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An Alternative Is Possible

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EDUCATION

UNDER FIRE IN IRAN



From Left: Dr Frank Chalk, Dr Payam Akhovan and Nika Khanjani sit in sombre discussion of the human rights violations being perpetrated in Iran.

PHOTO CLARA HASKELL

Bahá'í Religious Group Brings Human Rights Issue to ConU

• JACOB ROBERTS

Systematic discrimination, violence and the denial of basic civil rights in Iran is actively being countered by education, and the discussion came to Concordia University on Jan. 19.

Education Under Fire, a human rights campaign that has produced a documentary film of the same name, aims to bring awareness to the denial of the Bahá'í population's access to opportunities for learning in their own country.

An unrecognized religious minority with an estimated 300,000 members, the Bahá'í have been systematically persecuted and subjected to arrests, torture, and false imprisonment, according to Amnesty International.

"The way that [Iran] operates now, [...] rights and Bahá'í freedoms are generally repressed across the board," said Donna Hakimian, national campaign consultant for EUF. "One of the groups that really faces this is the students."

Calling the lack of admission to higher education "a very dire and distressing situation," Hakimian explained that the Bahá'í traditionally place a high social and religious value on education.

Comprised of many members from a wide variety of backgrounds worldwide, EUF was formed with the main goal of exposing the oppression of the Bahá'í people in Iran. The group says the persecution of the Bahá'í stems from their teachings, which are inconsistent with traditional Islamic beliefs.

"It's a very dire situation because the Bahá'í value education so much. So when the entire Bahá'í population cannot attend university, it is very distressing," said Hakimian.

Constant threat of government retribution has not hindered their desire for education, however, as an underground teaching network to educate the Bahá'í youth in Iran has been in operation since 1987, currently educating around 50,000 students.

This initiative, known as the

Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education, is the subject of the documentary.

Raising awareness of this issue in Canada and screening the film is something that Yovania Veeren, project coordinator of the Bahá'í Community in Canada, thinks is essential to helping put an end to the injustice.

The documentary exposes how Bahá'í adherents have dealt with their oppression in a manner "very different from the ways one would usually think that one would respond to persecution," said Veeren. "There was no violence whatsoever—it is very peaceful."

But recently, professors have come under attack by government forces raiding the houses where classes were taking place and imprisoning educators, said Veeren.

In 2006, 54 young people were arrested by Iranian officials, allegedly during a community service teaching project, and were eventually sentenced to four years in prison for propaganda against the regime. In May 2011, 30 homes were raided.

While doing research in Iran, Montreal filmmaker Nika Khanjani came into contact with the BIHE and remained with them for two years as a volunteer educator.

"The university was the example [...] of this response to systematic persecution in a way that was tremendously creative, absolutely collaborative [and] completely volunteer-run—and it was functioning," said Khanjani. "That was the miracle that I was witnessing, that this university was actually working."

The Concordia Association for Bahá'í Studies hosted this weekend's panel discussion, and Concordia history professor Dr. Frank Chalk—who is also director of the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Violations—compared the plight of the Bahá'í people to other atrocities brought on by hate propaganda, such as the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide.

"We have documentary evidence going back to 2005 that the military and intelligence agencies of the government of Iran are in-

sistently working to identify all the members of the Bahá'í faith in the country," said Chalk.

The Bahá'í in Iran were murdered in the hundreds through 1979 and 1981, Clark continued, explaining that a campaign of targeted killing and assassinations actively sought to eliminate the entire leadership of the Bahá'í faith.

Education Under Fire has been screened at many universities, including Harvard—which is now among 50 other universities in the United States recognizing degrees from the BIHE.

"According to Elise Auerbach from Amnesty International," said Hakimian, "the Iranian Government is very sensitive to their public image. So if professors are now talking about [what is happening], if it's included in syllabuses, if people are writing letters to the Iranian Government, it does elicit change."

Visit the EUF website, educationunderfire.com for more information.

HOW CON U STOLE CHRISTMAS

Holidays Were Stolen,
Say Employees

• KATIE MCGROARTY

Concordia University is heading to court to settle a case with support staff who say the administration stole their holidays.

The Concordia University Support Staff Union has filed three grievances regarding unpaid holiday vacations from 2010–2011.

According to the technical sector of the support staff union, the workers are owed paid vacation time from Jan. 4 and Dec. 23, 2010 and Jan. 3, 2011.

To draw attention to the issue, the union released posters featuring the Grinch from Dr. Seuss' *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* standing in a police lineup, with a caption saying "Concordia, the Grinch who stole our holidays."

Even though the arbitrator in the case ruled in favour of the union, the university has decided to appeal the arbitration and has filed a judicial review.

"Concordia is acting in bad faith," says Alex MacPherson, president of the technicians' union, which represents all 105 technicians at Concordia.

"Rarely does an arbitrator's decision get overturned, so we don't really know why they feel the need to do this."

Because of the university's request, no action will be taken regarding the CUSSU grievances until a decision is made in a superior court. A hearing date has not yet been scheduled.

The union says that, as per their contract, if a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, then it must be moved to the following or previous day, while the university says the union wrongfully interpreted their collective agreement.

"The university is perfectly within its rights to request the Superior Court to review the arbitrator's decision, just as the CUSSU would have been fully within its rights to do the same had it lost its grievances," said Concordia Spokesperson Chris Mota.

Combined Efforts Benefit the Homeless



The Old Brewery Mission, one of the three biggest Missions in Montreal, provides shelter and services for homeless men and woman in Montreal.

PHOTO MONONG PAUL

Three Montreal Shelters Team Up to Share Resources

• JACOB ROBERTS

It wasn't uncommon a few years ago for a homeless person to be turned away from a shelter due to over-crowding, even in the dead of winter.

But over the last five years, Montreal's three major homeless shelters—the Welcome Hall Mission, the Old Brewery Mission and Maison du Père—have been taking steps to join forces and ensure that no one is left out in the cold.

"One of the largest problems that we're dealing with right now is the mental health issue. A lot of our clients suffer from mental health problems," said Cyril Morgan of the Welcome Hall Mission. "Trying to get a psychologist to work with us is very difficult."

The three shelters have begun talks with McGill University, the Université de Montréal and the provincial government to try and get training for their intake workers, so that they will be able to recognize mental health issues or triggers for certain people and then send them off to professionals who can work with them.

"Many [homeless] people suf-

fer from all kinds of issues—they fall asleep during the day time, freeze their hands, freeze their feet—all kinds of crazy stuff. I know society will say, 'Why should we pick this up?'" said Morgan.

The three shelters are also working closely with the At Home/Chez Soi program, a federally sponsored project which aims to help with those dealing with the financial burden of living with mental illness.

"We've been working with them for the last two years and we're very concerned about when funding runs out from this program in 2013, that the homeless people who do suffer from mental illness will slowly migrate back to the streets," said Morgan.

"You can't take a person who has been on the streets for five years or more, put a band-aid on them and say, 'In a month you'll be fine.' [Helping these people is] a long-term process."

The first step taken by the three missions five years ago was to petition the city for a shuttle bus that would take homeless people from a full shelter to one with vacancies.

"We would talk to each other,

but it was like we were all different businesses. It got to a point where we said, 'This is enough. Together we can do much more than apart,'" said Morgan.

Maison du Père and the Old Brewery Mission are located seven blocks away from each other. In the past, if one was full, there might still have been a chance of making it on foot to the next one before they all closed their doors for the night.

The Welcome Hall Mission, however, is considerably further away, which means that for the homeless, choosing the wrong shelter could mean a night on the street in temperatures dropping to -20 C and lower.

In addition to the shuttle bus, the shelters will now open their doors early if the temperature drops below -10 C.

On any given night, the three shelters can house around 640 of the roughly 30,000 homeless people in Montreal, said the Old Brewery Mission's Michelle Llambias.

"We've had that number for the past five years," she noted. "It's hard to calculate, [so] it's a rough estimate. About a third of that number is women."

"You can't take a person who has been on the streets for five years or more, put a band-aid on them and say, 'In a month you'll be fine.' [Helping these people is] a long-term process."

—Cyril Morgan,

Welcome Hall
Mission Representative

We Don't Need Your Education

Alternative University Project Redefines
the Way We Learn *By Corey Pool*



ON A COLD WINTER NIGHT IN MONTREAL, A SMALL GROUP OF STUDENTS AND ACTIVISTS GATHERED IN THE BASEMENT OF A PUB ON STE. CATHERINE ST. TO SIP CHEAP BEER AND SCHEME WAYS TO REBUILD THE UNIVERSITY AS WE KNOW IT—FROM THE GROUND UP.

The night was heavy with political conversation soaked in happy-hour Labatt Blue; the mood lively and abuzz with new beginnings as those present officially launched the Alternative University Project.

"The basic goal of the project is to give classes outside of the university and in the community so that people can actually participate in learning while avoiding the commodified process behind [the university system,]" said Concordia Graduate Students' Association representative Erik Chevrier.

The project aims to redefine the educational system by offering free classes taught by students and professors while encouraging a communal learning structure. It is non-hierarchical, consensus-based and run entirely by volunteer learners and facilitators.

Still in its infancy, the idea for the AUP first arose at McGill University, conceived by students in the midst of tuition protests and the looming possibility of student strikes. It has since grown to include over 50 members and many others who support the idea of stepping outside of the conventional university to learn.

One such supporter is McGill associate professor Kevin McDonough, who specializes in the philosophy of education. He says

the idea is a very worthy in principle, even if he doesn't foresee it overtaking the current university system.

McDonough credits the Occupy movement for prompting university professors to give more informal classes like this on topics related to economic inequality and other concerns that the protests aimed to discuss.

The AUP's academic calendar currently boasts 11 courses described as "drop-dead gorgeous" that allow one to participate in studies in post-capitalist futures, a programming and web-design study group, a sustainable architecture studies course—and even a knitting class.

Redefining the idea of what a student is and the way in which the student learns is at the forefront of the AUP's mission.

"We're in this state of academia where you learn from an expert and the learning is strictly one-way, rather than a model where we learn with and from each other," said Galen Macdonald, a McGill student and one of the early organizers of the project.

"We also wanted to break away from the idea that learning is confined to within the walls of the university," said Macdonald. "[Learning] can happen anywhere."

As important as it is for the project, the lack of a defined

space has been cause for some debate within the group. While the idea of a home base is being considered, currently classes are slated to take place in cafés, lofts, basements and public spaces.

"People have different ideas about what's next," she said.

Though some, like Chevrier, look at the project with long-term goals, Macdonald isn't entirely sure what the future holds.

True to the nature of the AUP, Macdonald views the project as more of a learning experience.

"I'm more of the thought that this is just a big experiment for a certain amount of time, and we're going to have to see where we get to, what problems we face, and what we can come up with," said Macdonald.

"It's exciting, and the possibilities are really endless."

"We're doing this for its own sake," he said. "We're learning for the sake of learning, and building this community for the sake of having the community. Anything else that comes along with it is just a silver lining."

McDonough is excited at the possibilities as well, even though he's never taken part in such a project. He thinks that, given time, people both inside and outside of the ivory tower will come to see the benefits of an alternative university.

