

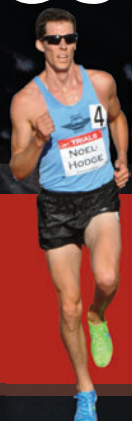


LINK

CONCORDIA'S INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1980

EDITORIAL: The CSU & GSA finally get their day in court—in 2015 . . . P23

CSU RELATIONS GET HEATED AT SNOWY ORIENTATION . . . P5



Still Dreaming: ConU's Clubs Await Day They Join Varsity Ranks . . . P17

CUTV Addresses Member Concerns . . . P3



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ANOTHER COUNCILLOR DOWN?

Ramy Khoriaty might lose his seat on council for being in conflict with the student union's standing regulations.

SNOW VILLAGE

It was -30 C when we went, but that didn't stop half a dozen oversized igloos from being more fun than they had any right to be.

CREDIT CARD FRAUD AT CSBC

Several cases of fraud have been reported on three credit cards belonging to the Concordia Student Broadcasting Corporation throughout the end of last year.

THAT TRANS GUY

Read Oliver Leon's column on the issues and everyday life of transition and trans rights.*

PROVISIONAL BOARD SUSPENDS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT CUTV

by Corey Pool @coreyriver

Concordia University Television's human resource issues have finally come to a head.

After a few months of citing staff conflicts, infighting and growing concerns from their membership, sources close to the station have confirmed that the provisional Board of Directors of CUTV has chosen to suspend Laith Marouf, the station's executive director.

"All of the actions that we've taken in the past few weeks have been in response to concerns shared with us by members," said provisional Board member Emily Campbell.

"We haven't had a lot of people coming to the station lately because it wasn't a great place to be," she added. "We're working very hard now to make it a safe, comfortable, fun and supportive working environment that everybody feels welcome in."

For mostly legal reasons, the Board is severely restricted with regards to what they can say about the issue—and they won't say much—but several sources close to the station have confirmed that Marouf was suspended Jan. 25, and will remain suspended for two weeks.

It's unclear what the Board intends to do at the end of the two-week period, and they are not willing to elaborate on any of the terms of, or reasons for, Marouf's suspension.

In the meantime, all members of CUTV staff are still being paid.

"All of the decisions made have come from a culmination of things," said Campbell. "What we're dealing with at the station is not just a conflict—it's a crisis."

► Continues on Page 4



◆ Photo Erin Sparks

WTF, CFS: PART II

*The CSU and GSA's turbulent struggle to flee the CFS—ending March 2015? **P6 & 7***

MISSING REPRESENTATION

*Students stand up against lack of fine arts voice on CSU council. **P9***

DECONSTRUCTING THE DEFICIT

*Breaking down the budgets of ConU's past. **P8***

THE TRADITION LIVES ON

*Concordia lends a hand in annual Loyola Sports Tournament. **P17***

DRAMA IN THE CITY

*Student theatre gala kicks off at Mainline with two plays from Concordia. **P12***

DANCING CLOSER

*Dance company stages show in loft. **P11***

UNIVERSITY BUDGET CUTS

*Teaching assistants want some recognition for helping ConU deal with cuts. **P19***

"NO" TO ACCESS TO INFORMATION?

*Why McGill's motion to deny ATIs sets a bad precedent. **P20***



TWO-WEEK SUSPENSION ADDRESSES STATION MEMBERS' CONCERNS.

By Corey Pool
@coreyriver

► Continued from Page 3

Since the situation at CUTV began unraveling several months ago, members, staff and volunteers have spoken to *The Link* about grievances and frustrations with Marouf, as well as the station's management style in general, placing particular emphasis on the failings of its hierarchical structure. William Ray has been in-

volved with CUTV as an active volunteer for nearly four years, and though he spoke highly of Marouf's ability to produce "brilliant work," he took issue with Marouf's management style.

"The issue really is his way of dealing with people, and a penchant he has for being very dictatorial," said Ray.

"It drove a lot of people away. A lot of people did not feel comfortable working in the space around him. As a member, I feel that the Board had no choice."

Campbell traced the beginnings of the staff and structure issue back to the height of the Quebec student movement last spring, when CUTV was receiving national and international acclaim for their live-streamed coverage of the daily demonstrations.

The organization ballooned in a very short time—the station was attracting new and eager members, local media attention and tens of thousands of dollars in donations.

The going was good and CUTV was in the spotlight. But when the

protests stopped and funds began to dry up, it all came to a grinding halt.

"We were on such a roll, and then [the student movement] ended really abruptly, and the way the station was functioning was no longer sustainable," said Campbell. "What happened was that we didn't adapt to that change fast enough, and it led to this really horrible downfall of the station."

Both Campbell and Ray echoed the same sentiment that the past few months have seen a sharp drop in member participation, and

new members have stopped showing up to the station.

But since Friday, things might be changing.

"It's only been a couple of days, but CUTV is now, for the first time, starting to live up to the promise of what it's supposed to be," said Ray. "Where people like me, the members, are setting the tone and the agenda. We feel like our contributions are valued. Before, that was not the case."

The Link was unable to reach Marouf for comment by press time.

MCGILL REQUESTS ABILITY TO REJECT ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Motion Deems Requests "Abusive," "Unreasonable."

By Corey Pool
@coreyriver

McGill University is attempting to deny a group of students and journalists their right to information.

In an official motion filed to the Commission d'accès à l'information on Dec. 7, 2012, McGill requested the ability to disregard nearly 20 Access to Information requests from a list of 14 McGill students filed throughout October and November 2012.

Any person is legally eligible to make formal written requests to the government or public bodies for access to information held by these bodies under the Access to Information and Privacy Act, as well as the Act respecting documents held by public bodies.

In addition to denying these initial requests, McGill is asking that it be granted the ability to "disregard future requests [...] submitted by the respondents or students of McGill or student journalists of *The McGill Daily* and *The Link* (Concordia University) or by persons associated to McGillLeaked or by persons that could reasonably be linked to such requestors."

The motion goes on to further include requests that are overly broad, or requests that are "frivolous or target trivial documents and information."

The majority of the information being sought out by the re-

quests in question often deals with McGill's research, investments or funding—particularly related to the military. Other requests dealt with information pertaining to the university's administration, or to the respondents themselves.

According to the motion, however, McGill is alleging that a "complex system" of ATI requests has been put in place by the respondents "as a retaliation measure against McGill in the aftermath of the 2011-2012 student protests."

"I'm really disappointed that they would do this," said Christopher Bangs, McGill student and founder of McGillLeaked. "It's actually pretty ludicrous that they would think that we have this secret, coordinated effort to destroy the university through ATI requests. It's nonsensical."

McGillLeaked is a blog created by Bangs that is dedicated to compiling legally obtained information about McGill through ATI requests. McGillLeaked featured one ATI filed by a reporter from *The Link* on the costs incurred by the #6Party occupation in February 2012.

"It's not like the 14 of us have coordinated our requests or have some secret motivation that's underlying this," said Bangs. "My motivation was to get access to the information that I really need for the things that I am doing in and around McGill."

McGill believes the series of ATI requests to be "abusive because of their systematic nature" and "unreasonable."

"What we want is permission to ignore abusive requests from these individuals, or others associated with them," said Julie Fortier, associate director of media relations at McGill in an email to *The Link*.

When asked what constitutes an unreasonable amount of ATI requests, Fortier responded that McGill received 170 requests in 2012, but only 37 requests in 2011.

Comparatively, Concordia received 131 ATI requests in 2012, and 75 requests in 2011.

The motion also states that McGill doesn't have the resources to process this amount of requests, and that attempts to respond to these requests has impeded the university's activities.

According to Fortier, McGill employs two full-time staff members to take care of the processing of ATI requests.

Unlike McGill, Concordia does not employ any full-time staff members to specifically attend to the processing of requests, but rather includes this responsibility in the functions of three other employees—including one of the university's legal counsels, when required.

One of the biggest concerns for Bangs is the ability for this motion to allow McGill to refuse important

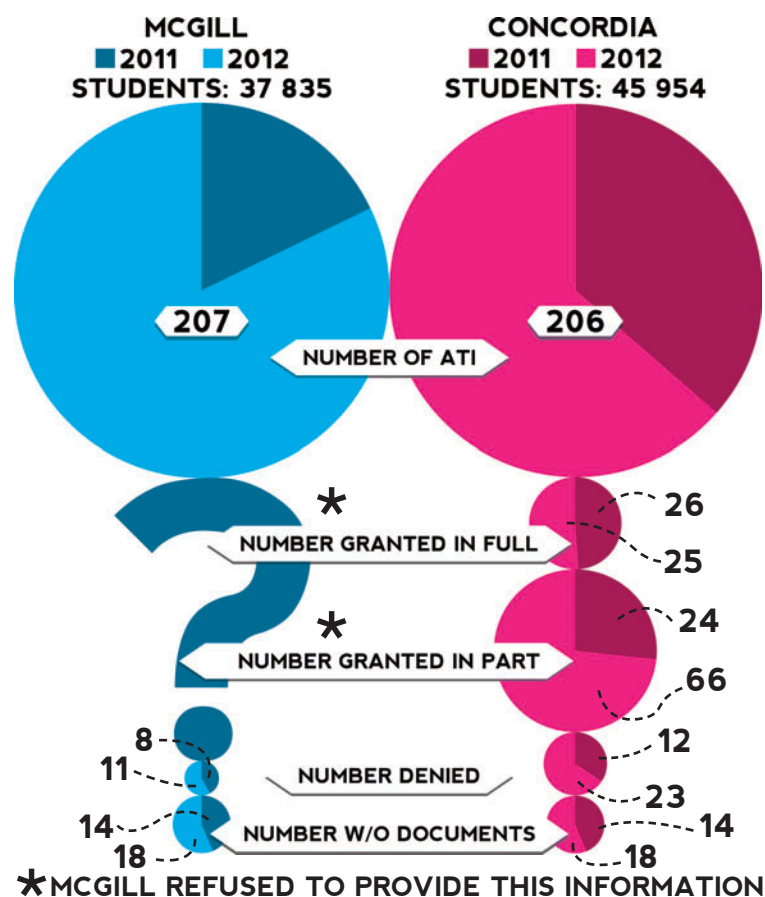
information to a wide range of people for a broad list of reasons.

"There is no other good way to get this information except through requests, and now they're trying to take that away," said Bangs.

The 14 students mentioned in the

motion have hired a lawyer and will be handling the case collectively.

"Sadly, the commission is so backlogged that it could take a year or a year and a half before we get anywhere," said Bangs. "It's kind of a waiting game for now."



FEELING DISORIENTED, TAKE TWO

VP Student Life's Orientation Efforts Subject of Debate for Fellow Councillors by **Katie McGroarty @katiecmcg**



Photo Erin Sparks

If you were judging by the report that followed, Concordia's fall Orientation went by, for the most part, without a hitch. Events were well-attended and plans were made in advance. For all intents and purposes, it was a hit.

In reality, things weren't so flawless. Although Orientation wasn't a complete bust, there were slip-ups. There were complications concerning the concert's headlining band, and the event's promotion was delayed.

Although the final numbers put this fall's Orientation as \$70,000 under budget, several Concordia Student Union councillors have been vocal about the fact that a few things could have, and maybe should have, been done differently.

Now, with winter Orientation just kicking off, it's Take Two for VP Student Life Alexis Suzuki, who is tasked with planning and executing the two-week event.

To do so, she has been allotted over \$60,000 of the CSU's annual budget.

Reaction to the Report

Although it is not specifically stated in the CSU's bylaws, the VP Student Life is traditionally expected to submit a post-mortem Orientation report to council, outlining what went well and what went wrong during Orientation.

This year, the report filed by Suzuki was two months late, and

did not meet the expectations of multiple councillors.

