempt only lasts a

matter of hours.

Earth Day isn't meant for activists—they are already engaged all year long—the challenge is to make everyone else care and act. The day is supposed to be a push that gets the ball rolling—but history has proven that the annual push hasn't been strong enough.

For Earth Day to provoke change it has to mean something to people. Try to think of what Earth Day means to you. Anything?

I've lived through 18 Earth Days now, and after much thought—I can't really say it means anything to me.

This is partially due to the enormity of the problem the day is trying to solve—you can't save the world's environmental problems in a day. Earth Day can be a great tool to get people motivated, but it

needs to find a way to keep them involved.

What people are lacking is the incentive to do the little things that will accumulate to make a big change, and to keep doing them. It's easy to see how people feel uninspired because it's hard to imagine that the little acts will actually do anything at all. It is hard to make such far-off solutions matter. So, think of the things that do matter to you.

For every year that you experience an Earth Day, you also experience 364 days where you can be enjoying, exploring and embracing the environment that surrounds you.

At its core, Earth Day is about preserving the world, the environment and the beautiful places that surround us.

Earth Day 2011 doesn't have to be meaningless. Think about what environmental issues matter to you and think of what you can do to fix them. Think of a small change you can make. Make a goal, stick to it.

Take your bike, eat less meat, shut the lights off, watch less TV, don't buy things unless you need them—whatever you want. If you don't have any ideas, spend 10 minutes Googling easy, hands-on environmental solutions and you'll find millions of projects you can implement into your everyday life.

Use Earth Day as a starting point, not a be-all-end-all solution to a huge problem—that won't fix anything. Whatever you choose to do, just make sure you keep it up. That's the only way things will ever start to change.

Don't Let Them Win

Strategic Voting: Against, Not For

• VINCENT VELLA

The upcoming federal election on May 2 will be, for many Concordia undergrads, the first election in which they will be able to cast a vote. Posters are up, the campaigns are in full swing and the party leaders are darting across the country trying to garner support.

Yet, the student vote is usually overlooked by most of the major parties by virtue of the fact that, historically, students avoid the polls en masse.

Whatever the reason, whether students feel politics do not directly impact them or there is just a general lack of interest, students

should realize that federal politics do have a significant impact on their lives and that they can actually have a significant impact on the outcomes of elections.

While the basic mechanics of voting may seem pretty straightforward—vote for the person representing the party you support—the nature of the first-past-the-post electoral system used in Canada complicates things.

Here's where it gets a little tedious: since it is essentially a winner-take-all system, the so-called losers get nothing if they're not elected. Also, since more than two parties compete for the same riding, those multiple candidates divide the vote, ensuring that

securing around only 30 to 40 per cent of the votes guarantees a win in a close riding. Because of these characteristics of the electoral system, strategic voting has become common among conscientious voters, who end up voting against parties/candidates they dislike, instead of for parties they like.

While Concordia students from Quebec will vote in the riding in which they live, the students from out-of-province find themselves in a unique situation. Unlike most other Canadian voters, out-of-province students have a choice as to where they cast their vote.

They are presented with two options. First, they can choose to vote

in the riding in which they lived before coming to study in Quebec. Second, they can choose to vote in the Quebec riding they currently reside in. These two options remain open to students as long as they are in school and have not declared an official residence.

While there is talk of voter apathy—as evidenced by the record-low voter turnout in the last federal election—a perceived insignificance of casting a vote in party strongholds, out-of-province students actually have a substantial opportunity to circumvent these problems with the special choice that is afforded them.

This means that, unlike many Canadians, these students have the

ability to make their votes a very serious strategic factor in certain ridings.

So whether out-of-province students choose to vote in their home riding or the one they live in while at school, they should cast their vote in the riding that it will have the most impact in.

Since most Canadians are limited by the first-past-the-post system used in Canada, out-of-province students have the chance to make a difference in these upcoming elections, one that they should take advantage of.

Not only do student votes matter just as much as anyone else's, in this case, they may even be more valuable.

This Needs to Stop

Decolonizing Concordia's Bilateral Institutional Links

• DOUGLAS SMITH

If someone were to tell you that your university maintains bilateral links with an academic institution involved in colonization, occupation and unequal access to education based on ethnicity, how would that make you feel?

Several students from Concordia and McGill are saying that this is the situation at their respective universities.

