



Too sexy for school

Why the sexualization of young women is a form of violence

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

Violence against women remains a pressing problem 20 years after the Polytechnic shooting, says Lilia Goldfarb of the Young Women's Catholic Association.

According to Goldfarb, the YWCA's head of Leadership Services, violence against women can be attributed to the increasing commodification of young women's sexuality.

"Sex remains a taboo, even if it's everywhere," and advertisers have a monopoly on the public discussion of sex, says Goldfarb.

"Part of the problem is that when AIDS became huge, sex education became about the mechanics of sex and less about the human experience," she says, which is another reason that sex shouldn't be a subject taught exclusively in biology and science classes.

The human experience is now supplied through cable television shows, and easy access to pornography on the web. Kids as young as 13 "talk about sex and pornography like they know it," says Goldfarb, who was told by a 13-year-old youth that the way to tell a girl that you like them is to pinch their rear end.

Goldfarb insists that violence and sexuality converge so often as to link the two together, and that "the sexualization of kids is a form of violence."

Goldfarb wrote her graduate thesis at Concordia University on the sexualization of young girls,

and recently starred in a documentary produced by the National Film Board, entitled *Sexy Inc.: Our Children Under Influence*.

Sexy Inc. catalogues all the usual media distortions surrounding sex by exploring misogyny in rap music to the sexual underpinnings behind reality TV.

More surprising, says Goldfarb, is the recent trend of age inappropriate material aimed at children as young as four to six years old. Goldfarb cites Baby Bratz, a line of plastic dolls featuring young babes with plucked

"Sex remains a taboo, even if it's everywhere."

—Lilia Goldfarb,
YWCA head of Leadership Services

eyebrows, silk diapers, and lipstick galore, as well as a brand of children's diapers made to look like women's lingerie.

All of these developments can be seen in just the past five years, says Goldfarb. "When I started [at the YWCA in 2003], people said I was just exaggerating, that this was just a trend." But now that trend is rising ever higher, that is, until society as a whole decides to put on the brakes.

The lack of educational standards for women compared to the standards of beauty they are forced to maintain, is evidenced by a recent *Playboy* centerfold, which featured McGill students. "There was this one girl on television who said she was proud to

'represent' her school in *Playboy*," says Goldfarb.

The failure of schools to provide sexual education is underlined by the increasing corporate presence in school cafeterias and women's bathrooms, says Bianca Mugenyi, the 2110 Centre for Gender Advocacy's Programming and Campaigns coordinator.

Sexism cuts across school lines, says Mugenyi, and the group which is at the largest risk of sexual violence and intimidation are aboriginal women: the Native Women's Association of Canada calculated that 510 abo-

original women have been murdered or gone missing since 1980.

"It's astounding that [so many women] have disappeared and it is shocking how little attention this has received," says Mugenyi, who says it is "important to remember that gendered violence is a systemic problem," even if it's out of sight, out of mind.

Mugenyi and the 2110 Centre for Gender Advocacy have been working to fight gender oppression and to promote gender equality through a series of community-driven projects, including calling for universal access to free and safe abortions. The fight for greater access to abortion includes a concerted campaign against Bill C-484, "The Unborn

Victims of Crime Act." The Act intends to protect the fetus from harm which Mugenyi believes is the "first step to recriminalizing abortion."

One of their most recent measures is a cooperative effort with Le Frigo Vert and the Concordia Co-op Bookstore to create the Solidarity Identification Card, which allows students not only to select their own given names, but the gender which they identify themselves by, something identification cards distributed by Concordia don't offer.

"The Centre [has been] lobbying the school to make that change," says Mugenyi, "but instead of just waiting for them to take action, we decided to be proactive and to issue our own cards."

Aside from its practical use as a second form of personal identification, the SID cards are currently the only ID cards that reflect the owner's self-identification. "Being able to have your chosen name and gender is a big deal to people," says Mugenyi.