"There's no doubt that, socially, the credential of the uni-

"We're in this state of academia where you learn from an expert and the learning is strictly one-way, rather than a model where we learn with and from each other,"

—Galen Macdonald
AUP Organizer

versity degree is a valuable thing," he said. "Students wouldn't pay as much as they do and put as much energy into getting a degree if they weren't valuable commodities for them."

But, he continued, "if you don't want the credential or you don't see that as essential to what your life is about and you still want to throw yourself full-fledged into [getting an education], you can do it."

For more information, visit alternativeuniversityproject.tumblr.com.

ALTERNATIVE U COURSES

The Greenhaus:
Experimenting with
Sustainability in the City:
Saturdays, 10:30 a.m., The
Plant, 185 Van Horne
greenhaus.class@gmail.com

**Programming and Web
Design Study Group:**
montreal.programming.class@gmail.com Meetings are Sundays
at 2 p.m. at Galen's place, 3654
Coloniale

**RAFT 438: New Materials
Writing Workshop
and Discussion:**
First meeting will be on Satur-
day, Jan. 28.
Time and place tbd. [newmate-
rialsworkshop@gmail.com](mailto:newmaterialsworkshop@gmail.com)

**Exploring the Mind in Bud-
dhism, Phenomenology, and
Cognitive Science:**
Thursdays, 6-8 p.m., Leacock
927 on McGill Campus, first
class: Jan. 26,
buddhism.cogsci@gmail.com

Knitting:
Mondays, 5-6:30 p.m., 570 Mil-
ton, Apt 25. Tea and treats wel-
come. stettinette@sprynet.com

**Studies in Post-Capitalist
Futures:**
Thursdays, 4 p.m., QPIRG
Concordia 1455 Maisonneuve O

Sustainable Architecture:
Sunday, Jan. 22, 8-9 p.m., 1812
Baile

\$10K Found in President's Coffers

Money to Cover Winter Orientation Budget

• ANDREW BRENNAN

The Concordia Student Union received a surprise \$10,000 from the President's Office, which the union is using to cover a majority of the Winter Orientation costs.

Floating in the ether of the President's Office accounting system was \$10,000 meant for the CSU three years ago, said Jordan Lindsay, CSU VP Finance. The surprise kickback saved the union from digging into other revenue pools for this semester's festivities.

Winter Orientation kicked off on Monday with free coffee and a fruit, and bagels from Fairmount Bagels in the downtown library atrium.

Jan. 24 is Outdoors Day at Loyola campus, and will feature sporting events and hot chocolate for students. At the end of the day, students can warm up at multi-cultural night events.

There will also be a Many Tastes of Concordia club fair, a Reggie's Bar Drink-Off with a Hangover Breakfast of French toast the following morning.

The CSU had originally set

"It is hard to find companies whose mandates are in line with our ethics, and it's important to be strict with who we work with,"

—Laura Glover
VP Student Life

aside \$5,500 for the week-long event, but due to the \$10,000 from the President's Office, the CSU will only have to spend \$400 on the now \$10,400 event.

The breathing room of extra revenue meant the CSU did not need corporate sponsorship, according to CSU VP Student Life Laura Glover.

"We try to avoid external sponsorship in general; it is hard to find companies whose mandates are in line with our ethics, and it's important to be strict with who we work with," she explained.



PHOTO CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

BRIEFS

Starbucks Gets Its License

Starbucks Coffee, already serving beer and wine at six stores in Seattle and Portland, OR, will be expanding the number of its outlets that offer alcoholic beverages. Their plan is to lure more customers into their stores during the evening hours, when most people aren't in the mood for coffee. According to Clarice Turner, the senior vice-president of Starbucks, the stores that will be offering alcohol have been specifically chosen for their location and ambiance. These outlets will be bigger and have more seating than an average Starbucks, and will also be serving fruit and cheese platters and focaccia bread with olive oil, offering an alternative to their fudge bars and breakfast sandwiches. The new locations will be spread across the United States, including Chicago, Atlanta and Southern California. So far, however, the company has no plans to bring their booze north of the border.

Genocide Suspect Deported

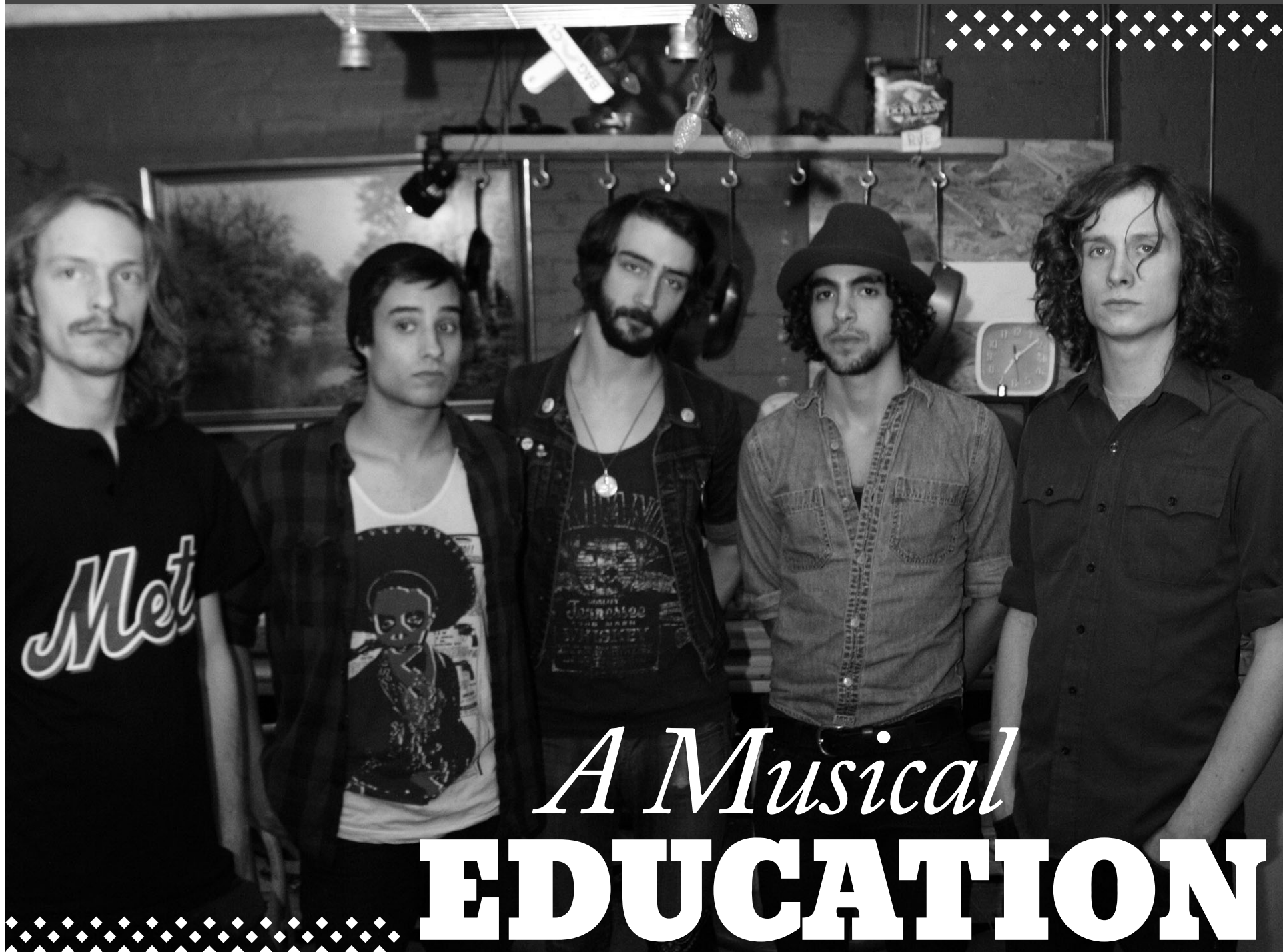
Genocide suspect Léon Mugesera has lost a 15-year legal battle to remain in Canada. Mugesera is suspected of inciting the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. He fled to Canada in 1993 with his wife and five children, but was ordered to return to Rwanda in 1996. He fought the deportation all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. In 2005, it was ruled that there were reasonable grounds for his involvement in the genocide. Last December, after six years of government review on the risk of Mugesera being tortured upon his return to Rwanda, it was ordered that he must go. On Monday, the Federal Court of Canada refused a final plea by Mugesera to stay in the country for a stay of proceedings until the United Nations Committee Against Torture could review his case. Now, Léon Mugesera is going home.

Mother Beaten in Local Attack

A 45-year-old Montreal woman was badly beaten in the head with a blunt object, leaving her in critical condition on Sunday. Her 20-year-old son is considered a suspect in the beating and is facing charges. According to Sureté du Québec Sgt. Claude Ross, the son called 9-1-1 after allegedly attacking his mother, and did not seem intoxicated when the police arrived on the scene. The woman was found at around 5:00 p.m. in her apartment in Cacouna, a town 218 kilometres northwest of Quebec City, where she lives with her son. She is now in serious but stable condition at an undisclosed hospital in Quebec City. Ross added that the police are still investigating possible motives that may have provoked the son to attack his mother.

Genome Sequencing Beats Cancer

Krystal James, a medical technician from Dallas, TX has spent the last year fighting an aggressive breast cancer that was threatening to take her life. During her treatment, her doctors decided to do something a little unorthodox and map the genome of her tumour. Genome sequencing maps the genetic information, or DNA, of the subject organism. This allowed the doctors to discover surprising abnormalities in the DNA from James' diseased tissue. It revealed that a new drug that was being tried on James was successfully targeting genetic aberrations in her tumour. A year later, James is getting back to normal. She is attending her son's sporting events and even school meetings. "I can get back to being a mom again," James said. It has been 10 years since the original human genome was mapped, and now genome mapping has paved the way for curing previously mysterious ailments and rare diseases.



No Half Measures for Toronto's Dinosaur Bones

• KATIE MCGROARTY

Dinosaur Bones are the real thing.

Not in the regenerated-from-fossilized-amber sort of way, but rather a group of guys from Ontario roaming the country sharing their not-so-Jurassic sounds. Armed with a slightly haunting brand of guitar-driven indie pop, these guys are in it for the long haul.

A group of friends in their mid-20s, Dinosaur Bones have pinpointed the most promising recipe for success—hard work.

It's obvious that the band wasn't put together on a whim.

"If you want to be successful creatively, you have to throw everything at it," said Ben Fox, lead guitarist and singer. Fox decided to commit to music full-time while halfway through a stint at Concordia, studying English literature and political science.

"It wasn't really something that I ever had to think about. I knew that this was what I had to do," he said. "I knew that if I didn't do it, I'd regret it for a long time."

Undaunted by the track record of once-ambitious, now ex-musicians that chose that same path, Fox said he found it to be the most natural decision he ever made.

"I think back-up plans are probably one of the most creatively stifling elements you can have in your life," he said.

Growing up in what he describes as a "circle of tons of artists and musicians," he played music with people throughout high school, some of whom would eventually come to make up Dinosaur Bones.

Luckily, when he decided to drop his studies and take up music, his old friends were on the same page.

"I didn't have to twist any arms or anything," he said. "For the

most part, we were pretty familiar with how each other work. It was comfortable from the get-go."