"I feel like it's this rosy portrayal of Orientation—reading it, you wouldn't know that there was no headliner at the concert," said councillor Chad Walcott.

"You wouldn't know that there was no advertising at all until very late. In fact, it would seem like it was the best Orientation that we ever had—which is unfortunately not the case."

Although the Orientation had its hiccups, Suzuki says that its flaws were not the result of poor preparation, but rather, inadequate training.

"There's just so much [to do] and it's not written down anywhere," she said. "So it makes it very difficult unless you have somebody who is really willing to make sure that your training is really well done."

Laura Glover, last year's VP Student Life, was hired by the Dean of Students Office to act as a liaison between student groups and the university during the summer. Although the two had some official training hours, Glover said Suzuki didn't take her up on her offers of guidance.

"I had ten office hours per week devoted to assisting Orientation and I did say explicitly that if there was anything that [Suzuki] needed, or that she felt that she wasn't properly prepared for, then

I was willing to help," said Glover, who didn't agree with Suzuki's criticism of inadequate training.

Glover said that, although the initiative was taken on her part to reach out and offer assistance, emails went unanswered and, although it was possible Suzuki felt unprepared, it shouldn't have been due to a lack of resources.

Although Suzuki supposedly had Glover's offer to help facilitate the transition, the only document provided to the incoming VP Student Life is the post-mortem report from the previous year.

What the document must contain isn't explicitly stated, but it is commonly understood to serve as an overall view of how the previous year's Orientation festivities went.

Last year, Glover included a timeline complete with the timing of when certain amenities should be booked and by what date various things ought to be ordered.

But Suzuki said that details, like how things work in terms of booking, should have been included but were not.

"If questions are asked, we do our best to answer them; but if questions aren't asked, you know, it's really difficult to understand what somebody needs from you," said Glover.

Post-Post-Mortem Solutions

When Suzuki's post-mortem Orientation report was presented to

CSU council, it was met with criticism from a variety of councillors.

"It didn't seem that the post-mortem produced this year was really critical of Orientation at all," said Glover.

Councillor Melissa-Kate Wheeler agreed, citing discrepancies between what actually happened during Orientation and what was reported in the document.

Suzuki, however, doesn't believe the post-mortem report should be a necessity, saying that she doesn't "really know what a post-mortem report means to people anymore."

She proposes that the report be replaced with a how-to guide, to be written in detail before summer, which could contain information such as the types of details she found lacking from Glover's report.

"There isn't a document like that at the CSU and I think it would really help a lot of people coordinating events at Concordia," said Suzuki. "Especially Orientation, because it's so huge and there's so much for someone to take on."

Although the document would not focus on the details of what happened during Orientation, it would still include an overview of the events, including some from winter Orientation in the proposed how-to guide.

"Now it's kind of too late. In my opinion, she made the same mistakes this time around as she did for

fall Orientation," said Walcott. "[Suzuki] needs to swallow her pride a little bit and admit to the fact that Orientation was not perfect."

Walcott and Wheeler both were hesitant to support the transition from traditional post-mortem report to how-to guide that would be built upon every Orientation by each consecutive VP.

"Interests of the student body will change, and it's important that Orientation is current and responsive to the needs of students," said Wheeler. "I don't think that a how-to guide is necessarily going to be relevant, you know, for a significant number of years."

Suzuki stated that "for the most part" her executive team was on board with the change and said that continuing a tradition that "lacked purpose and doesn't facilitate anything for anyone" should be reconsidered.

One of the criticisms both Wheeler and Walcott levied was that Suzuki projected that the guide would be prepared by June 1, 2013. The mandate of the current CSU executive ends May 31.

"It wasn't a huge deal to begin with," said Wheeler. "But the fact that we have been consistently asking [Suzuki] to produce a better report all year before writing this how-to guide, and she has refused to do it, has made me not support this at all."

SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT THE CFS



The Link could have opted to tell you the long and complex story of the Concordia Student Union's struggle to leave Canadian Federation of Students in our own words, but we thought it might be more effective to let the people who lived through it do so instead.

So, here's what some of those most closely implicated and involved in the ordeal had to say about it—as it unfolded. By Megan Dolski, @megandolski

THE FACES OF THE FIGHT



Current CSU President Schubert Laforest oversaw the council that voted to combine the CSU and GSA court cases.



Former CSU President and current Student Governor Lex Gill was the coordinator of the petition campaign against the CFS at Concordia.



Graduate student Governor Erik Chevrier was the GSA VP External during their CFS referendum.

September 2009

Hmm. Something isn't right. Grumblings of dissatisfaction with Canada's largest student lobby group—the CFS—surface across the nation.

"I am not knowledgeable on that issue, but I would recommend you check your sources on that."
—Katherine Giroux-Bougard, former CFS National chairperson, when asked about the 13 petitions that had begun circulating through schools seeking to leave the federation.

"Our members have the right to re-examine our membership in our organization. There has been some dissatisfaction with the CFS-Q and CFS National. I take it this is why the petition is being organized."
—Greg Johannson, former CFS-Quebec president

October 2009

A petition to leave the CFS, signed by 16.9 per cent of students at ConU, is delivered to the CFS; meanwhile, tensions rise between the federation and many student unions across the country.

"It's like those in charge of the CFS have lost sight of the interests of their membership and have come to see their own financial interests as synonymous with the goals of the federation."
—Andrew Haig, former CFS-Quebec treasurer

"This is typical of the CFS National office, who will attempt anything, short of assassinating people, to stop the defederation campaign."
—Yves Engler, Montreal-based activist and author, open supporter of ConU petition

"Because the petition was calling for a referendum, it wasn't anti-CFS. It just said, 'We should have a vote about where our money is going.' Students were very receptive to the idea."
—Lex Gill, former CSU president and petition campaign coordinator

November 2009

Yup, we're still members. The CFS

holds its annual general meeting, which sees the controversial "Motion Six" is passed, making it even more difficult to defederate.

"This is not about left or right politics; the problems with the Canadian Federation of Students go across ideology."
—Dean Tester, Carleton petition coordinator

On Motion Six: "A pretext to throw out the expressed democratic will of over 13,000 students nationwide. It violates the CFS's own constitution."
—Andrew Haig, former CFS-Q treasurer

"Fifteen years ago, it was much easier to get in or get out. These constant bylaw changes are an example of autocratic centralism, the absolute antithesis of grassroots democracy."
—Nicole O'Byrne, constitutional law professor at the University of New Brunswick

"There are no valid reasons for defederation at this time. It will disrupt the unity of the entire student movement of Canada. The CFS is the only real progressive organization; without it, there would be a massive void."
—Zachary Crispin, committee member of pro-CFS group Progressive Students 4 CFS

December 2009

The CFS held its AGM from Nov. 25 to Nov. 28. This was the second-to-last meeting the ConU delegation would ever participate in.

"It was a week in hell—the only way I can describe this experience is Orwellian. Had we spent another week there, we would have left saying that Big Brother is great."
—Lex Gill, member of ConU's delegation at CFS's AGM

"We were in shock. It was clear that there was an attempt at the plenary to vote down everything that Quebec proposed."
—Amine Dabchy, former CSU president

"Three hundred delegates were discussing their positions on 90

motions and we tried to make it as welcoming a space for debate as possible."
—Katherine Giroux-Bougard, former CFS National chairperson

February 2010

The CFS claims the CSU owes them \$1,033,278.76 in unpaid dues. The union says otherwise.

"The Concordia Student Union has failed to remit the entirety of these membership dues to the Federation for an extended period of time."
—David Molenhuis, CFS National treasurer

"When you look at that amount, you can't believe it. Are you serious? A million dollars? It's like a couple of them just sat together and chose what seemed like a good number."
—Amine Dabchy, former CSU president

March 2010

The CSU holds a referendum in which 72 per cent of voting students support leaving the federation.

"The reasons that have been given to leave are not convincing at all; many of them are straight-out lies—the student union's claim that the CFS is offering nothing to students on campus this year is very misleading."
—Audrey Peek, head of the "Yes to CFS" campaign at ConU

"[The CFS] don't care, they don't care at all. There isn't anything that we can tell them that is going to get them to change their opinion of the matter. Right now they think they have the upper hand because they think that they can legally bind us. The hardest thing to explain to people is that they are not logical. It's nonsense after nonsense."
—Auob Muntasar, former CSU VP External

"I wanted to have a legacy that we quit the CFS."
—Amine Dabchy, former CSU president

"The matter is pretty simple as

far as the federation is concerned: the [student government] has the responsibility to remit fees from all dues-paying members of the union."
—David Molenhuis, former CFS chairperson, after stating that he could not comment on specifics

April 2010

The GSA holds a referendum. Seventy-five per cent of voters support leaving the CFS.

"The CFS has done everything in its power to be undemocratic."
—Erik Chevrier, outgoing GSA VP External

June 2010

"We won a referendum to defederate from the CFS—they won't recognize it. They prepped their members to vote against us at the general assembly. So now we'll just have to lawyer up and see what happens."
—Prince Ralph Osei, former CSU president

Post 2010

That's just a snapshot of all the craziness that went down during the height of the CFS mess.

Since then, things for the CSU and GSA have entered legal territory, which has resulted in diluted bouts of insanity and inevitably has involved lots of waiting.

In 2011, the CSU and GSA served the federation with lawsuits, asking that their referendums be legitimized, and their wish to separate granted.

In 2012, the CFS filed a countersuit to CSU, claiming the union owes them \$1.8 million in unpaid fees—though both the CSU and Concordia deny this to be true.

And now, we're taking them to court (Check out the next page for all the details on how that happened). Until then, you might not hear more than the occasional murmur mentioning the CFS—but be warned, this scrappy battle will be sure to reemerge with a vengeance in the spring of 2015.

Hopefully now you'll have a better idea of what's going on when that happens.

"Til then.

PART 2/2

WTFXCFS?

by megan dolski @megandolski

Check last week's issue for part one.



WE HAVE A DATE

CSU and GSA to Meet CFS in Court—in 2015

As far-off and hazy in the distance as it may be, freedom from the Canadian Federation of Students might finally be on the horizon for the Concordia Student Union and the Graduate Students' Association.

Two rejected petitions, unrecognized referendums and much legal tennis later, both associations have finally secured a court date—set two years from now, in March 2015.

This time though, they're going at it together.

Two Against One

The idea for having the two associations join forces came as a suggestion from the CSU's lawyers.

"I think it was a very logical strategic move that was a long time in the making," explained Lex Gill, former CSU president. "I think that all the people that are involved in the case, in one way or another, have this consensus that this is the route that makes sense."

Upon receiving the legal recommendation, the CSU and GSA each brought the idea to their council of representatives at meetings held on Jan. 16 and Jan. 11, respectively.

In both cases, motions to join the two lawsuits were unanimously passed.

A week after the CSU Council meeting, on Jan. 23, the cases were legally merged in court. That same day, the case was assigned a trial date.

Current CSU President Schu-

bert Laforest said the collaboration between organizations simply made sense, considering the striking similarities between the two cases.

Both were already using the same legal firm, presenting similar evidence, using some of the same witnesses and shared near-identical timelines. Additionally, much of the required legwork in each case already overlapped, anyways.

Both suits make multiple demands, but the primary goal is to be recognized as independent from the Canadian Federation of Students—by way of having their referendum to secede legitimized.

The strained relationship between the CSU, the GSA and the CFS is not an isolated case, nor a new one. The federation has seen fourteen schools—nearly half its membership—attempt to defederate since 2009. (Check out the next page for all the gory details.)

Laforest said that there were talks of having McGill University's Post-Graduate Students' Society also join the newly merged suit. In March 2009, the PGSS voted to leave the CFS; the CSU did the same that month, and the GSA voted to leave the month after.

"They decided to stay independent given that the way they were arguing their case was slightly different from ours and they had slightly different evidence," he said.