Inspired by the Polytechnic shooting, the YWCA will be promoting the Rose Campaign, a companion to the White Ribbon Campaign, which asks participants to mail a white rose to their local MP as a plea for action against gendered violence.

For more info on the Rose Campaign, visit rosecampaign.ca. For a list of upcoming events hosted by the 2110 Centre for Gender Advocacy, visit centree2110.org.

510

Number of aboriginal women murdered or missing since 1980.

Source: Native Women's Association of Canada.

77,000

Number of invasive surgical procedures performed on 18-year-olds and younger in 2005.

70

Average percentage of teens 15 to 17 years old who accidentally encountered pornography on the Internet.

244,000

Minimum number of American children at risk each year of being victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

Source: American Psychological Association.

Remembering the fallen

Gearing up for National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

• TERRINE FRIDAY

"Force is all-conquering, but its victories are short-lived."

—Abraham Lincoln

On Dec. 6, 1989, Marc Lépine entered Montreal's École Polytechnique's engineering school and shot and killed 14 women. 10 other women whom he shot survived.

Lépine, who was abused by his

father as a child, blamed his actions for his distaste for feminists on his father. Monique Lépine, Marc's mother, tells her own story of emotional grief and survival in her book *Aftermath*.

The Link commemorates the women who died. Dec. 6 is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Show solidarity by wearing your white ribbon.

Geneviève Bergeron, 21
Nathalie Croteau, 23
Anne-Marie Edward, 21
Maryse Laganière, 25
Anne-Marie Lemay, 22
Michèle Richard, 21
Annie Turcotte, 21
Hélène Colgan, 23
Barbara Daigneault, 22
Maud Haviernick, 29
Maryse Leclair, 23
Sonia Pelletier, 28
Annie St-Arneault, 23
Barbara Klucznik Widajewicz, 31



GRAPHIC SAGINE CAVÉ

Judicial board decision in the books

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

On Nov. 26, the Judicial Board of the Concordia Student Union delivered a written decision on the complaint brought to it by councillor Louise Birdsell-Bauer.

The JB ruled that, "The Executive [...] shall present a motion at the December 3rd, 2008 Council meeting, respecting all applicable deadlines, to address the prompt appointment of a new Chief Electoral Officer and 4 [sic] new Judicial Board Members."

Although a five-day period was provided to challenge the ruling, both Birdsell-Bauer and CSU VP Communications Elie Chivi said that they have not done so.

To abide by the JB's ruling, the motion will be on the CSU Council's agenda for its Wednesday meeting, Chivi confirmed.

New student group? I don't think so

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

Elie Chivi, the Concordia Student Union's VP communications, responded to a petition circulated by the group Democracy, Sustainability, and Accountability which called for a recall of the CSU Executive, calling the petition "plagued with misleading information and propaganda."

Lawyer Patrice Blais circulated a petition accusing the CSU of not recognizing an earlier petition and appointing a new Chief Electoral Officer, although Chivi says the search for a replacement is an ongoing process.

The petition also blames the CSU for doing nothing to oppose an international student fee increase, but Chivi deflected that claim, saying the CSU prevented the "increase for an entire year, saving students over \$1.4 million."

"The CSU Executive is confident that the student body is wise enough to see through Blais' fabricated claims," Chivi continued.

Driving to sustain

Fuelling sustainability with a little bit of grease



Tyson Jerry and Chloe Whittaker hit up fast-food joints for fuel...for their van.

• THOM BATOR

Would you like a world record with those fries?

Environmental activists Tyson Jerry and Chloe Whittaker of Driven to Sustain might just be able to oblige; the team is attempting to break the record for the longest journey by car using alternative fuels, by driving 45,000 kilometres in their waste vegetable oil-powered vehicle.

The vehicle in question is a Mitsubishi Delica diesel van, modified to run on used cooking oil. Over the next few months, Chloe and Tyson will be taking the van across the rest of Canada, the United States, and parts of Mexico

in an effort to beat the previous world record of 38,137 kilometres set by a group of German environmentalists in 2006.