Students from both universities have raised concerns in "Structures of Oppression," a report in which they discuss their issue with the "strong bilateral student exchange programs [...] joint research projects and collaborative scholarships" that their schools have with the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

Essentially, Concordia is receiving and sending students to an institution that prides itself on being a hands-on engineering and science institute. This means that much of the research conducted by students and faculty is funded by arms manufacturing companies. These companies then sell their products to the Israeli Defense Forces, in order to maintain their occupation of Palestinian territories.

Two such companies are Elbit Systems and Rafael Advanced Systems. Elbit, with Technion's direct and indirect help, has become one of two main providers for Israel's electronic detection fence, dubbed the 'apartheid wall' by activists, and condemned in 2004 by the International Court of Justice.

These links go beyond just engineering and applied science programs. Rafael is a company heavily involved in the research and development of military technologies used in the occupation of Palestinian land. Since 2001, the company has had a three-year in-

house MBA program tailored specifically to its managers.

But what is perhaps more egregious is the treatment of the Palestinian students. These students, citizens of Israel who are trying to get the same access to education as their counterparts, are often blocked by obstacles in funding and acceptance into certain programs, whose criteria are heavily tilted towards students who are or have served in the Israeli military.

At the Technion, freedom of speech is a privilege. On June 2, 2010, shortly after Israel's assault on the Gaza Freedom Flotilla, stu-

dents both for and against Israel's attack staged simultaneous demonstrations in front of the campus gates.

The mostly Palestinian-student rally against the raid, however, was brutally repressed by the Israeli police. This resulted in the arrest of several Palestinian students, while the pro-Israeli military side was left alone.

It is important to point out that these issues are not exclusive to Technion. Israeli academia, as a whole, has been intimately involved in the oppressive actions of the Israeli state.

For this reason, students at McGill have been calling into question a new exchange between McGill and Hebrew University.

On March 28, *The McGill Daily* declared that "McGill should cut ties with the Hebrew University" due to the program's stated desire to "examine the topic of 'regulating internal diversity,'" which, according to article, "has the capacity to contribute indirectly to ongoing injustices" regarding the treatment of Palestinian citizens of Israel, which comprise of around 20 per cent of the population.

Here at Concordia, students

choosing to go on the Concordia-facilitated exchange are encouraged to apply for funding for their travel expenses via the Goldie and Joe Raymer Fellowship, which the Concordia International website states to be for students from "any discipline [...] to promote academic collaboration, student exchange and research internships between the two institutions."

But since no information is available on the criteria necessary to obtain this funding, one is left to wonder how Palestinian students at Concordia would be able to access this exchange.

Palestinian students, who manage to obtain both funding and acceptance still may not be able to participate in these programs. Students whose family was expelled in the 1948 creation of the Israeli state and simultaneous destruction of approximately 500 Palestinian villages and towns would almost certainly not even be able to enter the country, let alone participate in the exchange.

If we are to be serious in confronting systematic oppression in a tangible way, Concordia students and faculty are going to have to come together and make it clear to the administration that this is unacceptable.

In the wake of the recent decision taken by Johannesburg University to sever ties with Ben Gurion University under similar pretexts, we now know that not only is it possible to do the same here—but is actually only a matter of time.

Douglas Smith is graduate student at Concordia, and member of Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights and Tadamon! To download the report "Structures of Oppression" in PDF format, visit tadamon.ca/



PHOTO BENY SHLEVICH

At Least You're Not From Ontario

• TOMAS URBINA

Give me a break.

That's what students across Quebec have been telling the provincial government about tuition fees. On March 31, thousands of Quebec CEGEP and university students took to the streets in the latest of a string of protests against tuition hikes.

Okay, I get it—tuition's going up. But even better than a break, students here could use some perspective and an Ontarian to tell them how good they have it.

Tuition in *la belle province* has been frozen for 33 out of the last 43 years, but has risen from an average of \$1,932 in 2006-07

to \$2,415 this year, according to Statistics Canada. Still, Quebec students enjoy the lowest tuition rates in Canada (Newfoundland and Labrador is second).

In Ottawa, where I'm from, students paid an average of \$6,307 for tuition this year. Ouch. But even in Quebec, an Ontarian can barely catch a break. As an out-of-province student, I paid \$5,630 for my classes this year in the graduate journalism program.