Gill explained that the PGSS case wasn't similar enough to the

nearly identical Concordia cases to make a merger worthwhile.

"There were differences between the two cases that were substantial enough that people around the table decided that that wasn't the logical thing to do," she said.

She noted, however, that all three organizations remain very much politically on the same page.

The Cost of Court

Not only has defederating from the CFS been responsible for consuming much time and effort on the part of many past and present CSU presidents and executives—but the bill accompanying the saga hasn't been a small one.

In 2010, former CSU president Heather Lucas estimated the suit would take at least two years to see through, and cost the union roughly \$220,000.

Laforest was unable to publicly disclose the total cost of the union's legal fees at this point, seeing as the case is currently ongoing, but the process has not been inexpensive.

There is a tidbit of good news, though. Sharing the cost of one suit—versus paying for two—will cut costs for both the CSU and GSA in future legal fees.

While spending wads of student money was never anyone's ideal situation, Gill said bringing the case to court eventually became inevitable.

"It's not made any easier by the CFS's inability to recognize

the fact that members in Quebec want out," she said. "I think that with any rational organization we never would have ended up in court to begin with."

She said the rational thing would have simply been for the organization to respect the rights of its members, and recognize a democratic referendum by granting the organization rights to leave.

"But that's not the game they're playing," she said.

Continuous Momentum

Seeing as the case will not be heard in court for another two years, there is only so much progress that can be made to move things forward right now.

What can be done on behalf of the present executive are ample preparations ensuring that institutional memory of this case is transmitted to the future executive upon termination of their own mandate.

"If you let a year go by where people don't really talk about the complexity of the file or the history of the issues, people start to go, 'Oh, we are just in this lawsuit and I don't understand, so let's just drop it,'" said Gill.

"They don't understand what a disservice that would be to Concordia students and to the investment that Concordia students have made in this so far."

Gill said that no matter where they stand on the political spectrum, there is a general consensus within the Concordia

community that the CFS is not welcome here.

Laforest agreed with Gill in recognizing the importance of ensuring that motivation to pursue and win this case is passed forward.

"This is a portfolio that I inherited, that was initiated a few years ago, and we are just passing the baton to ensure that it's not dropped—we really have to keep it going," he said.

"A lot of work went into this campaign, so it is really about consulting with lawyers, consulting the people involved and making sure that all calls are made in the best interest of the case and Concordia students."

Gill thinks the current executive has a grasp on the importance and complexity of the current case.

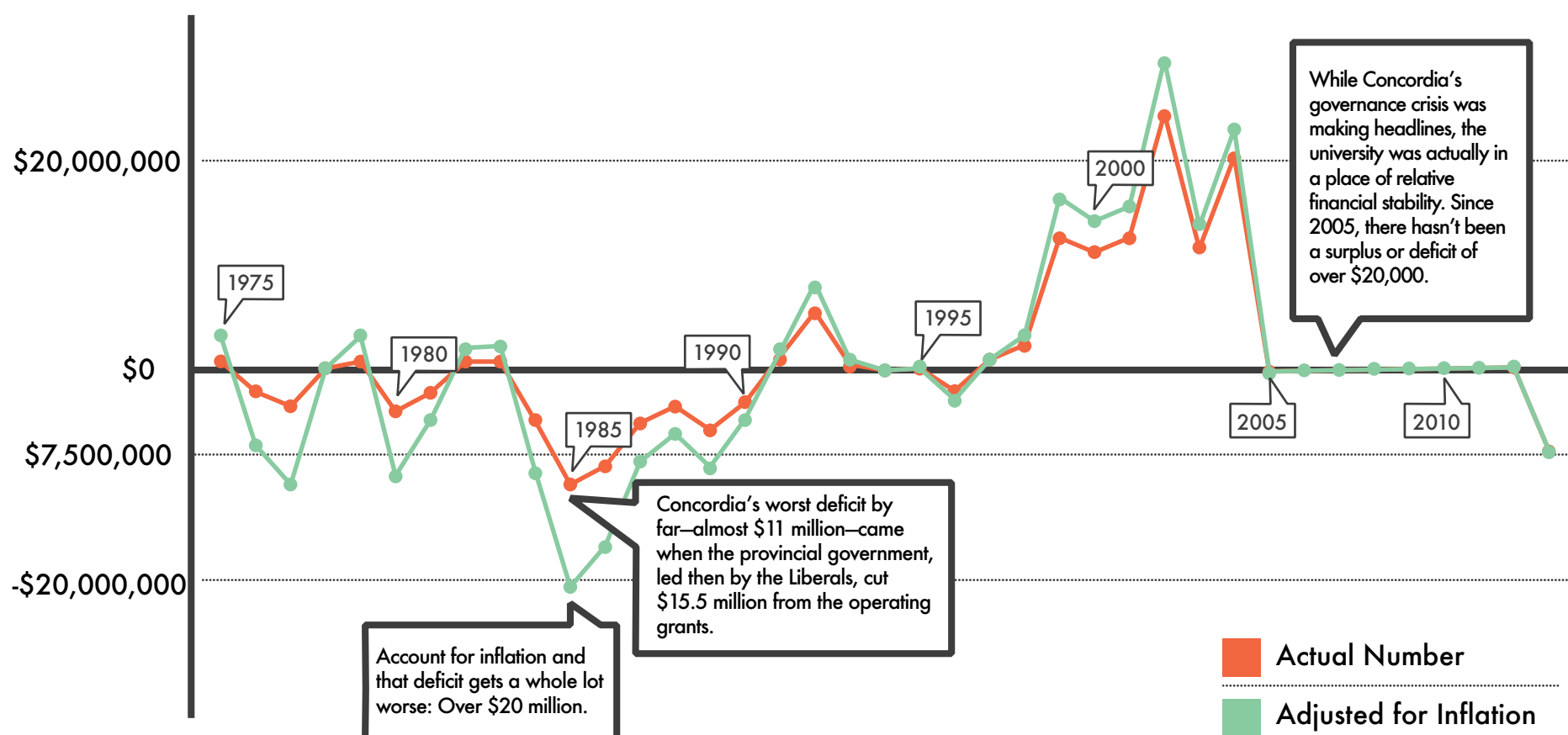
"It's a complicated legal file and I do get the sense that people around the table—as a result of that [special council] meeting and as a result of political culture at the CSU—are aware of the complexity of the file, as well as the importance of the political issues around it."

At its core, she said, this is an issue of freedom of association.

"Students made a choice, for a lot of really good reasons, that they no longer wanted to remain members of the CFS and that right is not being respected," Gill said.

"I think that is something that pretty much anyone that gets involved in CSU politics is aware of, and attuned to."

THE BOTTOM LINE



Surplus Could Become One of ConU's Worst Deficits by Julia Wolfe, @juruwolfe

In Quebec, nothing ever happens just once.

The Parti Québécois announced last month that it will cut approximately \$13.2 million from Concordia's operating grant this year, forcing the university's Board of Governors to scrap a predicted surplus of \$600,000.

Instead, the Board was forced to approve a deficit of up to \$7.5 million—the third highest in Concordia's 30-year history.

But the number-one spot is hard to beat.

In 1985, the school suffered a deficit of almost \$11 million. Account for inflation and that number soars to over \$20 million—by far the worst in Concordia's history.

And while that deficit makes today's look puny, the situation is almost identical.

Sweeping provincial cuts, this time from the Liberal Party, hit Concordia hard in the spring of

'85. The cuts came after the government's attempts to quietly consider tuition hikes resulted in flooded streets and strike threats.

Eventually, the school bounced back, posted record surpluses and stabilized to seven years of nearly net neutral budgets.

Since 2005, Concordia hasn't posted a deficit or surplus larger than \$20,000.

But a politically turbulent year has left the university's budget in turmoil.

This is the fourth time in this fiscal year that Concordia has had to revise its budget due to provincial shake-ups; at a Senate meeting on Jan. 25, Concordia's Chief Financial Officer Patrick Kelley joked that his job might be easier if he based the budget on a random number generator.

It doesn't help that the school is still unsure about the nature of the cuts. It has not been made clear whether the thinned operating

grant is permanent, or only to be in effect for the current fiscal year.

"We are taking this very seriously as a Board. We are responsible for the financial management of the university," said BoG Chair Norman Hébert, Jr.

"We had a balanced budget going into the year and now, unfortunately, we won't be able to have that."

For now, according to Concordia President Alan Shepard, "all eyes are on the summit," as Quebec universities gear up for the PQ's summit on higher education scheduled for Feb. 25 and Feb. 26.

But either way, Shepard said, things do not look good.

"This particular cut is part of a larger backdrop which is not just about Quebec, not just about Concordia, but about higher education around the globe," he said. "These are big global questions that lots of jurisdictions are wrestling with."

BY THE NUMBERS:

\$10,751,742

The worst deficit in Concordia's history, which occurred in 1985.

\$15.5 million

The total amount that the 1985 Liberal government cut from the province's university operating grants.

\$124 million

The total amount that the current PQ government cut from the province's university operating grants.

\$30 million

Possible 2013 deficit for McGill University, according to President Heather Munroe-Blum in an interview with *The Gazette*.

STILL NO FINE ARTS REP ON CSU COUNCIL

Students Seek Representation, Union Seeks
Solution by Colin Harris @colinnharris



■ Graphic Julia Wolfe

The Concordia Student Union council meeting had a few extra audience members on Jan. 23—ones that had no intention of keeping quiet.

Several fine arts students sat in the corner of the room, ready to voice their dissatisfaction of representation—or lack thereof—on the body. Although they are dues-paying members to the union, not one fine arts student currently sits on CSU council.

“Take some of your boatloads of money and give it to us,” said fine arts student Alyce Dressner.

The CSU bylaws state that at least two representatives for each faculty must sit on council. However, three resignations last semester and the absence of a candidate running in November’s byelections has left council falling short of that mandate.

This reality has left fine arts students feeling they aren’t getting their money’s worth.

CSU VP Student Life and Sustainability for the 2010-11 academic year Laura Glover resigned as fine arts councillor on Oct. 21, citing a lack of time to perform the job.

After a tallied attendance of meetings was announced on Nov. 2, fine arts representatives Michael Mercer and Nicolas Martel had to step down, as CSU bylaws state that councillors cannot miss three or more scheduled regular meetings.

Once it became clear the faculty had lost all its representation on council, Fine Arts Student Alliance VP Clubs and Services Erika Couto brought the issue to council’s attention at their Nov. 28 meeting. Circa that time, Couto had also begun circulating a petition asking the CSU to hold a second byelection.

Fast-forward to the winter semester, however, and it looks like a byelection isn’t in the cards.

“[A byelection] wouldn’t be done well due

to the time frame. I think the right call is to look for an alternate solution,” said CSU President Schubert Laforest. The union is currently without a chief electoral officer, who would oversee the vote, and the CSU general elections are just over a month away.

“A Fail-Safe Mechanism”

Before the winter break, a committee was formed to address and solve the fine arts representation issue.

Laforest, along with VP External Simon-Pierre Lauzon and councillors Benjamin Prunty, Hardial Rosner and Ramy Khoriaty, formed the committee and have met once since.

At that meeting, not all members were present. Among those absent was Rosner, who cited email issues as reason for her absence. The committee has yet to present any kind of solution to council.

Laforest said his priority, along with the short-term goal of giving fine arts students a voice on council, is to create “a fail-safe mechanism so this doesn’t happen again.”

His proposition is to create a way for faculty associations to recommend a representative with full voting rights at council, if ever there is no representation for that faculty following a byelection.

This would require an amendment of CSU bylaws, which needs a two-thirds majority of council’s support to take effect during his executive’s mandate.

However, Laforest was excused from Wednesday’s meeting due to illness. In his absence, council passed a motion that doesn’t need a change of bylaws.