When they stopped in Montreal last Friday, Jerry and Whittaker admitted that their world record attempt was really just a publicity stunt, secondary to their primary goal of sustainability education.

"The main thing for us is learning for ourselves and then teaching what we've learned to others," said Whittaker. Although the environmentalists are putting across the continent on vegetable oil, Whittaker and Jerry "don't even advocate the use of cooking oil [on a large scale] because we

know it's not a real solution."

The unfortunate reality is that there isn't enough used deep-fryer oil to go around, and it will never be a viable replacement for petroleum fuels. Using fresh vegetable oil is a solution, but Jerry and Whittaker don't think it's ethical. "It's a situation of food versus fuel," said Whittaker, referring to the fact that increased use of biodiesel is raising global food prices and contributing to world hunger.

The pair does believe, however, that the value of their eco-trek is that it gets people thinking about alternative fuel sources. "This is all about energy, whether it's clean or dirty is the question," said Jerry. "We have the technology with solar, wind and tidal to [significantly reduce] our dependence on fossil fuels."

Jerry and Whittaker began their journey in Victoria, B.C. on Oct. 1. Since then, they've been making their way east, stopping to learn about various sustainability projects and initiatives along the way. They then take what they've learned at their various stops into secondary and elementary school rooms across Canada to educate young Canadians about various sustainability issues.

The learning experience for the

students doesn't necessarily stop when Jerry and Whittaker leave the classroom. "Students can go online and track the progress of our journey from the website," Whittaker explained. These gung-ho greens even have resources for teachers: a downloadable curriculum developed with the help of a British Columbian teacher to further educate students about sustainability issues.

New York Fries in Canada and Taco Time in the United States supplied the oil for the sustainable journey. Participating locations of the sponsor restaurants along the duo's route save the oil from their deep fryers that would otherwise be thrown out.

The oil is stored in two large barrels that the pair carry in a trailer behind their van. They don't have a sponsor in Mexico yet and aren't quite sure where they'll get the oil when they get there, but Jerry doesn't seem to worried about it. "We'll just get on the phone when we get down there and find a donor," he said. "It's building a greater community that way."

To learn more about Driven to Sustain, please visit driventosustain.ca.

Faculty association exec throws in the towel

• TERRINE FRIDAY

Amidst accusations of delinquency from duties, former Engineering and Computer Science executive Henry Novik resigned from his post as VP finance Monday.

Novik denied his performance as VP finance was "far less than spectacular," as described by current ECA president Alex Brovkin. Rather, Novik suggested, a clash of personalities with Brovkin is the reason for his removal.

"The simple fact is that the president and I don't get along," Novik told the ECA councillors.

"I encourage all of you to examine the relationship between the president and the next VP finance," Novik said. "There's been no real misappropriation of any kind" during his mandate, Novik said, and "if [Brovkin] wants to have control over that stuff [...] I

don't want to be on the hook for that."

According to Novik, Brovkin had requested access to financial documents, which Novik had initially denied. Novik says a read-only password was later issued.

Rather than resign before the ECA Council meeting, Novik said he wanted Council to consider his performance as the association's finance representative.

Most of the words from the councillors were supportive.

"[...] You were there at the [ECA B-Annex office] and I do thank you for that," said Garrett Morgan, VP internal of the ECA.

"I haven't really been there that much," said VP external Marc Lindstrom, who was just installed in September. "But he did get my beer money."

"The only problem I found when I was working with him [...] was there was a delay with everything," said Athena Fotiou, direc-

tor of finance for the ECA.

"Now knowing what Henry said, we should take a look at the budget and ask questions," said councillor Karine Huberdeau.

According to Brovkin, "it's not only the budget that was an issue [...] I shouldn't be the one running after money [...] I shouldn't be the one running after McKibbin's, who still owes us \$5,000."