Although last year's debut LP *My Divider* may start out with a ballad soft on drums and heavy on lusty vocals, the subsequent tracks don't shy away from breaking the pattern. The record combines moments of dominant guitar rock with more subdued tracks, focusing on vocals and sophisticated riffs.

Hailing from the burgeoning indie rock circuit in Toronto, the band knows exactly where to draw the line between influence and imitating what came before them. The band entrusted the album's production to veteran producer Jon Drew, who has worked with Stars and Tokyo Police Club.

The result is a new take on Canadian alt-rock that will probably appeal more to fans of '90s mope-rock than those looking for the newest indie-pop hit. That

being said, a few of the tracks are still pretty damn catchy.

Fox says that some of *My Divider* is based on his move from Montreal to Toronto, but admits that the next album, which they are working on already, is turning out to be different.

"A lot of the songs on the album were based on leaving things I cared about behind," he explained. "But at the same time, I think every band's first album tends to be a culmination of things and tends to span across a longer period of time. The things that I'm currently writing about will definitely be from a different point in my life."

After opening for acts like Yukon Blonde and the Arkells, Dinosaur Bones are headlining almost every show this tour. They're set to hit the road for Montreal this week, and they'll be heading across southern Ontario for the next couple months.

As for plans in the future, Fox is wary about pinpointing what exactly would mean success for the Bones.

"It's more a matter of longevity, especially in music, and being able to sustain the quality of work that you're putting out," he said. "As well as being consistent as an artist that people are aware of and will continue to care about for an extended period of time."

Ready to go wherever their mid-tempo indie rock takes them, Dinosaur Bones aren't interested in taking the safe route. Touring coast-to-coast is the kind of education no university could provide, and the band are quickly becoming upperclassmen, a group of genuine, honest-to-goodness rockers willing to put in all of their efforts to keep living the dream.

Dinosaur Bones / Jan. 31 (w/ Prussia) / Il Motore (179 Jean-Talon St. W.)

Open to All
Friday, Feb. 3
4:00 p.m. H-649

openmedia

OpenFile city editor

Dominique Jarry-Shore

shares the advantages of a media model
fuelled by the relationship between
journalists and community interest.

THE LiNK

2012 BYELECTION

For the positions of Opinions Editor and Creative Director

The following contributors are eligible to come and vote:

Joshua Barkman, Andrew Brennan, Jeff Bush, Emily Campbell, Christopher Curtis, Richie Daly, Paku Daoust-Cloutier, Josh Davidson, Elysha Del Giusto-Enos, Shoshana Eidelman, Tyler Finigan, Grozdanovic, Sanaz Hassanpour, Rebecca Hiscott, Claudine Lamothé, Amanda Laprade, Brian Lapuz, Oliver Leon, Andrew Maggio, Dylan Maloney, Nicolas Martel, Katie McGroarty, Christopher Olson, Corey Pool, Amanda Siino, Hilary Sinclair, Sam Slotnick, Riley Sparks, Eric White, Jonathan Woods, Alex Woznica & current *Link* masthead.

The following contributors need one more contribution to be eligible to vote:

Camille Chacra, Boris Degas, Kevin Duarte, Iman & Caitlin Leroux

The following contributors need two more contributions to be eligible to vote:

Adam Aberra, Sean Celestrin, Stephen Cutler, Elise Favis, Rachel Fox, Hannah Hackney, Elsa Jabre, Christine Jeyarajah, Sean McClure, Allan Morais, Lizy Mostowski, Alex St-Laurent, Christopher Tan & Antonella Victorero

To run, this is what you need to do:

All candidates must submit a letter of intent not exceeding one single page, to be posted in the Link's office on Feb. 10, by 4 p.m. This letter will explain the candidate's reasons for running, goals and any relevant experience for the position.

Elections will take place at *The Link* office, Hall Building, room H-649. For more information, email: editor@thelinknewspaper.ca or call 514-848-2424 x7407

Feb. 17, 2012
4:00 p.m. H-649

NEW DOCS

on the BIG SCREEN



A young resident of Bombay Beach plays into the creepy factor.

PHOTO ALMA HAR'EL

Festival Premieres in a Hollow Desert Oasis

• BIANCA DAVID

You won't need to resort to streaming that new edgy documentary on your laptop anymore. Montrealers will now have the opportunity to see recent international docs on the big screen with the help of Rencontres internationales du documentaire de Montréal and Film POP.

Following the success of this year's edition of RIDM, the city will once again be hosting some of the world's best cinéma vérité.

A new monthly series called Docville is launching Thursday, kicking off with *Bombay Beach*, winner of the Best Documentary Feature prize at the 2011 Tribeca Film Festival.

Directed by Israeli-American filmmaker Alma Har'el, the film

follows a rural community living on the shores of an artificial salt-water lake in the middle of the Colorado Desert in California.

In the 1950s, developers built an oasis-like resort town called Bombay Beach there, but the experiment failed and what remains today is a remote ghost town that a community of 300 or so calls home.

"There's something about the landscape of the film; it's such a strange and surreal place in the middle of the desert," said Charlotte Selb, director of programming for Docville. "It's the visual embodiment of the death of the American Dream."

The film is an interesting hybrid of many cinematic elements, including fiction, choreography and music, presented in docu-

mentary format. There are staged sequences and choreographed dance numbers, but ultimately the film presents a story of real characters living in a unique place.

"There's the whole music aspect of it that I find really interesting, with the music of Beirut and Bob Dylan," Selb said. "I think it's a movie that's really enjoyable. It's beautifully shot."

Bombay Beach was chosen to launch the series because of the amount of acclaim it has received since its debut at the Berlin International Film Festival last year. Despite all the recognition however, this will be the first chance for Montrealers to see it.

"We're looking for films that surprise us, that move us—with a variety of topics. We're really

going in lots of directions," said Selb.

"We want to make [the audience] discover films they wouldn't expect, we want to show them what documentary can be. The genre is so innovative these days, [so] we're trying to show the whole range of what's being done."

Bombay Beach will be screened this Thursday at Excen-tris Cinema (3536 St. Laurent Blvd.) at 7:00 p.m. A discussion with the director—via Skype—will follow.

Docville will premiere a documentary on the last Thursday of every month until September.

For a complete list of dates and more details, visit ridm.qc.ca/docville.



DAILY COVERAGE AT
THELINKNEWSPAPER.CA

FRAME TO FRAME

Ralph Fiennes deserves props for writing and starring in his modern-take on Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*. He does justice to a forgotten classic, proving that his filmmaking expertise stretches from the front to the back of the camera lens.



FRINGE FOOD

L'Entrecôte St-Jean's two menu options—vegetarians be damned—are steak frites, or steak frites. As with a handful of other Montreal bistros, they've been doing this well for about 30 years. Unlike the other Montreal bistros, *L'Entrecôte* never bothered to try cooking anything else.



PHONE SEX

"I have always really, really enjoyed the power of making people come," phone sex operator-cum-performer Cameryn Moore mused on her blog, *PhoneWhere*. "This pre-dates my involvement in paid phone sex by decades."



WEEKLY SPINS

There's nothing like the smell of fresh Satanism in the morning. The masked Swedish sextet *Ghost* have brought their melodic metal to North America—even if they won't reveal their identities.



THE SPORT WITHIN the art



Concordia Contemporary Dance students limber up during a lesson in the MB building. Their first public performance of the semester is Friday in the MB Building.

PHOTO ERIN SPARKS

• RICHIE DALY

A group of dancers jump around, contorting their bodies and smiling in spite of the obvious physical exertion. Their hands cut through the air in delicate but precise movements to frame their bodies.

They are living, moving, breathless sweaty pieces of art unraveling a story movement by movement. As they collectively land on the floor, the room, on the seventh floor of the John Molson Building, hums with vibration.

"Every time I tell someone I'm studying contemporary dance they always say, 'Like *So You Think You Can Dance*?' " said third-year dance major Linnea Gwiazda.

"There's nothing on *So You Think You Can Dance* I've ever done [...] That's not what we do in this program."

The Concordia Contemporary Dance program is one of a kind—in that students are taught choreography as well as performance. For the degree-seeking dancers wishing to immerse themselves in the vibrant Montreal art scene there are, in actuality, no other options.

But for the ConU dancers, the uniqueness of the program means there are no other options in North

America that intentionally address the artistry between movement and emotion—more than just technique and the physical ability to leap and kick.

As well as being graceful, dancers have to be very fit. Their bodies must be able to withstand heavy cardio exercises, heavy floor contact and continuous stretching.

"My friend doesn't consider dance an art form, but she does consider it a sport. At least she realizes how much it taxes the body," said first-year student Emma Chorostecki.

Dancers have a lifestyle dedicated to keeping their bodies prepped for the exhausting technique classes they have five days a week.

"Tech," as it's known, is more than a physical workout, as students try to absorb new movement styles all while performing to the best of their abilities, as each movement is evaluated. But as much as tech is exhausting, the students stress the need for additional workouts at Le Gym or at other dance technique classes in Montreal.

"It's a different sort of physical demand. Because we're learning so much, it's so mentally and physically exhausting," said Chorostecki.

"I'm an athlete, but I would qualify that [as being] a dancer—but that's because I'm proud of the blend of creativity, determination and effort I put into my technique."

Despite the physical demands, the program stresses they do not regulate students' body types—only the level of effort they give in class. Peer into a dance class and a variety of body types can be seen, but all possess the same ability to move.

"You can have somebody as thin as a stick who does not have that immense power. But then again you can. You've got to accept the body you're born with," said professor Silvy Panet-Raymond, who's been with the program since 1986.

"You've got to train and be consistent. You have to eat well, sleep well and be incredibly disciplined."

The students all buy into this stringent methodology, and they seem to think they've found the right program for them.

"I had auditioned for places in Ontario and mailed auditions out to Western Canada, but once I got to the Concordia audition, I just knew I had to get in here," said third-year dance student and Toronto native Maxine Segalowitz.

"It was less of a choice. Every-

body in our program is contemporary in the way they are as a person."

Here, dancers only perform student-choreographed work, beginning with an end-of-year showcase in their first year and bi-annual showcases in the second and third. Students take months creating pieces they think are worthy of showcase, and rehearsals for shows extend well into early morning hours.

The added focus on choreography makes for a sharp learning curve.

Traditionally, more commercial-thinking choreographers might suffer some growing pains when adapting to the idea of dance as primarily art, as opposed to entertainment. There's no student executing ubiquitous "...Baby One More Time" music videos with twirling and flailing Britney Spears choreography.

Artistic ambitions and talent alone aren't enough, however. Genuine creative energy and passion is necessary to be chosen out of a pool of around 100 students.

"Teaching someone with talent [but no] motivation to work is like pulling a car up a hill. Even if it's a Cadillac, you're still pulling it up a hill," said Panet-Raymond.

"Teaching someone with talent but no motivation to work is like pulling a car up a hill. Even if it's a Cadillac, you're still pulling it up a hill."

—Silvy Panet-Raymond,
Contemporary Dance professor

And Gwiazda and Chorostecki are passionate—they feel content with their choice to pursue a field with little monetary gain awaiting them in their future.

"In my first year, in my class of 29, my professor said about three of [us] will be somewhat successful," said Gwiazda.

"We'll be working five jobs to support this art, but at least we'll be happy."