The motion allows three ex-officio fine arts

representatives to sit, which would grant them all the powers of a councilor with the exception of voting rights.

With that decision, the fine arts audience left Wednesday’s meeting. FASA has declined to comment on the motion until after their Feb. 6 council meeting.

“I really don’t see how it’s okay for them to think that’s where this will end,” said Dressner. “They seem really confused between fine arts students and FASA. They don’t owe FASA anything, but they do owe fine arts students representation because we pay them union dues.”

With council adopting the ex-officio motion, it’s unclear where this leaves Laforest’s “fail-safe mechanism.”

“Maybe ex-officio was the right way to go,” said Laforest. “Potentially, even if I was there, council would have decided ex-officio would have been more appropriate.”

It was brought up repeatedly at council that keeping lines of communication open with student associations is the responsibility of VP Student Life Alexis Suzuki. In the CSU bylaws, the VP Student Life is “the liaison for faculty associations.”

Suzuki says that she has not contacted any fine arts students regarding representation, and that no one has gotten in touch with her.

After Wednesday’s council meeting, VP Clubs and Internal Affairs Nadine Atallah has agreed to work with FASA and attend their next council meeting to find a solution to the groups’ issues, which she said “stems from a general lack of communication between the CSU and FASA.”

“At the end of the day it doesn’t matter whose job it is, but who’s in the best position to talk with them,” said Atallah.

BRIEFS

by Andrew Brennan
@brennamen

More Rent (Not the Musical)

Apartment dwellers, take note: the Régie du logement du Québec released its advised rent increases for 2013 on Friday.

Basing their increases on inflation and the rising prices of utilities, the rental board recommended landlords tack on 0.9 per cent to rents for buildings heated by electricity, 0.2 per cent for those heated by gas and 1.7 per cent for those warmed by fuel oil.

Again, these are proposed increases—landlords can raise or lower their rents at their own discretion.

An Anti-Anti-Gay Protest

Hundreds marched on Montreal, Quebec City and Ottawa last Sunday in support of same-sex marriage legislation being considered in France.

Event organizer Julien Finlay says the demonstrations are also trying to counter-balance recent anti-gay protests in Paris and other French cities, according to reports by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

If the legislation is passed, France would become the 12th country in the world to legalize gay marriage—adding itself to a list which already includes Canada, South Africa and Sweden.

Paying the Dictator’s Son

New information was released this week linking embattled engineering conglomerate SNC-Lavalin with the family of former Libyan tyrant Moammar Gadhafi, reported the Canadian Press on Friday.

In a sworn statement unsealed by a Quebec court, former officials with the Montreal-based company are accused of paying \$160 million in kickbacks to the son of the dictator.

They were hoping to secure major contracts in the country, yet police say they also paid for luxury yachts with the contract money.

Swiss Banks, Fraud and Hospitals

Police are exploring potential dealings between the former chair of Canada’s national security watchdog and a company alleged to be involved in fraud at the McGill University Health Centre hospital network, reported *The Globe and Mail* on Saturday.

Sierra Asset Management Inc., originally hired by engineering company SNC-Lavalin to help build a new hospital facility, was found to be operating out of the Bahamas at the same location as a Swiss bank linked to Arthur Porter, former manager at the MUHC and chair of Canada’s Security Intelligence Review Committee.



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date

Jan 30 – Feb 1

place

Library Atrium

hours

9-8

last day

9-5

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MOVING REAL CLOSE

SBDC Dancers Bring Their Living Room to the Studio by Megan Dolski @megandolski



THE LINK ONLINE

The Link will be crashing SBDC's dress rehearsal on Wednesday—check the-linknewspaper.ca later this week for a sneak preview of the show.



The story is autobiographical, the creative process inverted and the stage is, well, absent entirely.

Mid-Winter Night's Dream, the Sonia Balazovjeh Dance Company's latest production, promises to be unlike anything they've ever done before.

"It's our first [time] dancing for the sake of dance show," said SBDC dancer and Concordia student Aryann Blondin. "It is really our story of how the company grew up, and came together."

SBDC's latest will be its first not to involve raising funds or awareness for a charitable organization. The three-year-old semi-professional company is a non-profit comprised of volunteer dancers trained in contemporary and classic styles, and uses movement as a means to educate and inform audiences on issues within the community.

Boycotting the Backstage

While SBDC physically narrates the story of its own personal journey as a company, they want you to be right there with them.

"We wanted to do something smaller, more intimate to let everyone get into our world a little bit more as dancers and performers," said Sonia Balazovjeh, the company's founder and current dancer.

To establish a more visceral connection with the audience, SBDC's venue of choice wasn't a conventional auditorium or theatre space, but rather a loft with neither rows of seats nor a stage.

"We wanted to do something smaller, more intimate to let everyone get into our world a little bit more as dancers and performers." **Sonia Balazovjeh, Founder of the Sonia Balazovjeh Dance Company**

However, no stage means no backstage, either. All set and costume changes will take place live, and movement in the centre of the room will be constant throughout the 90-minute production.

"We wanted the show to be more casual rather than have us in the spotlight the whole time," said Balazovjeh. "We didn't want to create two separate spaces."

To make sure their audience was not only close by, but also comfy, the company members have built five separate "living rooms" within the space, using an array of furniture from their own homes.

Barstools, beanbags and couches bunched together in multiple pockets surrounding the "dance floor" aim to offer the audience a chance to experience the performance, rather than just watch it.

"We want people to not feel exposed, or like they are sitting by themselves," explained Balazovjeh. "When you are at a theatre, you go and sit by yourself and look forward, not right, or to the left or down—you just look straight ahead."

"We wanted to give people more of a circular cozy feel, rather than just looking straight on."

Oh, and wine will be served, be-

cause, well—because.

An Inverted Process

Not only did the members of SBDC transport themselves beyond their usual performance space with *Mid-Winter Night's Dream*, they also completely inverted their own creative process while making it.

"Our producer created the soundtrack and then we built our choreography and concept from what he provided," said Blondin, citing this as one of the greatest challenges in putting together the show. Balazovjeh agreed with Blondin in that this inverse fashion of choreographing to pre-determined music was difficult, but she feels it turned out to be one of the production's greatest strengths.

"We are choreographing to stuff we would have not necessarily chosen, or started with, so it was the opposite of what we were used to," she said. "But we would never have come up with what we have now if we'd done the reverse."

The show is choreographed primarily by company members, but also features two pieces done by guest choreographers—*So You Think You Can Dance Canada* Season 4 winner Jordan Clark and Lynsey Billing of L'Académie de

danse Scream.

Balazovjeh says both pushed the company's dancers into unknown territory, especially Billing's work.

"She challenged our limits completely," said Balazovjeh. "She just pushed us to get into emotionally fuelled dance."

Dayna Goldman, another SBDC dancer, says Billing's piece is the hardest for her to perform.

"We each have our individual stories that we are thinking about when we are doing certain pieces," she said. "Some of them are really intense and it's going to be challenging to do them in front of an audience."

The narrative of *Mid-Winter Night's Dream* draws from an overarching theme of transitioning forward.

"We are toying with the concepts of dark and light, and how the human spirit is continuously drawn to and in search of light," explained Balazovjeh. "It just seems to be this natural progression, that if you are in a dark place, you want to dig yourself out towards the light."

She says this idea hit close to home with the company.

"It's not to say we were in a horrible place, but when we were at our old studio, we felt a little re-

pressed and unsupported," she said. "Then we liberated ourselves and jumped out on our own, and have found this light place where we sort of belong."

Next Up, Love

The show's encore will double as a launch for SBDC's next major production, set to hit the stage February 2014.

The upcoming show will revisit the company's signature routine of working alongside and in support of a charitable organization. This time, SBDC will work with local organization Leave Out Violence, which seeks to reduce violence in the lives of young people.

LOVE's program is largely media-based and allows students to use art—such as photography, poetry and song—to express their feelings about being either the victims or perpetrators of violence.

While plans for the production are still preliminary, Balazovjeh says its concept and narrative will draw its inspiration from the young people that participate in LOVE.

"I really want to join forces with the students," said Balazovjeh. "They have produced some incredible work already, so I'd like to translate what they are saying into dance somehow."

Mid-Winter Night's Dream / Jan. 31 to Feb. 2 / Canvas Montreal (870 Notre-Dame St.) / Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m. / Feb. 1 and Feb. 2, 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

STUDENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Gala for Student Drama Showcases Young Talent by Josh Dixon



The cast of "The Carrier Pigeon Play" rehearse at Mainline Theatre.



Photos Natalia Lara Diaz Berrio

PLAY PROGRAM

"Carrelage,"
written and
directed by
Sophie Daunais-
Ouimet, assisted
by Myriam
Fugère (Université
du Québec à
Montréal)

"If Phones Could
Talk," written and
directed by
Alyssa Harms-
Wiebe
(Concordia
University)

"The Carrier
Pigeon Play,"
(Fourteen to
Never Theatre
Company) written
by Julie Foster,
directed by
Michelle Soicher
(Concordia
University)

"Solstices,"
written and
directed by Laurie
Murphy, assisted
by Florence
Rainville, (CEGEP
Saint-Laurent)

While finding a foothold in one's preferred industry can be hard for any student, it seems to be especially difficult for those studying drama.

In a fast-paced city, it can be daunting for a student to discern where and how to get started. Luckily, teams of dedicated and passionate graduates have taken matters into their own hands, and have curated the Gala for Student Drama.

"The two English plays are from Concordia this year, which is really nice. Word definitely got around the theatre department pretty fast that this was happening," said Julie Foster, a Concordia student and writer of "The Carrier Pigeon Play," a comedy to be shown at this year's festival.

"So, any kind of attention we can bring to these plays is a good thing for the Concordia community."

Now in its third year, this quickly growing festival takes submissions from playwrights and producers from post-secondary institutions in Montreal. After narrowing them down to the four best productions, they are staged for the public at longstanding Montreal indie venue Mainline Theatre.

Applications were filled out ear-

lier in the semester and two of the four final plays chosen were written by Concordia students—Foster and Alyssa Harms-Wiebe, who wrote "If Phones Could Talk." From there, the four respective teams had six weeks to make their visions come to life—no easy feat, even for the most experienced producers.

"It just happened that there were two Concordia plays this year. When we receive the plays, we ask not to have the name of the school or anything," said Ian Truman, the main brain behind the project, and himself a Concordia graduate. "If it's good on paper, it's probably good on stage too."

Born and raised in Montreal, Truman is undeniably passionate about this project, and that passion seems to resonate with all those involved in the festival.

Passion, however, cannot always conquer nerves. Foster was anxious about the production, but bubbling underneath that was an excitement for what is taking shape over the next two weeks.

Foster has every right to be nervous about her upcoming debut, considering it's her first real foray into production.

"Picking up the pace was definitely a challenge at first, but now that we all understand our play more, and with a lot of practice, it's been a nice growing process for all of us involved," said Foster.

Before this, Foster and her teammates had worked on original productions in high school, but nothing quite as extravagant as what this festival demands.

Each team is not only responsible for writing a successful play, they must also undergo the rigorous task of putting together sets, finding props and dealing with the technical aspects of a play, including lighting and sound.

This year, Truman has also made a point to push the teams into the limelight, and have them each deal with the media in some capacity so as to get experience in the real world of theatre and everything that entails.

"It's so challenging, even as organization goes, but I feel we can accomplish anything as far as events go," said Truman. "It's very complex; we handle the space, the teams, the people and how you communicate with them—and we still have some issues with that, but

we're learning how to make everything more clear as we continue."

With the festival's opening date set for Feb. 14, the curtain will be rising very soon. Perhaps the most beneficial aspect to this festival, though, is that Truman and his team are there to help out participants every step of the way.

But this is not a competition; it's an experience for students doing what they love. Without this festival, passionate theatre students would have a much harder time breaking into the industry.