Thanks to Concordia's nifty new tuition fee calculator, I can have fun finding out that next year, someone like me will pay 2.7 times what a Quebec student will pay. And don't even ask what

other international students—Americans, for instance—will pay. This year, an American friend of mine paid over \$19,000 in tuition and fees. Enough said.

And now tuition is going up again. It's rising by \$325 per year for the next five years, bringing Quebec tuition to an average of \$4,040 by 2016. Quebec students are up in arms. I hope they're also chanting for the out-of-province folk and the 4,700 international students at Concordia.

So how can students cope, regardless of where they're from? Cooperation. More specifically, cooperative education, or what's known as co-op. Aside from entrance scholarships that may be

difficult to keep because of the grade requirements, co-op is probably the best way to get through school debt-free. It's the reason I was able to pay for my own undergraduate education in expensive Ontario.

Basically, the university teams up with employers to offer paid and relevant employment to students in a wide range of fields. Once you start, work terms alternate with study terms and allow you to focus on school during a study term. It's also a foot in the door for a job later on. Unfortunately, Concordia only has about 1,200 spots available for a program that's been around since 1980. Add an increase in co-op

spots to your list of demands.

And here's a warning: if you have a loan, pay it off as soon as you can. Quebecers benefit from a six-month low-interest grace period when they graduate, which sits at 3.5 per cent right now. But even though the current interest rate is relatively low, by the time students have finished the 10-year repayment period, they'll have paid double the amount originally borrowed thanks to interest.

So keep up the protests, I say, but also keep some perspective, and maybe most importantly, fight for a say in where your tuition fees end up—and that might be the biggest break of all.



Letters@thelinknewspaper.ca

It Goes For You Too

As I write this, you and other members of *The Link* Publication Society are hours away from taking part in its annual general assembly. At the bottom of your notice for this meeting is written the following: "Constitutional amendments are available at *The Link* office."

To me, this means this list of proposed amendments are not available anywhere else. They were not printed in the paper or available on the website (for that matter, neither is the constitution itself). *The Link's* board seems to be doing everything in its power to make it difficult for students to find out what those changes are, in case any may disagree with them and want to round up support to vote them down.

It's a perfectly understandable and justifiable fear. But it's still wrong. I don't say this lightly. I know more than most the dangers of student politicians using their voting power to take control of the paper for the sole purpose of affecting its editorial content. I know, because I lived that very experience in 2001. The tug-of-war that resulted led to the paper being shut down over the summer.

In the years that followed, I proposed changes to *The Link's* bylaws that strengthened its protections from those political forces. (They may still be in place. I don't know for sure, because I don't have access to *The Link's* constitution.) I learned that increased transparency helps the free press more than it hinders it, even if it may sometimes seem in the paper's best interest to try to manipulate its own democratic processes.

It's a delicate balancing act between a paper being free of political control and being accountable to its members and properly protected from itself. But secrecy doesn't protect *The Link* from politicians. It only serves to make it unaccountable and untransparent. And that makes it wrong.

I read with interest your recent decision to increase the use of your website by moving breaking news there. You can make a big leap in transparency by also posting your bylaws, constitutional amendments and (open) board meeting minutes.

Transparency is scary in a world where knowledge is power. But *The Link* is strong. And if any politicians try to take it over again, I'll be the first to run down there with a picket sign and make sure they don't succeed.

Please reconsider your policy.

—Steve Faguy,
B.CompSc 2004, GrDip Journ. 2005
Editor-in-Chief 2003-04

Tuition Troubles

So obviously, we're all opposed to this. Except maybe the government employees who get to boost their salaries. But there is an issue that's not being voiced here. First off, I'm from Alberta, so I'm a resident of Alberta. I can't become a resident of Quebec and enjoy the cheaper tuition rates unless I live here for 12 consecutive months without being in school full time.

The cost of waiting a full school year to continue my education is out of the question for me. So I pipe down and pay the higher tuition. This is my choice and I can't complain about this.

After all, tuition is about par (actually a little more) with the tuition rates in my home province, so it wouldn't be much different if I went back home.

But get this: the out-of-province tuition rates are increasing as well as the Quebec tuition rates (not to mention the international tuition rates). What kind of idiotic government is in charge here?