But Novik maintains that he wasn't given any notice about not meeting his job requirements. "No, there weren't any warnings," he told Council. "Yes, I was given the reason [of delinquency], but I wasn't given the cause."

Novik says there are no hard feelings and he just wants his named cleared of financial responsibility with the ECA.

"I resign. I resign in the spirit of keeping the cohesion of the team together," Novik said. "I don't need a title to be involved."

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Concordia University
Hall Building, Room H-649
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W.
Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8

editorial: (514) 848-2424 ext. 7405
arts: (514) 848-2424 ext. 5813
advertising: (514) 848-2424 ext. 8682
fax: (514) 848-4540
business: (514) 848-7406

editor@thelink.concordia.ca
<http://thelinknewspaper.ca>

editor-in-chief

SEBASTIEN CADIEUX

news editor

TERRINE FRIDAY

features editor

CLARE RASPOPOV

fringe arts editor

JOELLE LEMIEUX

literary arts editor

CHRISTOPHER OLSON

sports editor

DIEGO PELAEZ-GAETZ

opinions editor

JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

copy editor

R. BRIAN HASTIE

student press liaison

JESARA SINCLAIR

photo editor

JONATHAN DEMPSEY

graphics editor

AMY SMITH

managing editor

JOHNNY NORTH

layout manager

MATHIEU BIARD

web editor

BRUNO DE ROSA

business manager

MICHAEL TOPPINGS

business assistant

JACQUELINE CHIN

ad designer

CHRIS BOURNE

computer technician

OPEN

distribution

ROBERT DESMARAIS
DAVID KAUFMANN

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CONTRIBUTORS

Jennifer Aouad, Thom Bator, Louis Birdsell Bauer, Nicole Biard, Justin Bromberg, Valerie Cardinal, Sagine Cave, Madeline Coleman, Ginger Coons, Ion Ebebarra, Jennifer Freitas, Pamela Friedman, Marie-Eve Gagne, Melanie Hughes, Elsa Jabre, Jason Lapointe, Tristan Lapointe, Vivlen Leung, Pascale Rose Licinio, James Lynch, Jackson MacIntosh, Nikki MacMillan, Kali Malinka, Alex Manley, Julien McEvoy, Paolo Mingarelli, Evita Mouawad, Alexandra Murphy, Fiona O'Connor, Barbara Pavone, Matt Reichman, Sinbad Richardson, Shanna Robets-Salee, Laura Roberts, Shawna Satz, Molly Sowiak, Rachel Tetrault, Giuseppe Valiante, Carolyne Weldan, Nicole Jane Young, Bonnie Zehavi, Philip Zein, Winstone Zulu

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Breaking down barriers for World AIDS Day

The stigma of sex and disability

• WINSTONE ZULU

Winstone Zulu is a social activist hailing from Zambia. Zulu, who has a permanent physical disability, has been living with HIV for 18 years. He was also the first person to be open about living with HIV in his country.

Zulu is currently a Journalism graduate student at Ryerson University in Toronto, Ontario.

I will not attempt to answer the difficult questions of why certain people react with such revulsion at the sight of a person with a certain disability.

Maybe the idea behind shutting doors to persons with a disability is no more than an attempt to “see no evil, hear no evil and say no evil.” Could it be that my presence is perceived as a bad omen that speeds up someone else’s process of becoming disabled?

Fortunately, I have faced stigma and discrimination for other reasons that make me doubt the reasoning above. It is said that those that are targeted for discrimination are first stigmatized. And so we had Hutus in Rwanda coming up with a “clear” description of what Tutsis looked like despite generations of intermarriages and intermingling.

I had polio when I was three years old. My mum tells me that my entire body was paralyzed at one stage. Mercifully, most of my limbs and body functions retained full control except my right leg where the muscle failed to fully develop. As a result I ended up walking with a very bad limp

“According to U.S. government policy, persons with HIV are inadmissible to enter the United States of America. I cannot issue you a visa [...] You are in the same category as terrorists and drug traffickers.”