The first performance of the semester for the Contemporary Dance Department, called *Studio 7*, is happening Jan. 27 at the MB Building, room 7.625. Entrance is free and beer is \$2.00.



PHOTO DAVID MURPHY

GRADES BEFORE THE GRIDIRON

Rookie Vaillancourt Tipped for Pro Ball, but Rejects International Bowl

• ANDREW MAGGIO

Rookies are supposed to be complimentary pieces to a sports team. They're expected to stay quiet, absorb information and learn the ropes until their moment comes somewhere down the road.

But once in a while a rookie breaks through the stereotype and becomes an overnight sensation. It happens all the time in pro sports, but this year we saw it in our own backyard courtesy of 19-year-old Stingers defensive back Kadeem Vaillancourt.

Vaillancourt, a native of Ottawa currently studying environmental science, burst onto to CIS football scene this year posting solid numbers (14 tackles, seven assists, one interception), and displaying the raw size and talent normally reserved for high-level NCAA college players.

For this, Vaillancourt was selected to play in the third annual International Bowl on Feb. 1 in Austin, Tx. The concept revolves around pitting a U.S. squad against a team formed of international players, all under 19-years of age.

"I'm really excited about the selection," said Vaillancourt, "It's a big game and I wanted to go there and show I could play with the guys on the top U.S. college teams."

But unfortunately, Vaillancourt will not be attending the event due to academic obligations, having made a commitment to be more focused on schoolwork than before.

"I found it really hard to find

balance between school and football. I ended up putting most of my effort into football," said Vaillancourt. "I've changed my habits toward school, making it an equal priority. I bring the same football mentality towards school now."

News of his selection was still a moment of extreme pride for him and his family.

"What he's doing is far beyond my reality," said Vaillancourt's proud father, Rick Clarke. "I tell his younger siblings 'following in your dad's footsteps is OK, but if I were you I would follow Kadeem's lead—he's way ahead.'"

Despite the fact that he won't participate head-to-head with the greatest on the continent, his dad stands by him whether he chooses to go into professional football, or stays on the traditional route. Many, however, are tipping the teenager off for the former.

"He's a very amazing kid and the family would be extremely happy and proud of him, but I don't think anyone here would be surprised [if he went pro], because he said that's what he is heading for," said Clarke. "I think if he's not playing pro football, it's because he chose not to."

Vaillancourt's accomplishment garnered similar responses from his teammates and coaches. Defensive coordinator Phil Roberts thought Vaillancourt was well-deserving of the recognition.

"We're definitely proud of him for being selected," said Roberts, "He did a great job this year covering some of the best receivers in the

country. He's very much a prototypical U.S. corner, he's got great size and the talent is definitely there."

Vaillancourt credits his early success to learning things quickly, and to his coaches and teammates for helping him assimilate to his new environment.

"I feel the reason I performed the way I did is because I have a coaching staff who I felt, from the beginning, had faith in me and want me to succeed," said Vaillancourt. "They placed me in situations to make plays, be it scheme or play calling, and I feel the way we play defence plays to my strengths."

Regarding the tumultuous ending of this season—where the Stingers lost 33-7 to the Laval Rouge et Or—Vaillancourt was already looking ahead to next year, showing no worry about the state of the team moving forward.

"I'm surrounded by perfectionists therefore their attitudes should rub off on me and make next season that much more interesting. I urge people to come out and watch."

Vaillancourt is already being touted as a good prospect with a great chance to play professional football, something that he says has been part of his plan all along.

"I'm in university to not only get a degree to fall back on, but also to work as hard as I can so that someday I can make it pro. I feel I can compete at that level," he said.

"I've been thinking about for so long that it all seems to make sense to me."



PHOTO AMANDA LAPRADE



DAILY COVERAGE AT
THELINKNEWSPAPER.CA

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Concordia 52 McGill 57
Concordia 55 Laval 51

Concordia's women's basketball team won't be finishing the 2011-12 season with a perfect record. They dropped the ball Saturday against the McGill Martlets, falling 57-52. They were victorious against the Laval Rouge et Or 24 hours earlier in Quebec City, however, topping them 55-51. The Stingers travel to Lennoxville this Friday to take on the Bishop's University Gaiters, before facing the Martlets again. Both games are set to start at 6:00 p.m.



MEN'S HOCKEY

Concordia 4 Carleton 5
Concordia 8 Ottawa 4
Concordia 4 UQTR 6

Injuries continue to plague Concordia's men's hockey team and it showed Saturday when they fell to the Carleton Ravens and again on Jan. 18 when they were down 5-1 early to the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières Patriotes before cutting the deficit down to two goals by game's end. This past week wasn't a complete loss for the Stingers, however, as they mopped the floor with the University of Ottawa Gee-Gees Friday night. The Stingers travel to UQTR tomorrow. Puck drops at 7:00 p.m.

WOMEN'S HOCKEY

Concordia 2 Montreal 5
Concordia 2 Ottawa 4

The women's hockey team had a rough weekend after crumbling in the second period on Friday against the Université de Montréal Carabins and blowing a 2-1 lead in Saturday's contest versus the Ottawa Gee-Gees. The Stingers will have their chance for redemption when the Gee-Gees come to the Ed Meagher Arena this Sunday. The puck drops at 3:00 p.m.

STILL PERFECT.



Cody Mazza-Anthony of McGill grabs one of his 9 rebounds of the night, but his efforts weren't enough to tarnish the Stingers' spotless record. PHOTO NATALIA LARA DIAZ BERRIO

The Stingers Fend Off McGill Squad, Remain Undefeated

• RICHIE DALY

For most of the game it was in jeopardy. The McGill Redmen nearly handed Concordia their first loss of the season, but the men's basketball team came back to win last Saturday's matchup 69-61, keeping their undefeated record still intact at 7-0.

The Redmen, who suffered a demoralizing season-opening home loss at the hands of the Stingers, were determined not to repeat the same mistakes as they came flying right out of the gate, outplaying Concordia and going up by 10 at the first break.

"The other team knows they're playing the number nine team in the country, so we get every team's best game," said Concordia guard Kyle Desmarais of the Stingers' reputation.

The game was still close at the half, with the Stingers only

being down by six, to the tune of a 31-25 score, but it all changed in the third quarter.

ConU started off the second half struggling to close the gap, but as McGill surged forward the Stingers clamped down and started forcing turnovers and limiting ball movement, energizing their own running game.

"We have a lot of quickness and a lot of speed. As soon as we start pressuring the ball for the full length of the court, we create the turnovers," said Desmarais about the Maroon and Gold's defensive efforts.

Stingers guard Decee Krah created the highlight of the game with one second left in the third quarter when he managed to catch and shoot a three-pointer with two defenders draped on him, giving Concordia the lead for the first time in the game.

Despite Krah's shot, the Redmen were determined not to suf-

"It was an ugly game. We were awful but we won ugly, and sometimes you have to win ugly, and we were lucky to win this game"

—John Dore,
Stingers Coach

"We had young kids on the floor in crucial situations. We turned it over way too many times and part of that was the Concordia defensive press, but it was also because of our inexperience," said Redmen head coach David DeAveiro.

On a night when the Stingers admittedly weren't at their best, Concordia head coach John Dore still had faith in his team.

"It was an ugly game. We were awful but we won ugly and sometimes you have to win this game," said Dore. "These guys believe in themselves and we executed in the end when we didn't in the beginning."

The Stingers will cross town to face the Redmen again this Saturday, after a trip to Lennoxville to take on the Bishop's University Gaiters Friday. Both games are at 8:00 p.m.

fer another defeat and fought back, resulting in a see-saw of lead changes in the final quarter.

The opposition were faced with the difficulty of manoeuvring around the Stingers' full-court press and found themselves turning over the ball three times in the game's waning minutes, which lead to a game-deciding 9-0 run for Concordia.

GOPen Marriage

Newt Gingrich and the Continuing Crusade to Ruin Free Love

GRAPHIC PAKU DAoust-Cloutier



• LAURA BEESTON

It's really unfortunate that Republican presidential hopeful Newt Gingrich has suddenly become the gross, 68-year-old poster boy for open marriage.

Last week, his second ex-wife, Marianne Gingrich, revealed in an ABC News interview that Newt had requested to open up the marriage after she discovered he was having a six-year affair with a political aide—who later became his third and current wife.

"I refused," Marianne told ABC about the alleged conversation. "And I said no, that is not a marriage."

There are many things wrong with this entire scenario and how it's being played out in the public consciousness, but let's start with that reaction: As uncomfortable as you may personally feel about it, Marianne, an open marriage is still a marriage and it's a real blow to those practicing responsible non-monogamy that you freely declared otherwise.

But open marriage, whatever Newt's attempts, should never be a loophole to negate infidelity. Despite being relegated to the fringes of society due to conservative and reactionary comments like these, open marriages are a legitimate lifestyle choice of committed couples that recognize the confines of sexual monogamy doesn't work for their particular partnership.

It should be personal—but now it's political.

Evidently, this arrangement doesn't work for everyone and it certainly didn't work for Mrs. Gingrich the Second at the time, but writing off alternative sexual unions because Newt Gingrich is a lying cheat sets us back light-years in terms of sexual evolution and understanding.

It doesn't help that her statement is dripping with an undeserved sense of superiority. One form of marriage here is "right," and the other is set up as profane, perverse—and apparently un-presidential.

But the public reaction to this

revelation is, sadly, predictable—with some exceptions actually opening up a discussion about the plurality of ways to engage in romantic and civil partnerships.

British newspaper *The Guardian*, for example, published an excellent feature called "I could teach Newt Gingrich a thing or two about open marriage" on Jan. 20.

The article outlined how "poly-family values" force those within the relationship to discuss their behaviour and expectations, negotiating partnerships and freedom in an ethical, open way—rather than going down the Newt path, hoping not to be found out and back-pedaling like crazy when they are.

While it's understandable people are raising hell about the subject—considering the request for an open marriage was coming from the same man who was hell-bent to impeach Bill Clinton over that famous blowjob, and who hypocritically seeks to moralize and impose laws on sex and love—there is something very disingenu-

ous about associating Newt with this model of marriage.

The pillars of an open marriage, as described in the bestselling 1972 book *Open Marriage*, are arguably the ideals of any loving partnership: they include trust, flexibility, communication and equality.

Clearly, these were not the things Newt was asking for or aiming to give to his former wife. He played the open marriage card because he was imploring her to turn a blind eye towards his years of philandering and messing around.

It was, as many pundits have stated over the weekend, "retroactive permission."

If we are to believe what has been alleged about his personal lives and previous wives, the ethics of an open marriage were nowhere to be found.

At this juncture, it's worth mentioning how super convenient it is that Newt has since publicly stated to have been reformed through the church and recognized the errors of his ways. Apparently, a little God as an afterthought is a good

enough cheating cleanse, and makes his transgressions excusable for those Republicans in Camp Newt.