The point of an out-of-province tuition rate is to ensure that non-residents are paying the same as everyone else in Canada. Raising non-resident rates along with resident rates is just going to give Quebec the most expensive universities in Canada (except for residents). WTF!

I've looked at the parts of the new budget concerning students, and on only one page did it mention anything about out-of-province tuition rates. It simply stated what the rates were and were going to be, and that the policy on out-of-province rates should be updated. That's it. They didn't address this issue at all.

—Timothy Jong,
Independent Student

Committee Isn't Community

It seems that President [Frederick] Lowy wants to stay longer at Concordia.

In February, he created an unusual external committee of three former top educational bureaucrats to diagnose problems. He then invited written submissions from all members of Concordia.

Everything may look democratic, but such "solutions" represent typical bureaucratic maneuvers to justify delays with blurred responsibilities, while also opening doors for continued external manipulation.

Rather than creating this new committee to diagnose management problems, it would be preferable to organize a more transparent election of the next president, without delay.

At stake is giving the new top

brass a stronger mandate by the whole Concordia community, then choosing the best-offered policies from the competing candidates during direct election. Only in this way will the selected leader have fewer problems when dealing with the 46 Board of Governors of Concordia.

I think the new president ought to reduce the BoG's size to 25 people, as was done at McGill in 2005. The new president can become stronger than Lowy, who shaped "his" BoG between 1995-2005.

After Lowy's departure, the BoG became the top player, overruling not only the president, but also the Senate and other bodies. The board caused friction and led to the costly departure of the previous two presidents. As new leaders, these presidents were simply not strong enough for open debates with the BoG and so the community did not know the details of the strategic differences between the two sides.

Now we see an artificial return of Lowy to the strengthened presidential position and no profound dialogue, which would be enriching this community.

We shouldn't have a problem with more powerful top administrators in our English universities if the majority of academics, students and staff members elect them democratically.

The present system of only electing members for a president Search Committee allows for manipulation, as there is an absence of a transparent final selection. Point 78 of Concordia's Rules for Senior Administrative Appointments states: "Members of the President Search Committee shall sit as individuals, not as delegates of their constituencies."

A similarly controversial regulation applies at McGill and means that those initially elected to represent the whole community are later isolated and experience enormous pressure from the top external executives who typically dictate which candidates they want, and in what order.

What about replacing Concordia and McGill's current practice of choosing a president (or Principal, in McGill's case) behind closed doors with a more open and democratic election? It is possible to arrange it without delay.

—Slawomir Poplawski,
Former technician, McGill
University
Department of Mining and
Material Engineering

Cheating, Really?

To the girl to my right during the exam:

Do you have any idea what position you put me in? Are you aware of what you are actually doing?

I don't know how this usually goes down, but you were lucky... this time.

I discreetly nudge you with my elbow because you're cheating from the iPhone you have between your thighs. Are you kidding? Now what? I'm supposed to signal the teacher? No, I can't because that would make me the snitch. Maybe you have friends in class that would 'settle' this matter with me on the street. Do I email the teacher? No, if you do get reprimanded, you know it will be because of me.

I am now at home and it is after the fact. This evening I still feel knots in my stomach. The glass of wine isn't even helping. I fume. Your cheating brings up your grade, which brings mine down! They're grading on a curve, and you know perfectly well how all this works.

You were too agile, too trained in this fraud with your iPhone not to have done this before. You knew exactly how to cross your legs to hold it just at the right angle for it to stay put.

I am far from the best student but what I know, I know. No smokescreens, no foggy or distorted images as I look in the mirror. I know who I am as well as the results I get according to the efforts I give. How do you look in the mirror without cringing?

I was bursting with conflict inside as I finished and walked out of that cramped class. What just happened? It wasn't even an official final exam! How dare you pull me into your web of deceit!

Pardon my innocence, but this was my first experience with this sort of thing. How can someone take a chance at expulsion on an exam only worth 20 per cent of the grade?

I don't have time to follow the current in Concordia what's what, so I don't know if this is a current issue or not, but I do know it has affected me.

I also know this: Friday is last class, and finals end on the 30th. This course is the last push towards finishing. You are obviously at the end of your BA. What will yours mean to you? Will you frame and hang your degree up on the wall or leave it in its envelope in a drawer? You'll see. Make no mistake; it will take on the shape you have given it. No matter how you look at it or how you make others look at it, it will always be distorted.