One participant in this year's edition, Laurie Murphy, was in high school this time last year—but what could be daunting for her has been made much easier with the help of the organizers. They are providing assistance not only for the productions themselves, but also in regards to handling media and other details.

"She's nervous, but she's eager, so we're more than willing to spend time with her and help her out with these things," said Foster.

"It's not that she isn't as good as everyone else, she's just younger, so there's an experience there," she continued. "So, giving them press,

giving them feedback, [and] technical direction is really going to benefit these students, hopefully."

While this city can be daunting for those new to it, placing the Montreal culture at the forefront of the festival has been a focal point for Truman and his team.

Since its second year, the festival has been presented as a bilingual event, as Truman hopes to bridge the gap between francophones and anglophones—a topic that has seen some increased tension recently.

Ultimately, the creators of the event want students to take away a glimpse of real-world experience from their respective productions. Whether or not the plays are successful, students can at least expect to see and experience every aspect that goes into creating a stage production—an indispensable experience in the world of theatre.

At the very least, this festival will put students in the spotlight they've been craving.

Gala for Student Drama / Feb. 14 to Feb. 16 / Mainline Theatre (3997 St. Laurent Blvd.) / 8:00 p.m. / \$12.00

IN THE STREETS, ON THE AIR

Rock Against Racism Raises Funds for Homelessness Broadcast With Doc Screening, Concert

by Katie McGroarty
@katiecmcg

On Feb. 20, you won't need an FM dial to tune into local radio.

The Homelessness Marathon, now in its 11th year on air, takes on a broad topic in a non-traditional way—by raising awareness about homelessness and the cycle of poverty directly from the people who have first-hand experience with the problem.

To make that national radio broadcast happen, there's Rock Against Racism, which hopes to raise the \$400 needed for gear and supplies for the evening.

A night dedicated to "fundraising" for the Homelessness Marathon, Rock Against Racism is half dance party, half film screening hosted at Katacombes on Jan. 31.

Montreal political punk rockers BOIDS and Action Sédition will take the stage after the screening; to kick off the night, there's *Squeegee Punks in Traffic*, a film that

Candice Cascanette, coordinator for the 2013 Homelessness Marathon, hopes will showcase a side of city life alien to most Montrealers.

"It's a great film focused on the life of one squeegee punk youth in particular. He has a camera and films from his perspective and is followed around by [director Daniel Cross]," Cascanette said.

"It's just sort of his day-to-day life, where he stays at night, how he's treated by the cops and his interpersonal relationships. [It's] a first-hand view of his treatment."

Underprivileged groups don't often get a voice in mass media, she said, and the marathon is a unique broadcast that offers an uncensored view of stories that frequently go unreported.

"It's really rare that you hear first-hand the voices of people living that experience, it's usually service providers and people talking about statistics on homelessness and new projects," said Cascanette.

"It's not aiming to give a soap-box for politicians to talk about

their campaign plans, but just about how messed up it is and how people are resisting what they're living day-to-day."

Armed with a 1-800 number and portable broadcast centre, the group will be broadcasting from the streets of Montreal for 14 hours of live radio, featuring the voices of anyone who calls the hotline to talk about the reality of homelessness and poverty.

Unlike the usual format of fundraising marathons, the Homelessness Marathon isn't a charity, and doesn't aim to raise money.

"It's entirely meant to be a popular education tool and awareness-raising tool. It doesn't seek to raise funds and is not a charity at all; it really just seeks to allow people to have their voices heard," said Cascanette.

Rock Against Racism Montreal, A Benefit for the Homelessness Marathon / Jan. 31 / Co-op Katacombes (1635 St. Laurent Blvd.) / 8:00 p.m. / \$6.00 to \$10.00 PWYC



Graphic Paku Daoust-Cloutier

OF ACADEMIA, DIY AND STUDENT STRIKES

Le Merle Mixes Zine Aesthetic, Scholarly Journal Content

by Vivien Leung
@vivien_leung

Being somewhat of a pessimist may be beneficial—or at least that's how things happened to work out in Heather Davis's case.

"It's often really overwhelming to think of all the terrible things that are happening in the world," said Davis, guest editor for *Le Merle* and recent Concordia Communications doctoral graduate.

"I think that one of the ways in which you can counteract that is to create communities and networks of people who want to resist that in whichever way [possible]."

Le Merle—French for black-bird—is a small-run, Montreal-centric publication. [It discusses the relationship between art and politics, in what its creators describe it as a "book of words and deeds." Their third issue launched Jan. 25 at local art book store Formats.

Building a sense of community is arguably as important to a polit-

ical movement as laying down ideological precepts, but Davis envisions *Le Merle* as doing both.

"Beyond thinking of it as direct political action, it's a space for people to riff off their experiences with art and politics," she said.

The new issue brings together art collectives, academics and activists from Montreal, Ontario and Europe in an examination of the 2012 Quebec student protests. The six different responses published in this issue range from poetry to scholarly essays and deal more or less directly with the theme.

According to Davis, the multiple perspectives is one of the major benefits of building relationships with like-minded and engaged people.

"A lot of us who contribute travel a lot; it brings part of our community to other places," she said.

So far, *Le Merle* has established links far beyond the city—like their relationship with Interference, an anarchist library in Brooklyn.

They've also worked on their layout with Carvalho Bernau, a design firm in The Hague, Holland.

François Lemieux, creator of *Le Merle*, particularly appreciated being able to share his views on the 2012 student protests with the Dutch artists through the publication.

"The only stuff they hear about is when it gets bad, like when a car gets burned or something—which is ridiculous," said Lemieux.

The publication can best be described as part zine and part academic journal. Lemieux said the inspiration came while he was enrolled in Interdisciplinary Studies in the Fine Arts department at Concordia and he ran an artist residency out of his home.

A group interested in community involvement began to coalesce, and from there they formed a reading group to discuss academic articles that interested them.

"I thought it would be nice to keep a trace of our train of thought, the connections and the various perspectives that existed within



Creators of *Le Merle* at last Friday's launch.

Photo Vivien Leung

that group," said Lemieux. "[*Le Merle*] became kind of a necessity."

For their next issue, they hope to gather ideas and reflections by attending the Colloques de Cerisy, a philosophy conference in France.

For now, though, they're not certain if and when there will be a next issue because of struggles with funding and publicity. The sales currently don't cover production costs—especially when accounting for the professional work put in by such a group of highly qualified and

passionate individuals.

"[Lemieux] created it purely through friendship, it's a labour of love," said Davis.

Lemieux agrees.

"I'm interested and Heather is still interested and other people are still interested. This is what keeps [*Le Merle*] going."

The issue is currently on sale in Montreal at Formats (2 Ste. Catherine St. E., #302) and Drawn & Quarterly (211 Bernard St. W.).

The following candidates are eligible to
run for the positions of:

Sports Editor - Justin Blanchard
Opinions Editor - Michael Wrobel

Elections will take place at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 1 in *The Link* office, Hall Building, room H-649.
For more information, email: editor@thelinknewspaper.ca or call 514-848-2424 x7407

The following contributors are eligible to vote: Josh Barkman, Justin Blanchard, Yacine Bouhali, Pierre Chauvin, Alice DuLac, Jane Gatensby, Flora Hammond, Oliver Leon, Jayde Norström, Michelle Pucci, Leslie Schachter, Riley Sparks, Jonathan Woods, Michael Wrobel, Graeme Shorten Adams and current *The Link* masthead.

GET THE PERFECT SHOT

The Montreal *Gazette's* Photo Editor Marcos Townsend talks all things photojournalism as part of the *The Link's* speaker series.

FRIDAY, FEB. 1
4:00 P.M.
THE LINK OFFICE
(1455 DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD. W., H-649)



FRINGE CALENDAR

VISUAL ART

1 ALL KIN Exhibition by Jason Botkin -
Vernissage
Jan. 29

Projet Beaumont (550 Beaumont Ave.)
6:00 p.m.
Free

2 Madeleine Mayo - Vernissage

Jan. 31
Casa del Popolo (4873 St. Laurent Blvd.)
5:00 p.m.
Free

CABARET

3 Dukes of Drag present B.Y.O.Moustache
Feb. 1 and Feb. 2

Feb. 1 and Feb. 2
La Sala Rossa (4848 St. Laurent Blvd.)
10:00 p.m.
\$10.00

There are a handful of notorious drag queen shows in Montreal, but this weekend there will be a drag king show as well. Presented by the Dukes of Drag—a group that has been pushing back against sexual norms since 2007.

COMEDY

4 Bandolier of Dreams

Feb. 2

Mainline Theatre (3997 St. Laurent Blvd.)
\$7.00

Hoity-toity improvised comedy for the refined set. Montreal improv veterans Mike

Hughes and Matt Goldberg show off their long-form improv skills and make it look easy—despite copious amounts of onstage wine sampling.

MUSIC

5 Amos the Transparent + Erik Lind & The Orchard + Laurent Bourque
Jan. 31

Quai des Brumes (4481 St. Denis St.)
8:30 p.m.
\$8.00

If you had entered our draw last week, you might be seeing these guys for free. Moral of the story: enter our draw next time. Of course, you could just pay to see these Canadian indie rockers.

6 Julie Doiron + Elgin-Skye + Construction and Deconstruction
Feb. 2

Casa Del Popolo (4873 St. Laurent Blvd.)
8:00 p.m.
\$13.00 advance / \$15.00 door

7 Buke & Gase + Ahleuchatistas + Isle of Pine

Feb. 4
Il Motore (179 Jean-Talon St. W.)
8:00 p.m.
\$11.00 advance / \$13.00 door

Brooklyn duo Buke & Gase are back with their homemade instruments and adorable stage presence.

FILM

8 *Final Cut* by Györgi Pálfi
Jan. 29

PHI Centre (407 St. Pierre St.)
8:00 p.m.
\$11.25

9 Cinema Politica: *Inside Lara Roxx*
Jan. 31

Hall Building (1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd.
W., H-110)
7:00 p.m.
PWYC

This documentary looks at the life of a porn actress infected with HIV. Dictor Mia Donovan and actress Lara Rxxx will be in attendance.

JAN. 29 – FEB. 4



FRINGE GIVEAWAY

You have Facebook (probably). We have free tickets (definitely). So “like” *The Link’s* Facebook page for a chance to win them!

Win a pair of tickets to brand new comedy talk show *Life Lessons With Keith Waterfield*, where the host will try to find the funny in the tragic tales of relationships gone wrong.

Or, win tickets to groove the night away to Prince Club—with a special DJ set by Cadence Weapon this Saturday at Cabaret Underworld.

We will be drawing the names Wednesday, so keep your eyes peeled for more info on our Facebook page.

PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Concordia's Kaylah Barrett passes the ball to a teammate in the Stingers' 60-46 loss to the McGill Martlets last Thursday.

Photo Erin Sparks

BOXSCORES
WEEK OF JAN. 21 TO JAN. 27



Sunday, Jan. 27	Men's Hockey – Concordia 5, University of Ottawa 6 (SO)
	Women's Hockey – Concordia 3, University of Ottawa 8
Saturday, Jan. 26	Men's Basketball – Concordia 58, Université du Québec à Montréal 65
	Women's Basketball – Concordia 74, Université du Québec à Montréal 70
Friday, Jan. 25	Men's Hockey – Concordia 3, McGill University 2 (SO)
Thursday, Jan. 24	Men's Basketball – Concordia 62, McGill University 60
	Women's Basketball – Concordia 46, McGill University 60

UPCOMING GAMES
THIS WEEK IN CONCORDIA SPORTS



Friday, Feb. 1	6:00 p.m.	Women's Basketball at McGill Martlets
	7:00 p.m.	Men's Hockey at Nipissing Lakers
	7:30 p.m.	Women's Hockey vs. Ottawa Gee-Gees (Ed Meagher Arena)
	8:00 p.m.	Men's Basketball at McGill Redmen
Saturday, Feb. 2	2:30 p.m.	Women's Hockey vs. McGill Martlets (Ed Meagher Arena)
	4:00 p.m.	Men's Basketball vs. Laval Rouge et Or (Concordia Gym)
	6:00 p.m.	Women's Basketball vs. Laval Rouge et Or (Concordia Gym)
	7:30 p.m.	Men's Hockey at Ryerson Rams

Check out Stingers game summaries at thelinknewspaper.ca/sports

■ VARSITY BLUES

Concordia's Sports Clubs Can't Yet Earn Varsity Status. But That's Okay—They'll Wait. By Justin Blanchard @jblanch6



■ Graphics Graeme Shorten Adams
& Paku Daoust-Cloutier

Many things may keep Concordia baseball club head coach Howard Schwartz up at night. His team's lack of varsity status isn't one of them.