—U.S. Embassy officer

throughout my childhood and part of my adult life.

When I turned 38 my body could no longer support the weight that often accompanies entry into middle age. I started using crutches, which I still do. For longer distances, such as maneuvering around airports and the university campus, I use a wheelchair.

My first experience of discrimination based on disability was

when my mum tried to enroll me into first grade when I turned seven. One look at the way I was standing was enough for the head teacher to conclude that giving me a place in school would be a waste of government resources.

The following year, mum took me to another school but entry was denied for the same reason. After a third attempt she gave up as the argument had now even changed from one based on my disability to one about being over-aged for grade one.

When I was 26, I managed to get a scholarship to study political science in St. Petersburg—then Leningrad—Russia. One of the requirements for entry into Russia was a full medical examination, which included an HIV test. My HIV test results were positive and access to enter Russia was effectively denied. It was around this time that I first started to connect the dots between the stigma and discrimination that surrounds disability and other conditions such as HIV/AIDS; the refusal to allow entry was based on the premise that I could get ill there and become a burden on the Russian government’s medical resources.

Memories from 20 years ago flooded my mind and I could see that small boy in khaki shorts and blue golf shirt, standing in a queue, only to be told that it would be a waste of government resources to give a disabled child a place in school.

In 2003, I was invited by both RESULTS-Canada in Ottawa and RESULTS-International based in Washington, D.C. to give a presentation.

I went to the U.S. embassy in Ottawa to apply for the American visa. The very last question on the form was whether you had an infectious disease of some significance to public health. So, although I already knew that like Russia the U.S. did not allow entry to HIV-positive people, I answered yes to the last question. Besides, I was entering the U.S. for a media promotional tour, which would involve talking about

my living with HIV. I was asked to report the following day for the results of my application.

Her: “I am sorry, Mr. Zulu. According to U.S. government policy, persons with HIV are inadmissible to enter the United States of America. I cannot issue you a visa.”

Me: “Why?”

Her: “I don’t know but it’s the law. You are in the same category as terrorists and drug traffickers.”

Talk about multiple stigmas and discrimination based on a non-conformity body. I was black, visibly disabled and HIV positive.

Mind you this was barely a year after 9/11 and at the mention of the word terrorists, the whole room was all ears, listening to this exchange and I am yet to find a more zealous group of auditors.

I later rang my contacts in Washington who got in touch with a number of members of Congress who in turn wrote letters of support to the embassy to issue a waiver to allow me enter the U.S.

Talk about multiple stigmas and discrimination based on a non-conformity body. I was black, visibly disabled and HIV positive.

Several times I have shared my story of living with HIV and when asked how I contracted it and reply that it was through sexual intercourse, jaws drop simply because I am sitting in a wheelchair. And this is often from the same group of persons who only moments before were suggesting that people who contract HIV are promiscuous.

So, okay, here is a person with a disability who is “confined” to a wheelchair and is supposed to be asexual but has HIV contracted through sex. That is not good for many audiences I have had discussions with. It kind of rips opens and exposes their neat but false theories and stereotypes about disability, sexuality and AIDS.

There have been and still are many dark and unacceptable things that occur in our world today.

In the U.S., supposedly the most advanced and civilized nation on Earth, every four years, including this one, leaders waste precious time and resources debating what two consenting adults can or cannot do in bed based purely on sexual orientation or preference. And for the same

reason, many Anglican denominations in Africa—and indeed the world over—are on the verge of splitting over the ordination of gay priests. This is at a time when there are several serious issues of human rights abuses in places like Burma, Sudan, Zimbabwe and Tibet, as well as the looming catastrophe of climate change caused by global warming that call for urgent and thoughtful leadership.

So the fight for disability rights has to compete against all these real issues as well as distractions such as whether life begins at conception or not. Eventually, we will succeed.

Before I close let me share with you something else. I always travel with the crucifix even though my faith in God is smaller than a mustard seed and there is little chance it will grow into anything bigger than what it is.