Whatever you do, wherever you end up with this degree, this will always be there and it belongs to you.

—The girl to your left

Hello World

I'm a cat! :3

—Nadim Kobeissi
Political Science

HEARD IN THE HALL

The Federal Elections

The Link took to halls of Concordia to see what students had to say about the upcoming federal elections. While many of them plan to vote, we asked them why they think students are notorious for not voting. Here's what they had to say:

"Students probably don't vote because they feel they don't have a reason to vote. Do you watch *South Park*? There's one where you have the choice between a giant douche and a turd sandwich. It's a good one. Basically they talk about the elections, about voting, and how the choice between both people sucks. That's probably one of [the] main reasons for [students] not voting."

— Cormac Meagher,
Masters
in Engineering



"Part of it is that they don't believe it matters. They have a vote, but at the end of the day it's just one vote. It's just one vote. What can they do? But, if you don't do anything, then you'll never really find out. I think the other reason is because they don't think it matters, this coalition and stuff like that."

— Casey Hill,
BA Political Science



"Je trouve que c'est un gaspillage de temps. C'est toujours quand quelque chose est proche à devenir conclut que l'opposition les arrête, il y a une autre élection. Il y a eu, comme, sept élections dans les quatre dernières années, alors... J'en ai marre, simplement."

— Marco Longinotti,
BA History

"I vote because I think it's important to be involved in what's going to be happening to you in your country, and the laws that are going to be governing it. But I think there is a disconnect. I think politics has become too formal, almost, and there is a link that's missing between the population, the general population, and those people—the politicians."

—Kaitlin Common,
BA Political Science

"I think people are just in their own world a little bit. They don't see the importance of voting, maybe there's apathy because there's not a direct result, or they feel that one vote doesn't make a difference."

—Josh Davidson,
MA Media Studies



TIRED OF READING

Tremendous Tales
by Christopher Oison

"There's a 0.1% transcription error in the replication process, but the results should be negligible."



Dear Melissa,

I can't get off when I get head because it, well... it tickles. I've only been with one girl and when I told her to stop, she took it as a sign that I didn't ever want it all (so I never get it anymore), but we never got around to resolving the problem. Is it all about technique? I want to get off, but the sensation isn't so much sexy as ticklish...

—Tickles

Dear Tickles,

I'm really ticklish everywhere, so I totally sympathize. The way I see it, there are two problems here: the tickling, and the lack of communication with your ladyfriend.

I'm going to assume that you aren't too ticklish to have sex, get a hand job, or masturbate, since you didn't mention it. This tells me that it might be a technique thing.

So, here are some things you can try: you're more likely to get tickled from soft touches, so the more pressure in a touch, the less tickle-inducing it usually is.

When you're getting head there might not be enough pressure from your partner's mouth, so I would suggest asking her to tighten her lips more, or use her hand with her mouth to help add pressure. The head of your penis is also the most sensitive part because of the nerve endings, so it isn't surprising if that's where you're feeling ticklish.

Communication is really important in all this because you can have your partner try different things, and work together to figure out what works for you.

It's also important to note that when you told her to stop, it might have hurt her feelings. Sexual acts put us in a vulnerable place, which could be another reason why you don't get it anymore.

I think it's really important for you to explain to her what happened, if you didn't already, because at least she won't feel like it's her fault and she might be willing to help you figure out what works.

Part of the responsibility does fall on you as well, because she can't guess what will work for you. No two people are the same. Things that might get one person off might be really horrible for someone else, so it's really important to take the time to learn from each other.

This can be really fun and exciting because you get to explore your bodies, not only for your partner's benefit of learning how to please you, but for you to understand your own body. Something that might help is showing her how you masturbate, so she can get a better idea of how you like to be touched and try to mimic it.

Finally, maybe you really are just too sensitive for oral sex. Everyone is different and the places people are ticklish vary. If it isn't enjoyable for you, then there's no harm in sticking to the acts that are.

—Melissa Fuller

Send your dirty little secret sex-related questions or qualms to
sexpancakes.thelink@gmail.com

Nah'msayin?

Belly_ButtinX0x@Changeyouremail.com

As a non-dinosaur, university student and living, breathing person in our society—you probably have an email address.