"I suppose I would break a little smile if we were varsity, but it's just a personal ego thing and honestly it is not an issue," he said.

Nonetheless, Schwartz admits obtaining the recognition that comes with the title of varsity is something he, like the rest of Concordia's clubs, strives for.

"It's an issue I've discussed with Katie over the years," said Schwartz, referring to Katie Sheahan, the director of recreation and athletics at Concordia. "It's really just a pride thing—I'd like to be varsity because it sounds more important."

Not just to him or to his team, but to potential recruits as well.

"That's the one drawback [of being a club]," said Schwartz. "It hasn't happened, but it could, that McGill would get a student that I wanted [because of their baseball team's varsity status]."

It's equally a drawback for the likes of Concordia's ski team, which misses out on key recruits in part due to having little visibility outside the university—let alone within it.

"I had to present myself in class this year, told them I am captain of the ski team and

everybody looked up," ski captain Paul Blanc-Paque told *The Link* two weeks ago. "No one knows we have a ski team."

Though as much as the university's baseball, ski, golf and cross-country clubs may like to join the varsity ranks, Sheahan said such moves aren't in the department's plans just yet.

"Every school has a threshold of how many fully-funded programs that you can field at a time," she said.

Currently, that threshold is locked in at 10 for Concordia, where men's football, men's wrestling and men's and women's basketball, soccer, hockey and rugby fall under varsity.

"There's a moratorium on developing new varsity teams while our priority remains facility development in the department," Sheahan said.

"So it's not a question of their proposal not being an earnest one; it's just that the mandate we have for new development is strictly facility development at this stage."

It's a mandate that's been in place since Sheahan's arrival at the university in 2003, but don't think it means the department sees its club teams as inferior to the varsity ones.

"All of our teams, whether they be club or varsity, are Stingers," said department

associate director John Bower.

Unfortunately, not everyone sees it that way.

"People often confuse the word varsity with quality of regard," said Sheahan. "One of the things that I think is really important for people to recognize is that this is a classification that allows us to be clear about the resources that we allocate."

"The word isn't meant to say that one sport is more important than another," she explained, noting that, at Bishop's University, women's hockey is a club team while golf is a varsity team.

The opposite is true at Concordia, but you might have trouble telling, considering how fine the line dividing the two levels is.

Varsity team athletes have the luxury of seeing their resources—which include equipment, administrative and transportation support, according to Sheahan—mostly paid for by in a pre-approved budget by the department, and the opportunity to attend athletic therapy sessions.

But that aside, both varsity and club teams generally receive the same amount of attention from the department.

"I have regular meetings with [Sheahan], and when we have a meeting they're two hours long and I have as many as I request," said Schwartz. "We are treated with the utmost respect within the department,

and that's true for all the other clubs."

Indeed, Schwartz isn't the only one meeting with the department. Sheahan said she recently spoke with the ski team to look into equipment purchases, while Bower added the department is looking into ways to increase the golf team's profile with offseason training camps.

And that's not the only way the department makes the clubs feel a part of the group.

"We have the same expectations to follow," said Schwartz.

"We have to follow [Canadian Interuniversity Sport] standards for drug testing, we have to attend student-athlete orientation—we have to do everything by the book," he said, adding that his players must also follow the course load commitments and maintain good academic standing with the university, as is required of varsity athletes.

"Katie has the same commitment to us as she does to varsity," Schwartz said.

As long as that commitment remains secondary to facility development, it may be quite some time before Schwartz's team—or the rest of Concordia's clubs—make the jump to varsity. But until then, the clubs can rest assured they're in good hands.

"To say Katie's been accommodating would be an understatement," says Schwartz.

■ A PRECIOUS TRADITION

Annual Loyola Sports Tournament Bigger Than Ever



"I've been a volunteer for six years now at the tournament. My son is going to graduate next year, but I'll probably be here for another 10 years."

Peter Arzenshek

by Yacine Bouhali @mybouhali

You could say it came from Meagher beginnings.

In 1971, the Loyola—Ed Meagher Sports Tournament started out as a four-team hockey tournament. Today, it's one of the biggest high school sporting events in the country, with 36 teams and over 400 student-athletes competing in three sports.

"It's a fantastic tournament," said this year's honorary chairman, William Hague. "Ed [Meagher] would just be smiling if he saw how great it became."

Spread over a six-day period every January, most of the matches take place in Concordia's facilities, as the university lends its hockey rink and basketball court to the tournament.

"Concordia has been a great help over the years, and without them, this would certainly not be possible," said tournament chairman Bob Lafave.

Many doubted its ability to succeed when the inaugural year was largely a failure. One team couldn't make it due to a snowstorm, reducing the expected four-team field to just three.

At the end of it, Loyola had lost money—but the school principal at the time, Ken Casey, was determined keep Meagher, and hockey coach Jim Ruddy's, idea—to create a tournament that would showcase the talent and spirit of high school athletes—alive. He kept the tournament going and, 42 years later, it's bigger than ever.

Meagher, who passed away in 1995, was longtime teacher and coach at Loyola High School.

Meagher forged a Loyola tradition by inspiring the commitment of staff members,

parents and alumni. Today, nearly all volunteers are parents of a Loyola student or a former student themselves.

"I've been a volunteer for six years now at the tournament. My son is going to graduate next year, but I'll probably be here for another ten years," said Peter Arzenshek, with huge smile on his face.

"This event reflects the spirit of the Loyola community. We're all here because we want to be part of something bigger than ourselves, part of one big tradition."

The event has come a long way since that infamous three-team debut, now featuring not only hockey but also basketball and wrestling. But as important as the competitive side to the tournament is, Lafave doesn't hide the fact that making a profit is also a big reason why the tournament committee keeps organizing the event year after year.

"Our mission is to make a profit that goes to the school so they can buy sports equipment," said Lafave, who noted the school had recently purchased two \$21,000 scoreboards. "That's the kind of expense the school wouldn't be able to afford otherwise."

The tournament has seen its geographical scope grow significantly as well, as today, teams from Ontario, the Maritimes and even from across the border making their way to Notre-Dame-de-Grâce to compete against local high schools in Montreal.

"It's awesome to play different teams and see the whole school cheering for you; it's a motivation boost for everybody," said John Bews, Loyola's juvenile hockey team captain. "We're all here to participate, but for sure it's always better when your school wins."



Photos ■ Leslie Schachter, ■ Dylan Maloney & ■ Geoffrey Vendeville

TRAC DESERVES R-E-S-P-E-C-T



Collective Bargaining in a Time of Budget Cuts for Teaching Assistants

It's difficult to jump right into an op-ed about the teaching assistants and research assistants' collective bargaining at Concordia.

We face issues that go well beyond the usual antagonism between employers and employees. Universities are not factories, so the issues and concerns involved in negotiations are quite different from standard labour negotiations.

Universities have been changing in the last 10 to 20 years, not only in Quebec, but also all over the world.

There has been tremendous pressure by international organizations—mainly those associated with a neo-liberal socio-political agenda—to eliminate public funding and replace it with private funding from corporate sources (being paid for research and scholarship) or students (tuition hikes and student debt).

But as with the public funding of other social goods like highways, bridges, ports, parks, public security, intelligence and military services, the private sector has generally failed to provide what the public sector no longer seems willing to pay for.

Universities have suffered financially as a result, and university boards largely controlled by business interests have adjusted priorities accordingly. Disagreement about whether universities suffer from under-funding or poor budgeting misses the point: we suffer from both.

In Quebec, this trend influenced the policies of the Liberal government under Jean Charest and continues to influence the actions of the Parti Québécois government under Pauline Marois.

Universities have been ordered to trim already extremely tight administrative budgets. Beyond the usual reductions in office supplies and photocopies, hiring freezes and reductions in working

hours are also probable.

Universities have been given permission to increase ancillary fees—for every dollar of tuition you are charged, you pay another \$0.50 in fees—not to mention fees for miscellaneous services.

Universities have also been ordered by the government to go into business, renting real estate, operating retail stores, selling every flat surface to advertisers and contracting to do private research, among other things.

Much of what passes for funding has gone into new buildings and facilities, while the people that inhabit them are neglected. Since the government does not fund 100 per cent of the costs of those buildings, universities end up carrying a large debt burden—which in turn takes up a large piece of operating budgets.

And, by a huge margin, most of what Concordia's operating budget supports is people: pay, wages, salaries.

The money that is paid out is paid out to professors, to lab technicians, to maintenance workers, to departmental assistants, to the people who reshelve books in the library, make classroom projectors work, wash the windows and mail out transcripts.

How do teaching assistants fit in all of this?

One way to save money is to hire cheaper workers to do the same work as more expensive workers. Therefore, TAs are hired to take some of the load off of instructors so that class sizes can be increased.

The math is attractive: If one professor can handle a class of 30 students, then accommodating 60 of them might take two classes and two professors; instead, one professor can lecture 60 students, and then everything else can be done by two TAs who cost a fraction of what a second professor would cost.

In Point 1.1 of Concordia's Academic Plan, teach-

ing assistantships are framed as graduate funding, like a fellowship or bursary.

But in Point 3.4.2, we see what the plan has to say about the function of TAs: In order to keep costs down, TAs do what instructors once did, which is to provide a "small class experience" by "facilitating smaller group activities and tutorials" even though under-funding and poor budgeting have "made it necessary to increase class sizes."

This leaves out the other work that TAs do: grading assignments and exams, holding office hours, setting up and managing labs, and otherwise fulfilling not only a support role, but a primary role in the education of thousands of students in hundreds of classes—all for pennies on the dollar.

A teaching assistantship is not an honour recognizing academic excellence, an internship, an apprenticeship or a form of student aid. It is a job. And a job that has an increasingly fundamental place in how Concordia and other universities operate—and in how employees and labour costs in universities are managed.

So the issue is not merely one of fair and competitive wages, fairness in job postings, getting paid on time, being categorized in the correct pay grade or merely meeting with us to discuss these things—all issues Concordia has failed us on at some point or another—but about plain respect: to be recognized for the essential role we play, and to be treated accordingly.

—Robert Sonin,
President of the Teaching and Research
Assistants at Concordia
Public Service Alliance of Canada Local 12500

Teaching and Research Assistants at Concordia will be discussing these issues at a general assembly Jan. 30 in the Concordia Student Union's seventh-floor lounge at 12:00 p.m. Of course, we encourage all TRAC members to attend, but all members of the Concordia community are welcome.

LOCKING RODDICK GATES

McGill's ATI-Dodging a Reason to Review Freedom of Information Laws by Pierre Chauvin @pierre_chauvin

McGill University's decision to ask for special powers regarding Access to Information requests filed by some McGill students and reporters from *The McGill Daily* and *The Link* has been covered extensively.

But a more general discussion about the usefulness of ATI requests has been missing.

Last year, I reported on the five-day student occupation at McGill nicknamed "#6party." After it ended, I filed an ATI request with McGill to know the costs associated with the extra security put in place during what occupiers dubbed a "surprise resignation party" for Deputy Provost Student Life and Learning Morton Mendelson.