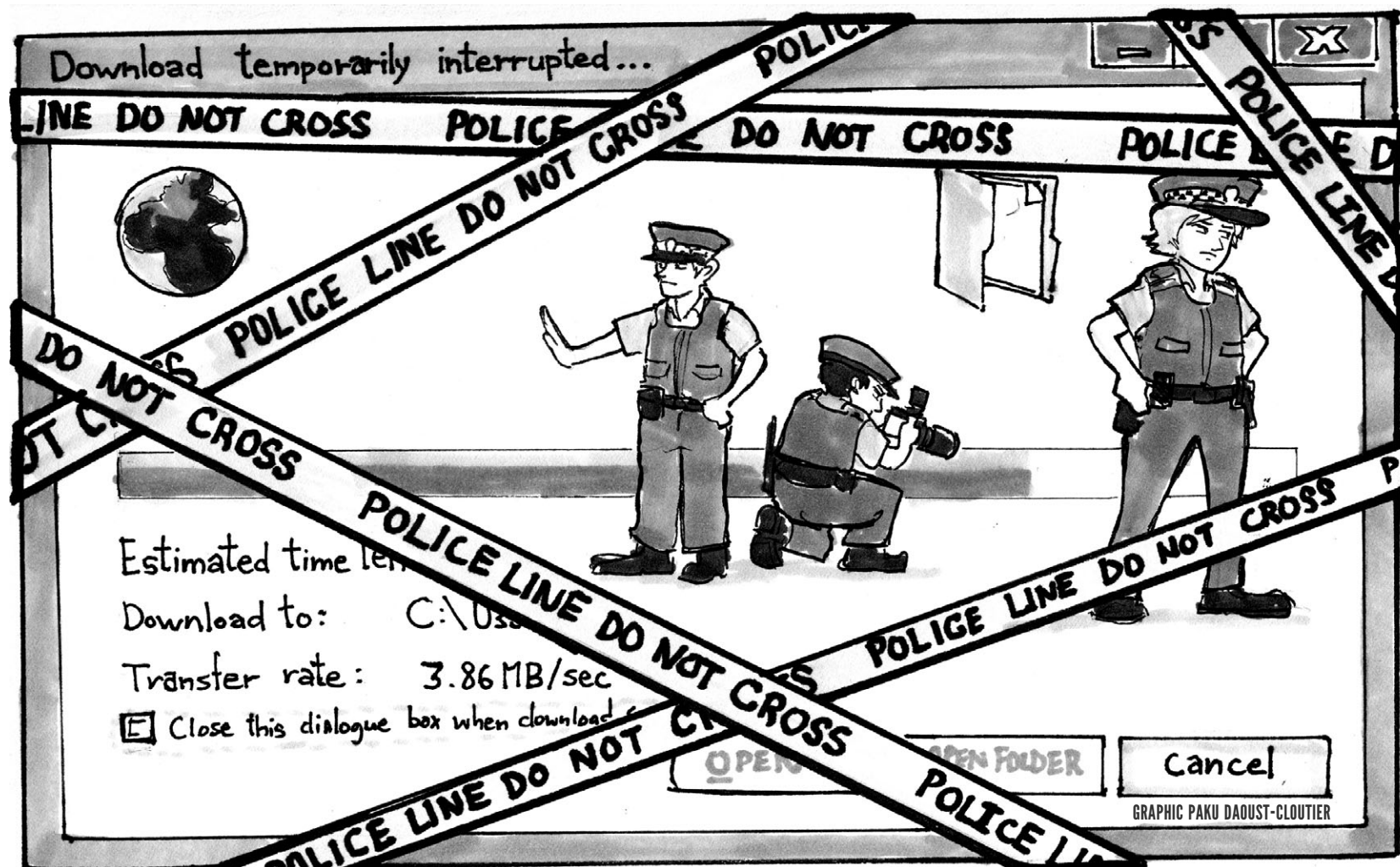
Please, someone, make it stop.

At the base of it, the entire debacle has given responsible non-monogamy—which really does have the potential to create more loving and realistic partnerships in a world where divorce rates and depression rates are at all-time-highs—a really ugly and undeserving rap. It's also what keeps people who are having open marriages from "coming out" about them.

Open marriages are a valid lifestyle choice—maybe not for the Gingriches, but for the estimated two to six per cent of wedded folks who are actively making it work.

If anything, maybe there is hope that Newt's marriage "bomb" creates some public wiggle room to think critically about social and sexual prohibitions and prescriptions, and why there is still a huge significance placed on sexual exclusivity as the only way for a partnership to work.

MEGA-EXPLODE



What Reactions to U.S. Gov't's MegaUpload Takedown Say About the War on Digital Piracy

• ALEX MANLEY

The day after the Jan. 18 Wikipedia-led symbolic blackout in protest of the American Congress's imminent vote on the Stop Online Piracy and Protect Intellectual Property Acts, the American government took down Megaupload.com.

The popular site that made it easy to for users to upload music, movies and TV shows for download symbolizes exactly the kind of thing that SOPA and PIPA were attempting to combat—an infinite, perfect warehouse for distributing copyrighted material.

The suit against Megaupload and its related entities charged them with robbing American shareholders of upwards of \$500 million.

The American government is worried about the major record companies' shareholders lost profits—an aspect of illegal downloading that doesn't even begin to enter the discussion for many who fret primarily about stealing from the artists. This is a perfect example of the absurdity of the debate that currently encircles copyright protection and illegal downloading.

Masturbation and Marijuana

There's a moment in Concordia graduate Brett Gaylor's 2009 copyright documentary *RiP: A Remix Manifesto* when Cory Doctorow, self-styled "online cultural critic" and writer for the tech website BoingBoing.net, compares the moral aspect of illegal downloading to masturbating.

"I think that what's happening

with copyright is the same thing that happened with masturbation. People are starting to admit to each other, 'Yeah, I do it too...'"

It's an interesting comparison, one that also extends to marijuana usage. What does one do about these practices that are condemned as sinful or illegal by the moral arbiters of the day, but are extremely popular and widespread regardless?

It seems as though eventually something has to give—either those at the top change their stance, or the masses at the bottom change their habits.

In the case of masturbation, it was the former. Religion became less of a dominant cultural force, and masturbation—a pretty low-profile sin, let's be honest—ceased to be an issue for all but the most authoritarian and fundamentalist of believers.

Marijuana hasn't reached that stage yet, but given the Liberal Party's recent attempts to legalize it in Canada, perhaps it will eventually. The days of *Reefer Madness* long gone—it seems every other film and TV show now treats weed with a knowing wink.

Internet piracy remains a pressing issue, however. The SOPA/PIPA issue is proof—the Orwellian bills were misguided attempts to assuage Hollywood and the record companies on the part of American legislators.

Soft on Piracy

When Congress announced it would be postponing the vote on the bills indefinitely on Friday in response to the widespread online

outrage, many saw it as a victory for the common Internet user.

Nevertheless, it's doubtful that this will be more than a reprieve, a temporary cease-fire in a continuing battle. Like the concept that you can make money off your intellectual property, downloading appears to be a hard habit to break.

It's a problem compounded by the fact that, in many cases, online piracy takes place in the same contexts as perfectly legal content consumption and the distinction is now being made all the murkier by businesses who are adapting to the new model.

If some music makers and companies provide free content, then it's conceivable that an album might not be worth anything, intrinsically.

Significant portions of the content available online are infringing on copyright as well (just take a tour of YouTube), but their continued presence makes them seem less illegal, while some videos and songs are taken down vigilantly.

As downloading becomes more prevalent, simple, and accepted—the industries realized suing everyday people for exorbitant amounts didn't make for good optics—and with the growing shift towards free content, a certain entrenching has occurred in the pro- and anti-piracy camps.

That fact became clear when Anonymous, the nebulous Guy Fawkes mask-wearing hacker collective, took credit for a series of distributed denial-of-service attacks that crashed the websites for the U.S. Department of Justice, Universal Music, the Recording In-

dustry of America Association and the Motion Picture Association of America.

As the news broke on Twitter, it was hard not to feel a certain surge of pride. It was a classic David-and-Goliath story, re-writ digital for the 21st century. But in the days that followed, the facts that came out complicated that narrative.

Kingpin Dotcom

With his lavish, jet-setting lifestyle and the shotguns, expensive artworks and multiple luxury cars that were seized during the Jan. 20 raid on his New Zealand home that led to his arrest, it's hard not to see Megaupload founder Kim Dotcom as Hollywood fodder—and who better to skewer the man than the people he was getting rich stealing from?

With \$42 million dollars of profit in 2010 alone, Dotcom's Megaupload became a gigantic, well-oiled machine for copyright infringement, a website that rose through the seemingly infinite ranks to become one of the web's most-used tools.

While the site masqueraded as an online content locker that perhaps turned a blind eye to the digital piracy it was being used for, it's clear in the U.S. government's indictment that Megaupload's entire business model revolved around illegal content.

For one, they paid premium users in return for downloading popular material and secondly, while they deleted child pornography and pro-terrorism propaganda, they danced around the issue when it came to simple copyright in-

fringement, deleting URLs to pirated material—but not the copies on their servers, allowing other URLs linking to the same content to remain active.

With the dust beginning to settle, it became clear what Megaupload really is: a sophisticated crime ring that actively sought to encourage piracy in order to enrich its founders.

In that light, the DDoS attacks by Anonymous—which used unsuspecting third-party computers to help crash the sites that had drawn their ire—seem more like misguided, knee-jerk, vigilante justice on the part of a nebulous cyber-gang than anything.

The illegal download business model of people like Kim Dotcom and the hacktivism of the Anonymous collective, however thrilling they might seem in the short term, only serve to undermine whatever arguments there are for keeping the Internet free and unregulated in the minds of the world's media corporations and policymakers.

If we are to have an open worldwide web, it looks like we'll have to fight for it. But that's a fight we'll have to win in public relations terms if we have a hope of battling legislation that attempts to throw the Internet baby out with the digital piracy bathwater.

However clever and technologically deft Anonymous and its ilk are, the strongest argument for an open Internet isn't a DDoS attack—it's a bustling web, alive with downloads both paid-for and free, where, whatever money is made, and however it's made, the old adage rings true—content is king.



Riot police were called on for crowd control at several anti-tuition hike protests in 2011. PHOTO RILEY SPARKS

TOO QUICK TO CRUCIFY

The SPVM Made the Right Call Jan. 6

• RILEY SPARKS

It took almost no time for Montreal's anti-police activists to make cheap politics of the tragic Jan. 6 police shooting of Farshad Mohammadi.

Two days after the shooting, Howl!—a collective that advocates for social justice through art—wrote, “As Canada’s Conservative government moves to enforce economic austerity measures that place the burden of the financial crisis on poor and working people, let us also mark this police killing within the growing calls for social and economic justice in Quebec and Canada.”

A speaker at Howl!’s protest in Bonaventure Metro on Jan. 10 argued that “our economic system killed Farshad Mohammadi,” and that his shooting was evidence that “capitalism kills.” Artist and activist Norman Nawrocki, who spoke to *The Gazette* that day, was

more direct: “The police decide, ‘We’ll take care of the homeless problem for you, we’ll start killing them.’”

Yes, the cops in this city aren’t always great and they make plenty of mistakes. And yes, there are too many homeless in Montreal and more needs to be done to protect them. But the important discussion about the inequalities and economic injustices that cause homelessness is pretty academic when the manifestation of this problem is stabbing you in the face with a pair of box cutters. So let’s set aside politics for a moment, take a step back and look at the facts of the situation.