As social networking sites and texting have increasingly taken over as our main form of communicating with our friends, email has taken on the role of a more professional tool used for communicating with employers, co-workers and professors.

The distinction between the two is really quite practical—but if email is going to be considered as a professional, valid and respectable way of communicating, something needs to change.

Rosez_areRED@hotmail.com, I'm talking to you.

Back in the day when we were 12, it was cool to come up with interesting and eccentric email addresses. Everyone did it—don't lie, you did it too.

Back then, an email address wasn't something that was sup-

posed to have your name in it. That would have been boring. Not to mention the fact that your mom was worried that some evil Internet predator would track you down if they knew what your name was. You remember Neopets, right? That thing was totally sketchy.

I mean, sk8rguy22@hotmail and princess_in_p!nk@msn may have had their time and place, but FYI, if you are in university now, that time was circa 2000.

How can anyone expect to use their koolaid_kid12 e-mail in a professional environment and be taken seriously? Please people, grow up and keep your cutesy-girlylove2 emails to yourselves (if you really, truly must), and communicate with the outside world using your name.

—Megan Dolski
Opinions Editor



GRAPHIC VIVIEN LEUNG

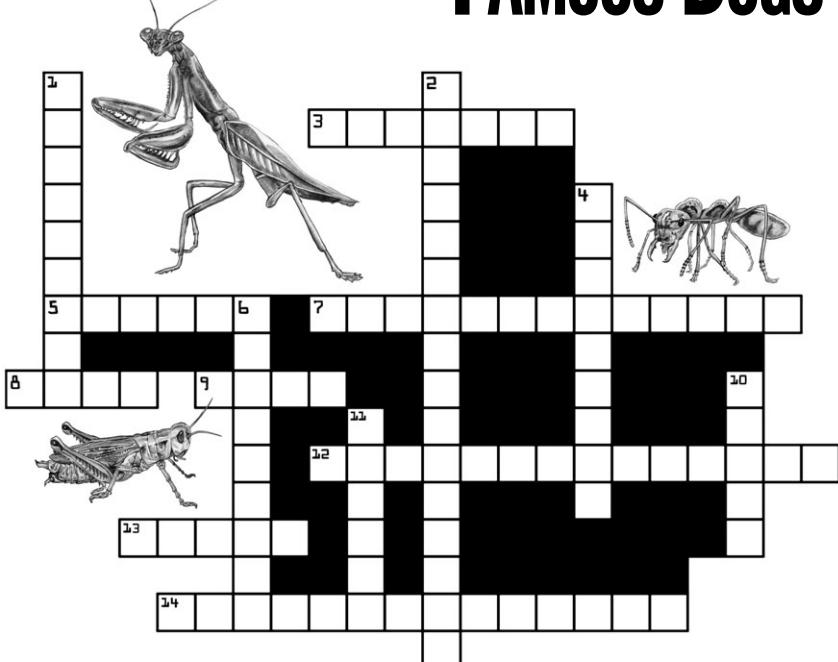
Notice something that just doesn't make sense? Got an axe to grind? Send in a rant to Nah'msayin? 300 words max.

opinions@thelinknewspaper.ca

Quik-X

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

'FAMOUS BUGS'



DOWN

1. He does whatever a spider can. Plus, see into the future. But he can't spin webs himself; he had to invent a device for that. You know what? Fuck you, Stan Lee. You fail as an entomologist.

2. This novel by Robert A. Heinlein—and the subsequent film adaptation by Paul Verhoeven—introduced the whole war-against-alien-insects subgenre. (2 words)

3. This spider convinced a farmer to not eat her pig friend by revealing that she possessed sentience and a basic understanding of reading and spelling. A creepy, creepy childhood classic.

4. A total rip-off Dreamworks' *Antz*. (3 words)

5. The larval form of this Japanese *kaiju* was able to destroy the Tokyo Tower. Her *larval form*. Imagine what she could destroy once she reaches full maturity! Maybe the Burj Dubai!

6. My conscience also comes in the form of a small insect who wears a top hat and tells me what I need to do in order to become a "real" man. (2 words)

7. A total rip-off of Pixar's *A Bug's Life*.

8. A low, continuous humming or murmuring sound, made by or similar to that made by an insect, or a certain Concordia sports mascot, perhaps?