Thirty days later, I got my answer: over \$141,000.

It's a perfect example of how journalists use ATI requests. They allow us to gain access to information we wouldn't otherwise know. Mainstream media organizations—from the *Ottawa Citizen* to *La Presse*—make extensive use of ATI requests in much the same way.

Earlier this year, Chris Bangs, a McGill student who runs the website McGilliLeaked, contacted me. He was gathering all ATIs filed to McGill on his website.

I gave him my findings—any document released under the Access to Information Act is considered a public document.

And that's how *The Link*

appeared in a motion filed by McGill to the Commission d'accès à l'information du Québec, the ATI regulatory body.

In total, I filed two ATIs to McGill—the only two that *The Link* filed that year.

Besides some of the ridiculous claims made by McGill—like assuming that students purposely file requests "intended to fail" or that *The Link* is taking part in a "complex system to acquire documents and information whereby different persons will submit within a short period of time a series of ATIs"—McGill's motion ends by making a disturbing request.

They want the ability to deny any request made by McGill students or reporters from *The Link* or *The McGill Daily* or any "persons that could reasonably be linked to such requestors" if they consider the request to be "overly broad" or "frivolous" or "similar or identical to previous documents."

Aside from the fact that this motion has been a public-relations disaster for McGill, it begs the question: did the McGill legal team even read the Access to Information Act?

See, there aren't just one or two sections dealing with restrictions to the right to access, but an entire chapter. That's right, the act contains 23 sections defining in what situations a

public body can deny a request.

Concordia, for example, routinely accepts and denies ATIs—mainly over concerns of privacy, security and economy.

Though McGill is playing the victim, the current Access to Information Act does more to protect public bodies than it does to empower journalists to do their work.

This is not merely my personal opinion, but the revelation of the latest international rankings of countries based on freedom of information.

Canada ended up 51st of 89 countries in the rankings—behind Angola, Columbia and Niger.

McGill claims the requests are part of "retaliation measures against McGill in the aftermath of the 2011-2012 student protests."

The student strike demonstrated, however, that there are multiple ways students could disrupt universities—filing ATI requests for that purpose seems comparatively weak and inefficient.

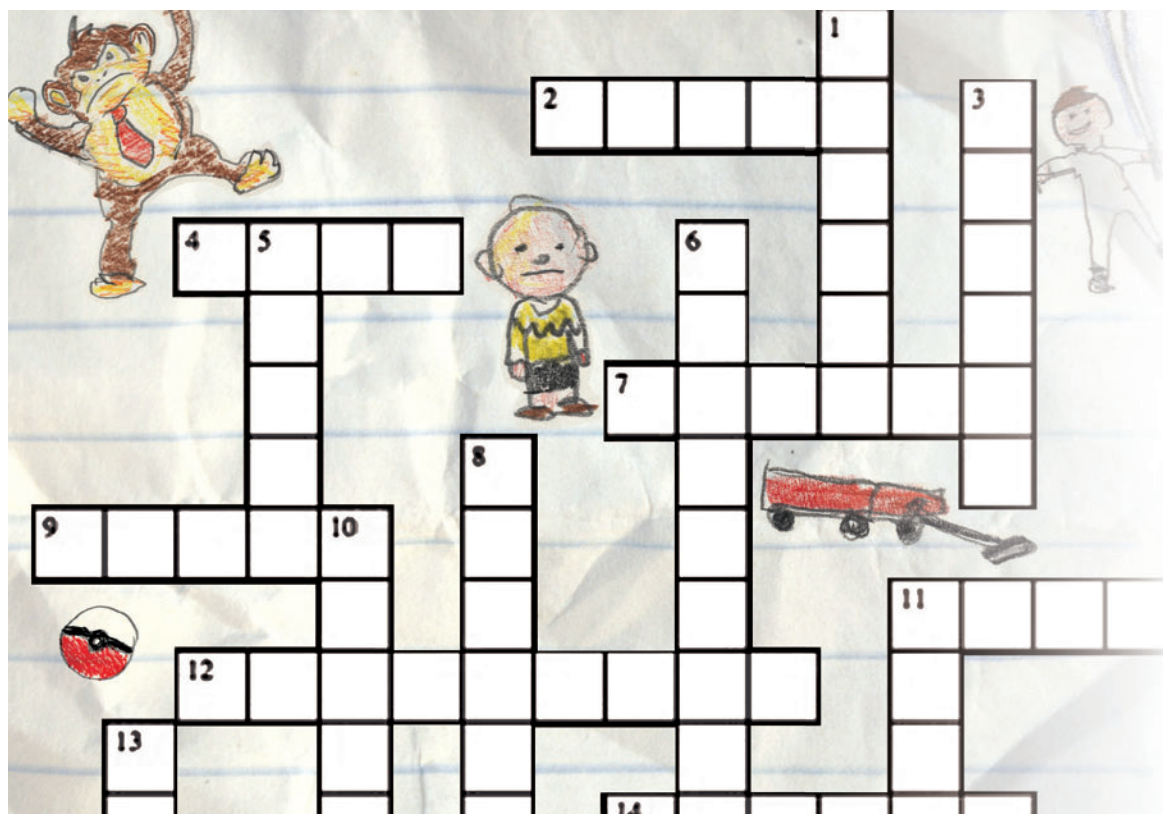
This motion could set a dangerous precedent for infringing on student journalists' right to information.

In times of cuts to universities, one should question such a waste of time and resources by McGill, as well as the costs associated with it—and perhaps even file an ATI about it.

For more information on Access to Information in Quebec, visit cai.gouv.qc.ca.



◆ Graphic Paku Daoust-Cloutier



WE'RE LOOKING FOR A RIDDLER

The Link is looking for a word wizard to make our weekly crossword puzzle. So if your silly taste in trivia is always stumping your friends and/or you are creating delightful illustrations or graphics but have nowhere to show them off, get in touch!

Email opinions@thelinknewspaper.ca for more info.

PAIN IN THE BUTT

I'm a gay guy who just got into a serious relationship that I'm really excited about. So far I've been topping him exclusively, even though he considers himself a top.

I used to bottom like a champ, but have recently been much less 'accept-

ing' when people try to fuck me.

I've been practicing with a dildo for him, and am able to fuck myself pretty easily, but for some reason, whenever he tries I'm too tight and it's too painful for me. Please help!

—Bottom Blues

When done properly, anal sex should not hurt.

Usually, when it does hurt, it's because something isn't right—either physically or psychologically. You've successfully bottomed before and you can fuck yourself with a dildo, which makes me think that this is primarily a psychological issue.

So my first question is, do you actually want to be topped by your partner? Anal sex can be very psychological because you need to be mentally relaxed and ready so that the muscles in your ass can physically relax.

Think about whether this is something you really want to be doing, because if not, your body may be involuntarily reacting to unspoken feelings. If that's the case, you need to explore why that may be and maybe discuss it with your partner.

If you do really want to be topped then it's possible that you're just a little nervous

because you haven't done it in a while or you're generally a little tighter than usual. Both are problems we can solve!

As usual, communication with your partner is key. In terms of possibly being nervous, try to identify what it is that worries you. Sometimes it's trusting that your partner will stop if you need to, or that he'll be careful in the beginning.

If that's the case, start a dialogue and talk about what you can both do to ease those fears. If your partner is aware of your concerns, it will take some pressure off you in the moment.

While it's a good place to start, fucking yourself with a dildo is going to be much easier because you're in complete control of the situation, unlike when your partner might be doing it.

Start practicing anal play with your partner if you haven't already. Use a dildo, his



fingers, or whatever you want—just do it together. This will help you get used to him penetrating you in different ways, work on trust, and loosen you up a bit more in preparation for his dick.

Once you're ready to get fucked by your partner, go back to the basics of anal penetration.

Get really hot first and don't skip foreplay, because the more turned on you are, the more relaxed and accepting your body will be.

Lube up a lot to make penetration easier and to minimize any discomfort. Prep yourself by starting with fingering or toys before attempting penetration with his dick.

Start off in control of the penetration, moving yourself on his dick rather than him fucking you. And remember not to push yourself if it's painful, because it shouldn't hurt and you don't want to cause any actual physical damage.

It may take some time before you're re-

ally ready to be fucked, but try not to put too much pressure on yourself to get there—because that might just make it worse. This is where communication really helps, because knowing you have full control in stopping if you need to will help you relax.

Good luck and write back in if you need more help!

—Melissa Fuller, @mel_full

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

Need some extra help? You can always contact Concordia Counselling & Development at 514-848-2424 ext. 3545 for SGW and ext. 3555 for Loyola.

Got a quick health question? Call info-santé at 8-1-1 from any Montreal number.



LETTERS@thelinknewspaper.ca

ECA Accreditation: It's Kind of a Big Deal

Concordia's Engineering and Computer Science Association is seeking accreditation this semester, a legal certification granted by the Ministry of Education to student associations across the province.

Currently, the ECA is the association that represents undergraduate students in the Engineering and Computer Science faculty at Concordia. The association organizes social and academic events, as well as finances constituent groups called societies.

Overall, the ECA contributes immensely to the university experience of students in the ENCS faculty.

Accreditation is also kind of a big deal.

Being legally accredited grants rights and protections to student associations. The ECA is pursuing this certification because they want to have the legal recognition and legitimacy that most other associations in Quebec already have.

I find it extremely unfortunate that there has been very little coverage of accreditation by the student media, especially over the past few weeks. The process itself constitutes the largest undergrad student consultation in the ENCS faculty in years!

Three thousand six hundred students are being asked to vote, inside and outside of classrooms, over the course of three weeks! This referendum requires that at least 25 per cent of ENCS students vote for the results to be legally binding. Otherwise, the results just won't count.

This minimum requirement has compelled the ECA to reach out to its constituents in a massive "Vote Yes!" campaign, where hun-

dreds of students have been contacted inside and outside of their classrooms.

In the past two weeks, more than 20 volunteers have made over 100 classroom announcements. This represents just about half of the total lectures conducted in one week in the faculty. An information booth has been made available for students, where they can pick up flyers or buttons and speak to volunteers.

The campaign has been branded by the "Legalize It," "Recognize It" and "Legitimize It" posters that have been posted on bulletin boards in the Hall Building, but the message doesn't stop there. The ECA is encouraging students to get involved or provide feedback so that they can better serve their constituents.

The kind of outreach that accreditation has engendered is unprecedented in the ENCS faculty. If *that* isn't a big deal, I don't know what is.

If you know any undergrads in the ENCS faculty, I urge you to tell them to get informed and go vote!

The polling period extends from Jan. 28 to Feb. 14.

—Melanie Hotchkiss,
ECA Campaign Manager

ECA Accreditation & Context

The Engineering and Computer Science Association is trying to get accredited. If you're an engineering student at Concordia and haven't heard of ECA accreditation yet, you should feel embarrassed, ashamed and dumb.

Worse, if you haven't heard of accreditation, you're probably not alone.

While I could list some notable coun-

terexamples, most engineering students are single-mindedly focused on going to class, getting ready for industry and almost nothing else.

This apathy shown by most engineering students is scary. Worlds of activity exist outside your classes, and you don't care about them because you don't understand their relevance. Imagine how clueless Louis Pasteur felt when he discovered the importance of bacteria.

The ECA's accreditation push should actually be called 're-accreditation,' because the ECA used to be accredited—but lost this status back in 2006. This year's ECA executives are now cleaning up the mess left by previous ECA execs.

Why did the previous ECA execs fuck up?

For the same reasons engineering students don't care about something unless it's preceded by a four-letter course code: the insular culture of ENCS students prevents us from understanding the impact of anything outside of our courses.

We don't know how business, politics or community works because we're single-mindedly focused on our engineering pursuits.