Like most details about Mohammadi, the events preceding his confrontation with police in Bonaventure Metro are unclear. What is certain is that two police officers approached him in the station and some time later he stabbed one in the chest, neck and

face. After a short pursuit, the officers fired three rounds, killing Mohammadi.

The police just can’t let a violent, armed man run around a busy metro station. Mohammadi had already attacked one person—it wouldn’t have been unreasonable for the police to believe he might try to hurt someone else. Still, did they have to shoot him? What options did they have?

If the officers had been able to clear the area, they might have worked to calm Mohammadi down while they waited for better less-lethal options. But the escalating situation and crowded scene would have made that difficult. Trying to disarm him would have been dangerous. The officers would almost certainly have been cut, and if that cut struck an artery, bleeding to death would take minutes.

Pepper spray and tasers are also not ideal for a rapidly moving situation. Neither are guaranteed to

work, and can be defeated by thick clothing, wind or movement. It’s not clear if these officers were armed with stun guns—the Montreal police have only 48 in their arsenal.

Shooting to wound also isn’t as easy as it looks on TV. Legs and arms are very small, probably moving, targets. There are major arteries in both, so even if the officer did hit their target, the person could still rapidly bleed to death. The shot is also much more likely to miss and hit someone else, as happened last year to Patrick Lamoges, who was killed by a stray police bullet.

The police have a tough job, and many of them do it well. Others, like those who shot Fredy Villanueva and Patrick Lamoges, do not. We can speculate all we want about whether these officers made the right call, but until the Sûreté du Québec investigation wraps up and all of the facts are public, no

one will know for sure.

The presumption of innocence in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms applies equally to all. And immediately, almost gleefully, rushing to crucify the police without knowing or caring what happened on Jan. 6 is ignorant.

Activists devalue their very legitimate cause when discarding facts to fit a prejudiced narrative of psychopathic pigs murdering the vulnerable.

Hopefully Mohammadi’s death will force the city and province to work harder to help people like him. There are many ways to prevent these situations before they happen, but there’s little the police can do when confronted by a violent, unstable person wielding a knife in a metro station, no matter how disadvantaged or marginalized he or she might be.

Social workers and counsellors, not cops, should be the ones dealing with people like Mohammadi.

AS FEES RISE, GRADUATE HAPPINESS AND SECURITY DECLINE

• HOLLY NAZAR

You don’t have to be a math major to understand that with higher tuition rates come higher student debt levels.

The Quebec government has indicated it will try to keep moving forward with its planned tuition increase, which will amount to a 127 per cent hike in rates between 2007 and 2017.

In response, Concordia’s Graduate Students’ Association is starting a conversation about student debt this week.

For the most part, two camps dominate the debate over student debt: those who believe students should ‘invest’ in the future earning potential of a degree, and

those who feel that the amount being asked is too much.

But there are more fundamental issues to think about.

One of the biggest problems with seeing education as an investment is that it gives little importance to actual learning. The piece of paper at the end becomes far more important than becoming a more knowledgeable, experienced and critical member of society.

Politicians and university administrators have already done a great deal to shorten program lengths, remove prerequisite courses and lighten requirements to grant as many degrees as possible.

As diplomas have increasingly

been seen as a way to out-qualify other job applicants, their monetary and educational value has declined.

Those who graduate with significant debt also face limits on the choices they can make. It seems like everyone knows at least one person who is in a job they hate or putting off dreams and plans because of their debt.

Statistically, Canadians graduating with student loan debt are less likely to have savings and investments, less likely to be homeowners, less likely to go to graduate school and are less wealthy overall than students who graduate without debt.

Moreover, the burden of debt isn’t only financial. Having to dig

oneself out of a financial hole tends to make people feel less secure and less happy, which is difficult to quantify but undeniably important when it comes to quality of life.

Debt also exacerbates existing inequalities. A total 65 per cent of Quebec students graduate with debt, and 85 per cent of those students come from families with an income under \$40,000 per year.

This means that students from marginalized backgrounds are further disadvantaged at the beginning of their independent lives, and the situation will only be exacerbated as tuition goes up.

Finally, we have all seen that high levels of personal debt can destroy economies. It’s baffling

that so many people compare Quebec tuition levels to those in the United States as a way of arguing for the increase when the American economy is in a continuing consumer debt crisis.

In the U.S., student debt has surpassed credit card debt, and will soon be worth over \$1 trillion. Many experts have expressed alarm that these debts are likely to spark another economic meltdown.

In light of this, the GSA is screening *Maxed Out*, a 2007 documentary on consumer debt—including student debt—in the U.S. The film will be screened Jan. 26 at 6:00 p.m. at the GSA House, located at 2030 Mackay St., with a discussion to follow.



The Great Blumpkin

Q: My boyfriend wants me to give him a blumpkin. Why—and is that clean?

—Cautious & Potentially Nauseous

So for those of you who are wondering, a blumpkin is when a man receives oral sex while sitting on a toilet and defecating (aka shitting).

Yeah, don't feel bad for not knowing that one—apart from a toss-off a reference in *Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle*, it hasn't gained much cultural currency, for obvious reasons.

Now, I think it's worth noting that the only other references I could find to the blumpkin were on websites whose entire purpose was listing obscure sexual acts, and *The Howard Stern Show*, which was later fined \$27,500 for describing it on air (fun blumpkin fact!).

I think it's safe to assume that the blumpkin might just be the result of teenage boys trying to out-gross each other by inventing sex acts that they don't actually intend to do. That being said, my theory when it comes to sex is if you can conceive of it, at least some people are doing it.

So let's talk about the blumpkin. Why does your boyfriend want you to give him one? To answer that, you'd have to ask him, and while that might sound like an awkward talk, if you're at the point in your relationship where he's comfortable enough to ask you for a blumpkin, hopefully you're comfortable enough to ask him why.

Maybe he has a fetish; maybe he's just curious. Whatever his reasons, you might want to make sure it's not just because he thinks it'd be funny.

By the tone of your question, I take it that you weren't immediately so grossed out as to not even consider the idea. It's worth reflecting on your initial reaction—experimentation is great, and there's always the chance that you'll find something new that you're really into when you're pushing the envelope a bit in bed.

At the same time, while it's great to broaden your horizons, it's also crucial to be aware of your own personal boundaries so that you can decide which ones are and aren't negotiable. You should also only be with a partner who respects your limits once your mind is made up. Maybe you chose to write in because this act is a bit past your limits.

So are blumpkins safe? To varying degrees. Any time fecal matter is involved, sanitation is an issue, since you're exposing yourself to fecal bacteria, but there are ways to make things safer.

If performing this act on a toilet, clean the toilet thoroughly beforehand. With this act, you have the risk of STIs, but you also have the added risk of contact with the bacteria found in feces, so avoiding actual contact with your partner's feces is your best bet.

What my advice really comes down to, though, is asking yourself if you want to do this. If so, why? If pleasing your partner is the only reason, and this is some kind of deal-breaker for him, then it might be time to think about your sexual compatibility as a couple.

—Melissa Fuller

Submit questions anonymously at sex-pancakes.tumblr.com and check out "Sex & Pancakes" on Facebook.

Solve the Crossword, Solve the Crime

ACROSS:

1. A classic '80s crime drama starring Tom Selleck as a mustachioed detective. No word yet on whether the title is a commentary on his, er, girth. (2 words)

5. Frank and Joe are better known by their surname in this book series that got its start in the '20s. (This is hardly a tough one.) (2 words)

6. This show ran for 12 seasons and featured a wrinkly crime-solving mystery writer. And that's all she wrote. (3 words)

7. Kristen Bell played this sassy titular P.I. on this CBS show. Strangely, she was not from outer space. (2 words)

9. A cheeky 2005 flick with a repetitive title and a couple of nods to film noir. Its lead went on to portray 4-Down. (4 words)

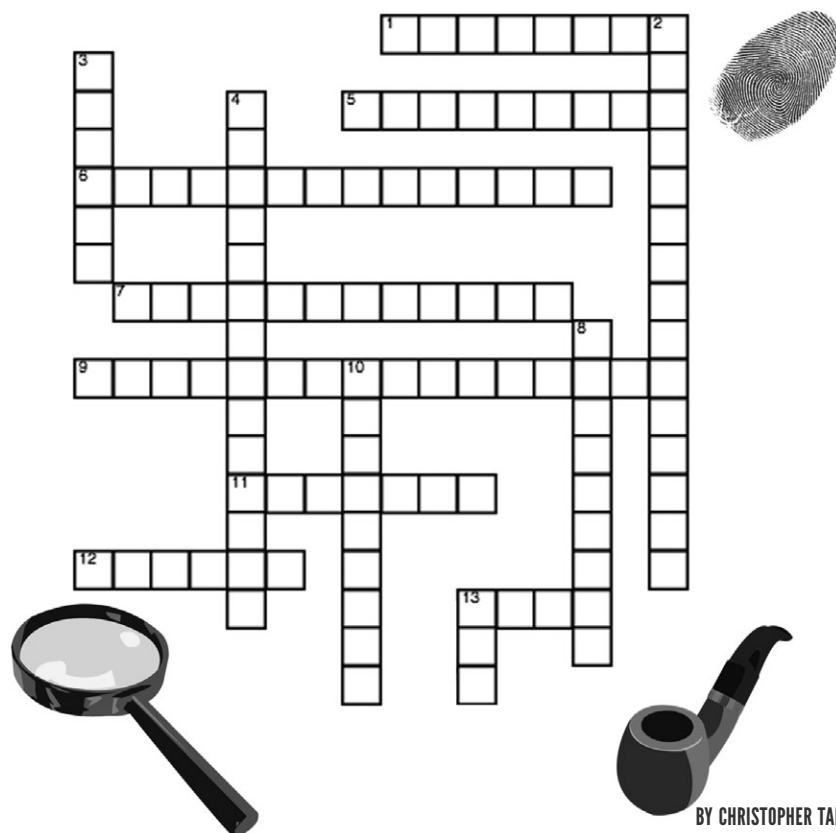
11. This groundbreaking video game used 32 cameras to capture its actors' most subtle facial expressions. Looks like it was worth it—the characters' resemblance to the actors are uncanny. (2 words)

12. TV Guide rated this paranormal-obsessed series the second best cult TV show of all time. Still stumped? Fear not—the truth is out there. (2 words)

13. A popular board game in which players race to learn the who, the what and the where of Mr. Boddy's murder.

DOWN:

2. This bumbling gumshoe would be scrap metal if it weren't for his niece Penny and dog Brian. Go go gadget supporting characters! (2 words)



BY CHRISTOPHER TAN

3. According to DC Comics, this dark-caped crusader is the world's greatest detective. I guess he does "detect" criminals, in the sense of the word "detect" that means "terrorize in the night."

4. Arguably the greatest sleuth ever conceived. The 2010 BBC series about him and his much-mocked doctor partner is a must-see. (2 words)

8. The boys from 5-Across were so successful that this gal was created as

their female sleuthing counterpart. (2 words)

10. Zoinks! This pooch is Mystery, Inc.'s top dog. (2 words)

13. If you ask me, the real crime is all of the lousy forensics shows now cluttering the airwaves due to the success of this Las Vegas-based crime show. It's like Dr. House, except society is sick, and nobody ever gets cured.