9. An imitator, or an early Guillermo del Toro film about giant cockroaches that assume human form. Remember that one? Yeah, it wasn't that good.

10. An author who no doubt inspired all subsequent films about men turning into flies after teleportation mishaps.

11. A film about a man turning into a fly after a teleportation mishap. (2 words)

12. A hurtful euphemism for bugs, or a delightful Mattel toy from the 1990s that kids could make rubbery insects with. You all remember burning your hands on the goop, don't lie. (2 words)

13. A blood-sucking arachnid, as well as a charming absurdist super-

hero parody from New England. (2 words)

14. A hurtful euphemism for bugs, or a delightful Mattel toy from the 1990s that kids could make rubbery insects with. You all remember burning your hands on the goop, don't lie. (2 words)

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Issue 29 Crossword Solutions



THE LiNK

CONCORDIA'S INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

The Link is published every Tuesday during the academic year by The Link Publication Society Inc. Content is independent of the university and student associations (ECA, CASA, ASFA, FASA, CSU). Editorial policy is set by an elected board as provided for in The Link's constitution. Any student is welcome to work on The Link and become a voting staff member. The Link is a member of Canadian University Press and Presses Universitaire Indépendante du Québec.

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Keep The Movement Going

With the summer drawing closer every day and exams weighing on the minds of students, it's easy to see why a sense of indifference, or perhaps just forgetfulness, can set in and keep students from staying up-to-date on and aware of the issues we face.

While thousands of Concordia's out-of-province and international students will be returning home for the next few months, those of us sticking around must not abandon the issues at hand and wait until September to begin caring again. We can expect the Charest government to use distant and uninterested students as a way of sneaking tuition fees up—so we have to stay present in the battle to keep education affordable.

As the recent protests by CEGEP students have shown, higher tuition is simply not feasible for the vast majority of students. With the average Quebec university student surviving on around \$13,000 a year, and tuition set to increase by 75 per cent over the next six years, students will soon be spending close to half their income on education.

Coupled with the increased cost of living, higher tuition fees will drive students away from university and widen the socioeconomic gap in this country even further.

CEGEP students have shown no fear in the face of police armed with rubber bullet guns and tear gas canisters, something that truly emphasizes how important affordable tuition is to them, and how important it should be for university students to remain vigilant about—even in the summer when school is usually the last thing on our minds.

The ball is rolling now, and we need to keep the momentum going over the summer. But how can you keep fighting for affordable tuition when you're on the other side of the country, or the world?

Twitter is a prime resource for updates. Stay in the loop by following the Concordia Student Union's feed, as well as CSU President Lex Gill (@lex_is), *The Link* journalists Christopher Curtis (@TitoCurtis) and Riley Sparks (@SparksRiley), the Association pour une Solidarité Syndicale Étudiante (@ASS-

Esolidarite), Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec (@FEUQ) and *Rue Frontenac* newspaper (@ruefrontenac). All of these feeds are maintained by individuals or groups who are especially aware of the student community in Quebec and are working to make sure everyone else is just as informed as they are. If you know of other voices on the issues, let us know and we'll start to follow them as well.

If you aren't a fan of Twitter, you can still make sure your voice is heard. Write a letter to Jean Charest and tell him why tuition needs to stay where it is:

Conseil exécutif.
Édifice Honoré-Mercier,
835, René-Lévesque Blvd. Est,
3e étage Québec (Quebec)
G1A 1B4

The only way to stop tuition hikes is to make it so annoying and difficult for the government that it becomes obvious raising tuition would cause more harm than good.

Given the number of police officers present at every protest, and with the cost of having multiple helicopters in the air to watch over protesters, the government might be forced to spend more money paying the police to 'control' protesting students than they would even get from a tuition hike. It's simply not worth it for them to jeopardize our future like this.

So this summer, while you're relaxing in the sun and enjoying your time off, take time to keep up with what's going on in the province. While tuition may be the last thing on your mind, it certainly isn't the last thing on the government's, and if you blow it off, you'll probably wish you'd done something meaningful to keep school affordable come next September when your tuition is due.

Education is a right. As for affordable education, however, that's one right you may have to be willing to fight for.

—Erin Sparks
Photo Editor

Editorial Cartoon

Protest Responsibly

GRAPHIC ERIC BENT