I don't expect this isolated engineering culture to change overnight, but I want engineering students to recognize that our lack of context is dangerous.

A high-ranking exec in an engineering firm once told me, "You can always pinpoint the best engineers because they are the ones who are passionate about something outside engineering. I don't hire one-dimensional engineers; I want to work with

well-rounded people."

If you want to be well-rounded, start at home.

Find out more about accreditation and what it means for the ECA. Don't ask what it means for you—you'll know that as soon as you understand the context. Start a conversation with execs or society members, either at the booth on the Hall Building's eighth floor or walking around with the "Legalize It" shirts.

After taking those baby steps, try finding things outside of engineering that interest you—like our massive greenhouse on the Hall Building's 13th floor, or the Concordia Student Union, where we're horrifically underrepresented.

Stop focusing so much. Start understanding the contexts and communities that you're a part of, and get involved with the rest of Concordia.

—Nick Sweet,
BEng Engineering

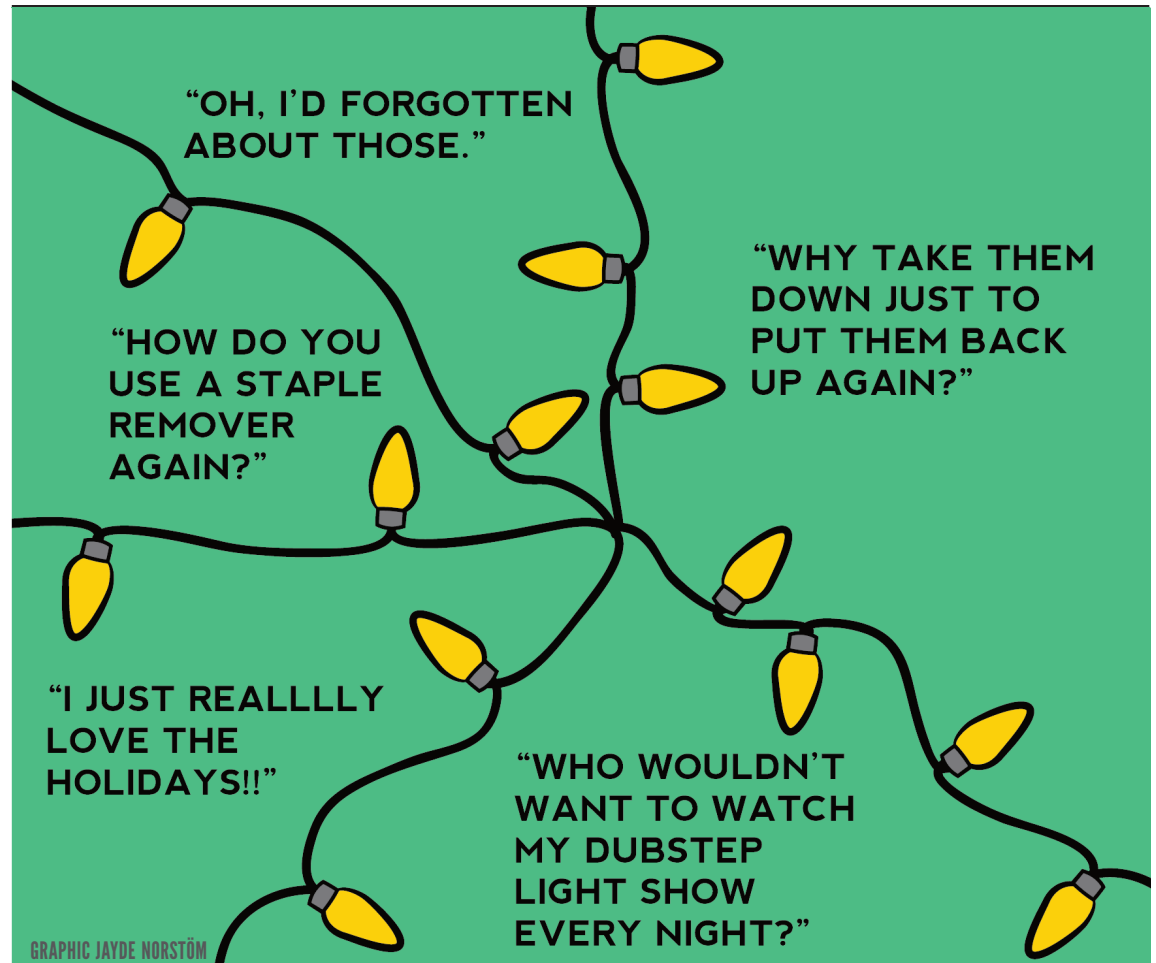
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ILIJA



FALSE KNEES

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NAH'MSAYIN?

The ConU Candy Caper

Something fishy is going on in the hallways of Concordia.

After graduating high school, where healthy eating habits were forced on students by pesky government health boards and soda in schools was about as easy to come by as textbooks published in the 21st century, university was supposed to be a calorie-filled paradise.

Last year, instead of juice-dispensing, granola-filled vending machines, the proximity of a can of Pepsi to any given classroom was about ten paces—an absolutely glorious amenity. There's nothing like the feeling of your stomach lining slowly deteriorating with each delicious sip of Mountain Dew, as it keeps you from falling asleep during a lecture.

But those days are long gone, and I have come to reference the good old

days of fully stocked and working vending machines at ConU the way our predecessors reminisce about penny candy.

Now, these machines that used to provide at least some of our daily sustenance are under-stocked traps, never providing the good flavour of Miss Vickie's and always eager to take your toonie and give nothing in return.

So what's going on here? I call conspiracy—a sneaky under-the-table plan to get us all into shape now that the escalators are working again.

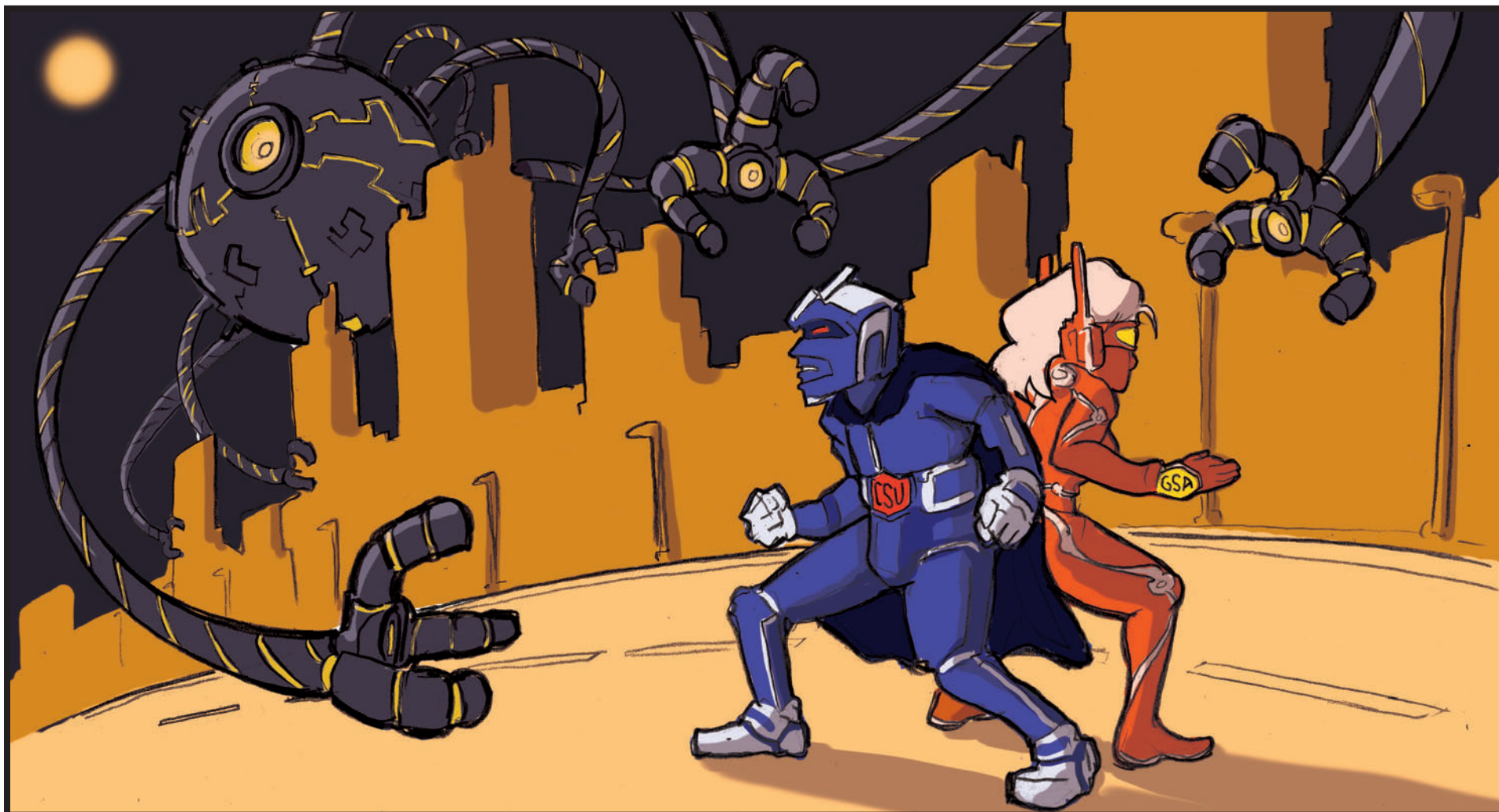
Stay tuned for next week's investigative report on the subject—that is, if I can keep the sugar level of my soda-free body high enough to actually get out of bed.

—Katie McGroarty,
Fringe Arts Editor



Graphic Joshua Barkman

Editorial



A DATE TO REMEMBER

The year 2015 can't come soon enough.

Since 2009, Concordia's graduate and undergraduate student unions have been fighting to escape the dastardly clutches of Canada's largest student lobby group: the Canadian Federation of Students.

They took an important stride forward this month, however, when the Concordia Student Union and the Graduate Students' Association both unanimously voted to combine their cases against the CFS.

A united front is good for many reasons. By combining forces—and legal fees—there might be more of a chance we can finally find the independence we have long been seeking from CFS.

Both unions are fighting for defederation. It's been a long battle, and a few years from now we'll have our chance to finally sever all ties with the federation—potentially saving us nearly \$2 million in fees that the CFS claims we owe them.

Our history with the CFS has been long and tumultuous, wrought with nonsensical member-trapping bylaw changes, doors blockaded to stop referendums and a dubious attempt to tamper with CSU elections.

Finally, we're heading to court. In the spring of 2015 it will be time for the CFS to stand trial and have justice served to them—hopefully.

The federation's complete lack of respect for elections and the democratic process should be noted. In 2010 the referenda of both the CSU and the GSA were not recognized as legitimate, courtesy of newly established and highly contentious bylaw amendments.

Since then, things have been tapering. Aside from lawsuits filed by the CSU and GSA in 2011 and a countersuit slung back at the CSU in 2012, not much has transpired since the utter chaos of 2009 and 2010.

It is reasonable to expect the relative calm

to continue as we wait for 2015—but until then, we must remain informed, aware and vigilant.

There are still proactive steps we can take, such as choosing our future representation wisely.

Think about it. Who do you want representing you, not only on council, but also in court?

Ultimately, the executive that students elect in 2014 will more than likely determine whether the CSU and the GSA will win this excruciatingly long and arduous legal fight.

That may be 14 months away, and by then a significant chunk of currently enrolled undergraduate students will have graduated. By 2015, about half the student body will be new to the issues.

But our collective institutional memory cannot falter along the way.

The executive needs to diligently pass its knowledge on to whoever takes office when they leave—and that trend needs to continue until we meet in court.

◆ GRAPHIC PAKU DAoust-Cloutier

THE LINK

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