JOE OLIVER AND THE PIPELINE PROBLEM

Why Canada's Natural Resources Minister Needs to Go

• PAULINE MAUCHE

On Jan. 9, *The Globe and Mail* published an open letter from Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver, who warned that "environmental and other radical groups" were seeking to block the opportunity to diversify Canada's trade.

A few days later, U.S. President Barack Obama informed Prime Minister Stephen Harper of his administration's decision to turn down TransCanada's application to build and operate the Keystone XL pipeline, which was slated to transport oil from the Athabasca oil sands in Alberta down to the American Gulf Coast.

Which leaves one to wonder—does Mr. Oliver think President Obama is a radical?

In an attack on environmental groups, Oliver wrote, "Their goal is to stop any major project, no matter what the cost to Canadian families in lost jobs and economic growth. No forestry. No mining. No oil. No gas. No more hydro-electric dams..."

"They attract jet-setting celebrities with some of the largest personal carbon footprints in the world to lecture Canadians not to develop our natural resources."

One of the natural resource developments Oliver was referring to was the Northern Gateway project.

The project is a proposal by En-

bridge, a Canadian oil and gas giant, to build two pipelines that stretch 1,177 km between the oil sands and the West Coast of British Columbia.

Transporting more than half a million barrels of oil per day, this \$5.5 billion project would cross salmon rivers, coastal rainforests and sensitive marine waters. From the coast, a tanker would transport the extracted bitumen to refineries in Asia, California and elsewhere.

None of that matters to the minister, however, because, "increasing trade will help ensure the financial security of Canadians and their families."

But how much will Canadians really benefit from this 'profitable' venture? Enbridge itself only estimates that the Northern Gateway will create 104 permanent jobs in Canada, along with 200 subsidiary jobs.

The Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada found that shipping unprocessed bitumen crude out of the country means exporting 40,000 jobs out of Canada. You don't need to be a math whiz to see what's best for Canada's trade here.

Not only will the pipeline destroy ecosystems and export jobs away from home, but the Northern Gateway will negatively affect the lifestyles of about thirty First Nations communities.

So when Oliver says, "Our regulatory system must be fair, independent, con-

sider different viewpoints, including those of Aboriginal communities," he really means that he will listen to them if they approve the project.

Aboriginals in this area depend on the region's land and water for their livelihoods, culture and health. The pipeline would threaten the economic wellbeing of the communities of British Columbia that depend on fisheries and forests.

Oliver said he wanted financial security of Canadians and their families, so why would he destroy these communities? Most of them are opposed to this project. Does being objective mean not listening to the minority?

The tar sands are the fastest-growing source of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada and are probably the main reason why Harper decided to withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol. It's important to diversify Canada's energy markets, but why should Canada's natural resources be sacrificed when other forms of energy are available?

Joe Oliver has failed to present an energy strategy to Canada and, with no energy policy, is still importing more than half of the oil it uses.

When Oliver talks about Canada being on the edge of a historic choice, I think he's right. Canada's future depends on whether or not the natural resources minister will be replaced by a more competent person.



LETTERS @thelinknewspaper.ca

Real-Life Mobilization

In Julian Ward's opinion, the upcoming strike vote, the Concordia Student Union general assembly, and CSU GAs in general are undemocratic ("This Ain't What Democracy Looks Like," Vol. 32, Iss. 17) because only a small fraction of students actually show up and vote at a GA.

Obviously, Julian Ward does not understand the role such mass meetings have played in the student movement, the labour movement and beyond.

Ward would replace the GA with some kind of online alternative, using the administration-controlled MyConcordia portal to consult students about a strike targeting the fee hikes the administration wants students to pay.

The GA is not just a matter of consultation. It is about *mobilization*.

Half the battle is getting people to take the time out of their schedules to actually show up and be counted. People for and against the strike can mobilize and anybody is free to come to the GA, participate in the debate and vote in the tradition of direct democracy. If that is not democratic, I don't know what is.

The fact that you have hundreds of warm bodies in H-110 is of critical importance for the next stage in a strike—striking!

Just try to mobilize the people who click "yes" in a computerized strike consultation. How many people actually show up to something they've scheduled on Facebook?

The reason tuition is lower in Quebec than other Canadian provinces is because of student mobilization. One of the reasons we've had successful student mobilizations is the tradition of GAs and direct democracy in the student unions of CEGEPs and universities across the province.

The one per cent have their pocketbooks. The 99 per cent need the organs of radical direct participatory democracy like the general assembly to make their voices heard.

—David Bernans
CSU Researcher & Archivist
1999-2006

Democratic for the People

The Arts and Science Federation of Associations Special General Meeting in November was indeed problematic—but the Timbits were not the problem.

When students are gathered into a room in order to rubber stamp decisions made by their executives, it is not democracy. However, there are examples from across Quebec of student unions holding general meetings

or assemblies on a regular basis where students can discuss and bring motions to the floor.

The Concordia Student Union is such a big entity that it is difficult to imagine half of the members getting together in a room and discussing all together.

At most universities in Quebec, a lot of departmental student associations are active and politically engaged. Since they are smaller, they can hold regular general meetings and take positions that reflect the interests and politics of their members. Plus, the smaller size of these meetings allows for more discussions and debates.

If you think the CSU general meeting is not democratic, then stop whining about it and a) get the most people you can at such meetings so it will reflect the opinions of a maximum of students b) organize a general meeting with your departmental association.

This is already happening, as some student associations of the Arts and Science faculty are planning to hold general meetings in the upcoming weeks.

Democracy cannot come from a top-down approach. It needs to start from the bottom up. It starts with the students.

—Hugo Bonin
Women's Studies Major

In the Face of Government Arrogance, We Organize

This year, students will make history.

Together, we can force the provincial government to back down and reverse their \$1,625 tuition fee hike and ensure accessible, quality education for future generations.

On Nov. 10, we filled the streets of Montreal with over 30,000 people to denounce the Quebec Liberal Party's unjustifiable fee hike. This winter, we can do even more.

Despite our determination this autumn, the government hasn't budged. Not only did they try to minimize the solidarity that gives life to the student movement, but were so petty that they attempted to buy up Google keywords for student associations to promote their pro-increase agenda—as if, by shoving it down our throats, this fee hike would suddenly become acceptable. We know better. Their plan will add to the massive financial burden students carry, promote individual and family debt and will do absolutely nothing to resolve the real problems of university mismanagement!

Following the massive demonstrations this fall, proposals for student strikes are gaining incredible momentum on cam-

puses. Already many associations are planning to consult their members directly on the question, knowing it is perhaps the only way to make the government back down. We urge you to participate in these debates, express your ideas and opinions so that this campaign faithfully reflects your wishes and values.

It is not lightheartedly that we plan a Quebec student strike this winter. No student wants to voluntarily interrupt the course of his or her studies, but it may be the only option—especially compared to the government doing it by force through this massive increase.

Unfortunately, Jean Charest's government has refused to listen. We have taken every reasonable step to prove the devastating consequences of this increase in black and white, supported by clear data and research. Nevertheless, this government has essentially denied reality and chosen to ignore the inconvenient facts. Are we willing to deny our younger siblings, our friends and allies and future generations access to the education we've been privileged enough to have, simply because they won't be able to afford it? Is this really what we want for Quebec society?

We knew from the start what we were dealing with—an arrogant government, stubborn and obstinate, which has never had the wellbeing of students or their families at heart. They are blinded by neoliberal ideology and a failing "user pays" mentality. It's the same blindness they had in 2004, when they attacked the poorest students and tried to cut \$103 million in student aid—but we fought against it, united, and won.

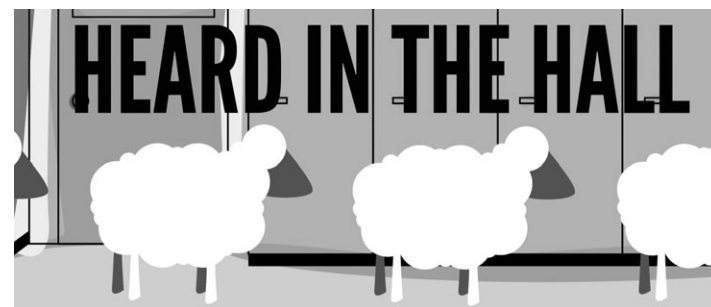
So get involved! Join the movement! No matter how you participate, we need to send the message to Charest that this hike will not pass, that students will fight to defend accessibility to university studies, that they will not let the Liberals burden us with more debt or shut us out of classrooms.

Students, rise up! Let us be united, work in solidarity. Together, we will win.

Let us make 2012 the year of youth.

—Martine Desjardins
President of the Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec

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Put That in your PIPA and Smoke it

• SANAZ HASSANPOUR

What did you think of the Wikipedia blackout in protest of the Stop Online Piracy Act and Protect Intellectual Property Act last Wednesday?

"What [Wikipedia] did was a good move [...] and they pretty much pushed a lot of websites to do the same. It might eventually be enough to convince [the American government] to consider backing out."

—Olivier Jacques
BComm International Business



"A lot of people were notified about the [protest against SOPA], but I'm not sure if it had a dramatic effect. Maybe people don't take it seriously enough yet."

—Nazanin Darbandi
MSc/MEng Information System Security



"I just switched to the French site, Wikipedia French. Only the English version was blocked, so as long as you spoke one other more language it didn't bother you. I personally think, in terms of meaning, they should have blocked the whole website. It would have been more effective."

—Gerard P. Theus Trudel
BComm Accounting



"The Wikipedia blackout was very effective, even more so than [I] originally believed it to be. I look forward to seeing what Wikipedia brings to the table next."

—Ian Edington
BComm



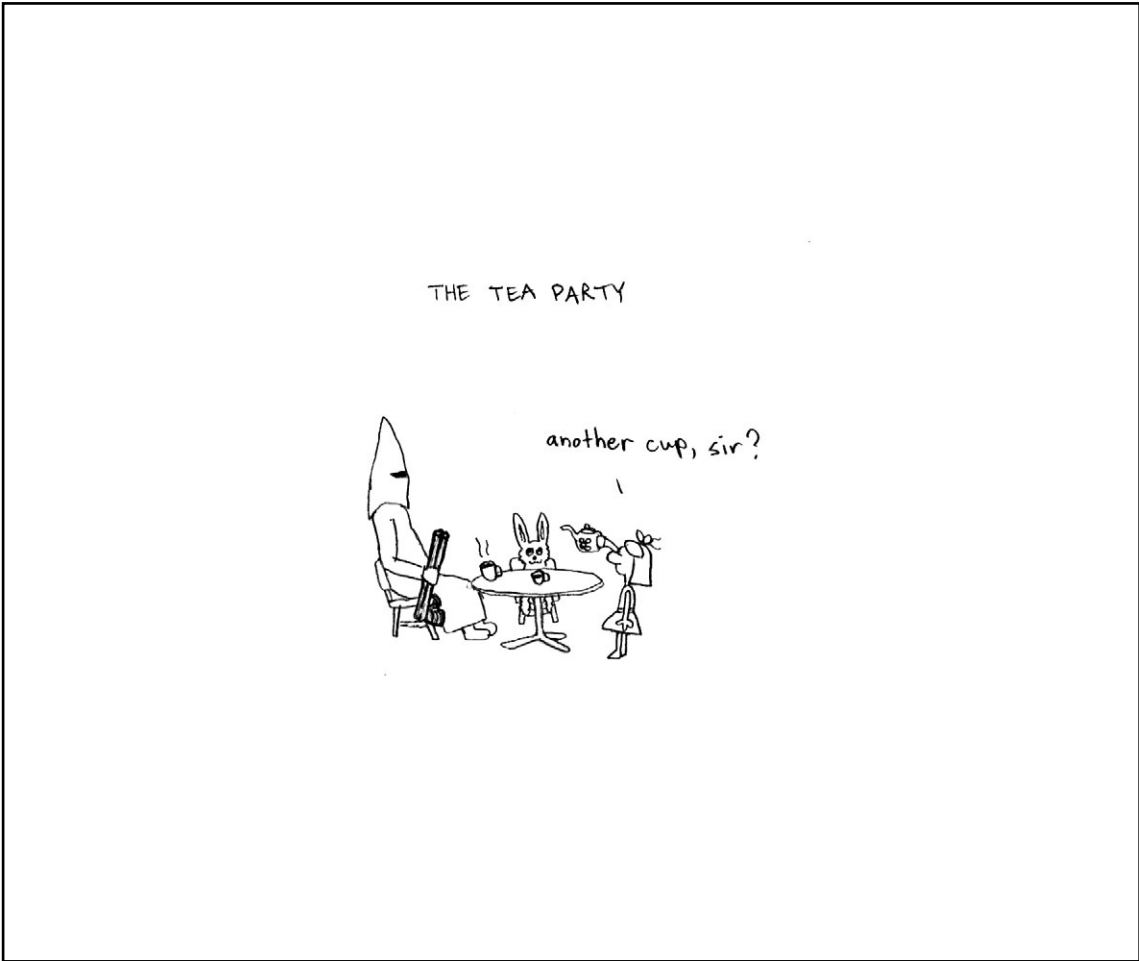
"It got a rise out of people. I saw a lot of Facebook statuses about it. So, that's how I knew about it myself. People definitely reacted to it."

—Thao Tran
BComm Human Resource Management



Barton Flats

COMIC JONATHAN WOODS



Tremendous Tales

by Christopher Olson



“Symptoms include itching, scratching, increased hair growth, and a heightened appreciation for Duke Ellington and classical jazz.”

False Knees

COMIC JOSHUA BARKMAN



Nah'msayin?

Rotating Machetes

Usually when a clogged artery happens—let's say, in your heart—you get it fixed. Very smart doctors attempt to unclog it and widen arteries so blood can get to where it needs to go so you can, well, not die.

You don't need to be smart to know the exact same scenario is happening in the pedestrian walkway underground in the EV Building, next to Le Gym, where that death trap of a rotating door meets the metro.

Hordes of people attempt to maneuver through the two

always-busy-as-shit glass turnstiles everyday, and everyone slows up and awkwardly positions themselves to dive into the spinning disaster that's going as fast as a teacup ride.

Believe it or not, there's an awesome solution to this—take the fucking turnstiles out. And do it before someone falls and gets decapitated between the moving doors and standing frame.

The doors were removed last semester, so why that's not the case right now is hard to understand. It also doesn't

help that idiots stand on the metro side, completely oblivious to the world around them while eating shitty two-dollar pizza and blocking people into an area tighter than my arteries feel when I'm trying to navigate the crush of sweaty, winter-coat wearing bodies.

Let's get doctor-smart about this, or the stress from walking to my class might lead me to decapitate some people even before the inevitable happens.

—David Murphy,
Lifestyle Editor



GRAPHIC JOSHUA BARKMAN

Engage in Your Education

editorial

How passive are we about our education?

Some of us are graduating this year, and lately many of our peers in the same position have been complaining about the state of our university. Some are dissatisfied with the level of engagement we see from our peers in class, the passiveness of some profs, the amount of money we've put into getting this degree, maybe not having learned as much as we feel we could have—the list goes on.

Not pursuing a post-secondary education is almost unheard of today, as university has become a natural step after graduating high school. Without a degree, we are presumably left with few career options. Graduating during The Great Recession means that many students are covering their walls with degrees that they otherwise would not have paid for. What does this add up to? A lot of time, money and stress. But is it worth it? Are we satisfied with our post-secondary education? Recent student upheavals,

strikes and protests say no.

Maybe we have become so complacent and stuck in how things are “supposed to be” that we've forgotten that there can, and should, be alternatives to our current system.

As university students at an institution that encourages our engagement in new ideas, where we should be constantly interacting and learning, where we're taught to ask questions, think critically and generate new opinions and dialogue, how many students are sleepily working their way towards degrees, hoping that a piece of paper will buy them a job?

On top of this, our governance system, on varying levels, is less than inspiring.

While President Frederick Lowy congratulates Concordia for getting through last year's administrative exodus and (very public) crisis of government, the Chair who was called to resign is still on top and as contemptuous as ever—shutting down students and closing the door to more

transparent meetings.

And while *Your Concordia* ran a campaign last year that gave many faith in their ability to bring radical new ideas and change to the table in terms of how this university is run, they ultimately failed to live up to these ideals... so far. Cool, a swap shop and some fun events, but how about getting students to actively engage in their university community and, ultimately, in their own learning? Their passion was uplifting and gave students hope for a brighter future. Where is it?

All of the tuition talk this year has taught us that our education is worth money—a lot of it. But we're focusing so much on how much it costs that we might be forgetting to ask whether the money we're spending now is being returned in knowledge.

Talking about a new project being started by university students and professors this week (the Alternative University Project) got us thinking about how much control we have over our own education.

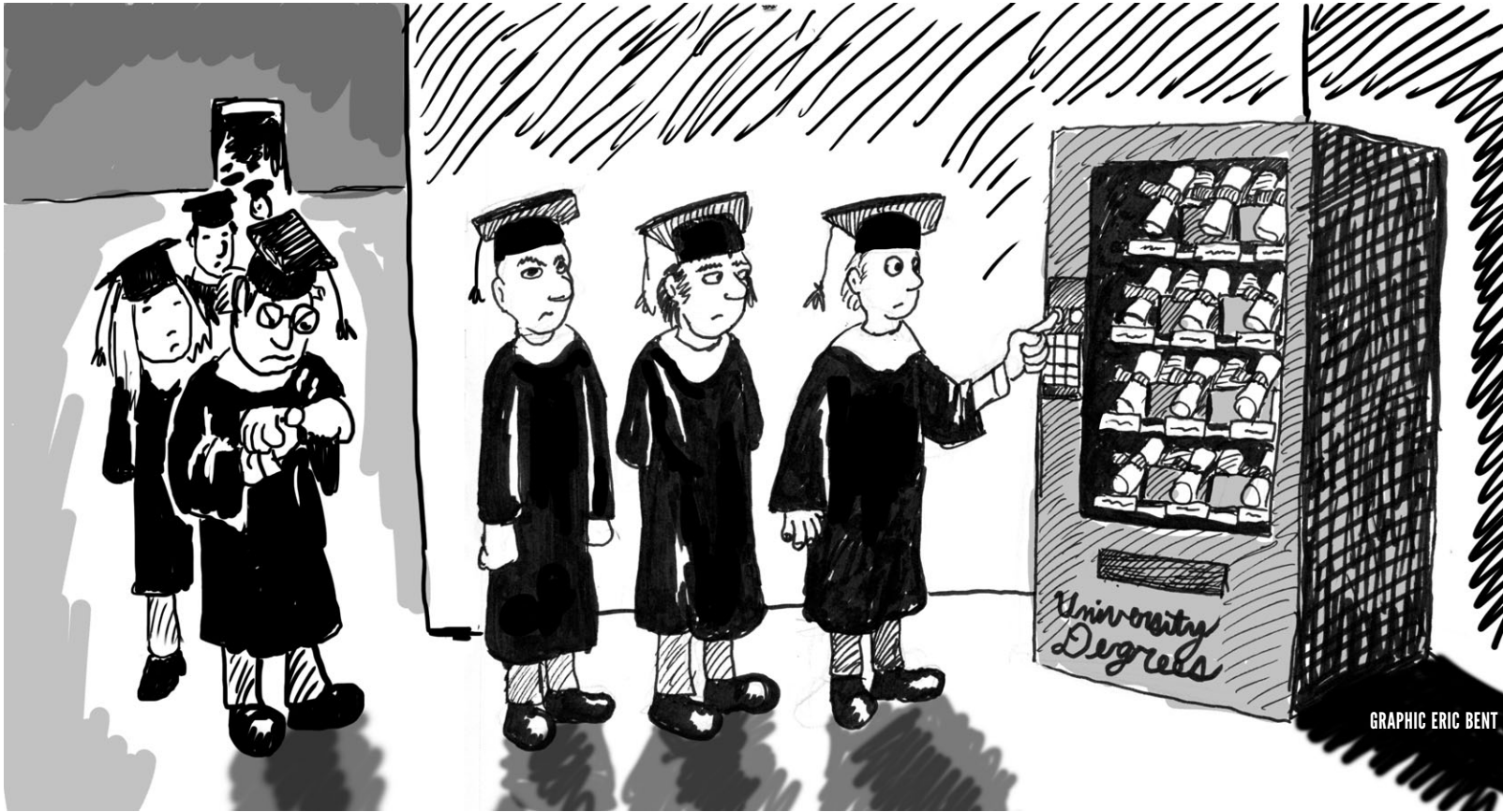
The label of “student” shouldn't be something that comes off when we walk across that stage to get our diplomas. We battle with the administration over how much our schooling is worth, but how much are we in control of our learning? How engaged are we with our position as students?

A project that focuses on the world of learning outside of the institution of a university is a beginning. It focuses our attention on why we all work so hard to come to school every day: to learn.

Student is a word that isn't necessarily clearly defined. We are in a position now where we can question everything—our learning, our administration, our rights—and change what we're not happy with. Projects like Alternative University are starting the dialogue and we should be looking towards them. Our education needs to be about more than a piece of paper.

—Alex McGill
Fringe Arts Editor

editorial cartoon



 **ISSUE 17 CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS**

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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 Presse Universitaire Indépendante du Québec.

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Board of Directors 2011-2012: Clare Raspow, Mathieu Biard, Christopher Curtis, Justin Giovannetti, Morgan Todd, Jamila Musayeva; non-voting members: Rachel Boucher, Laura Beeston.

Typesetting by *The Link*. Printing by Transcontinental.

Online and print contributors: Joshua Barkman, Natalia Lara Diaz Berrio, , Andrew Brennan, Paku Daooust – Cloutier, Christopher Curtis, Richie Daly, Bianca David, Josh Davidson, Elysha Del Giusto-Enos, Melissa Fuller, Nikola Grozdanovic, Clara Hakell, Sanaz Hassanpour, Amanda Laprade, Andrew Maggio, Pauline Mauche, Dylan Maloney, Katie McGroarty, Paolo Mingorelli, Holly Nazar, Christopher Olson, Mononc Paul, Riley Sparks, Christopher Tan, Jonathan Woods

Cover By Julia Wolfe

Volume 32, Issue 18
Tuesday, January 24, 2012
Concordia University
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