But the symbol of the crucified Christ shows to me someone who bore what I think was the ultimate stigma. They could have killed him in many other ways. They could have stoned him to death like they did Stephen. But death on the cross, particularly between two criminals, was a mark of disgrace, a shame. Although many people, including famous celebrities, use or wear the cross as fashion apparel, I see no glory in what went on at Golgotha. To me the cross is a reminder that we are in this world for one important purpose and that is to serve and help others, especially those in less privileged situations and positions than we are. Any other way I have tried to search for happiness and meaning has left me dissatisfied and yawning.

Regardless of how long it takes good triumphs over evil.

Need evidence? Well, it wasn’t until the end of June this year, to the embarrassment of war criminal Condoleezza Rice, the U.S. struck Nelson Mandela off its list of terrorists. Change for good will eventually come.

To read Winstone Zulu’s complete letter, please visit thelinknewspaper.ca.

Prez sez, “Thanks a latte”

• TERRINE FRIDAY

Although *The Link* reported president Judith Woodsworth’s World Café was a bust two weeks ago, Woodsworth begged to differ at the monthly Board of Governors meeting.

Woodsworth, who says she was advised to leave the Café to allow for more casual discussion, is happy that faculty turned out in good numbers.

\$16 million deficit could be late

• TERRINE FRIDAY

The university’s 2007-2008 budget is facing delays and will be produced for December. According to the university’s vice-president of finance, Larry English, a deficit of up to \$16 million will be reflected in the financial statement.

Also included in the budget is the \$1.3 million payout to former Concordia president Claude Lajeunesse—10 per cent of the university’s deficit in the 2007-08 fiscal year—who held the position for only two years.

Concordia University Faculty Association president Charles Drainin voiced his concern for Lajeunesse’s payout and its relation to the university’s deficit yesterday in an interview on CBC radio.

“Goodbye, farewell...”

• TERRINE FRIDAY

The fall convocation of newly graduated students may have been president Woodsworth’s best time so far at Concordia.

“I think it’s my favourite time of year,” said Woodsworth of the day-long “marathon.”

Woodsworth was also eager to hear several graduates were returning to further pursue degrees.

“So many of them are continuing their studies at the graduate level here, which is really good news [...]”

The high price of technology

Why newer and shinier can be dirty and dangerous

• MÉLANIE HUGHES

The age of technology has a dirty little secret: e-waste.

E-waste is a term coined to encompass information technology and telecommunication devices, such as televisions, fax machines, printers, radios, mobile phones, computers, and laptops that are broken or unwanted, and destined for the dumps.

There is little collective agreement on the definition of e-waste.

Some definitions extend to any electronic commodities sold and donated by their original owner, whether destined for reuse, resale, recycling or disposal. E-waste can also be equivalent to what Environment Canada considers hazardous waste, toxic or chemical substances—as some electronic products contain polychlorinated biphenyls (commonly known as PCBs), lead, mercury and cadmium.

Semantics aside, the e-waste load, both functional and non-functional e-products, is mounting and society needs to act in favour of

responsible, effective and ethical e-waste management.

The problem

The growing amount of e-waste parallels the rising amount of technology's more compact, better, and shinier built-in obsolescent products. Product obsolescence is a process whereby merchandise is produced with the intention of becoming non-functional within a predetermined time.

E-product manufacturers benefit from planned obsolescence because consumers are pressured into buying newer versions of the same product, from the same producer. A report commissioned by Environment Canada developed baseline estimates of e-waste currently generated in Canada.

The Information Technology and

Telecommunications Waste in Canada report released in 2000 estimated that in 1999, 33,972 tonnes of IT waste was sent to the dumps, while 15,592 tonnes was recycled, 24,507 tonnes was sent for reuse and 6,128 tonnes was put into storage. It was estimated that approximately 67,325 tonnes of e-waste would be disposed of in 2005, almost double in just six years.

Combined with the Baseline Study of End-of-Life Electrical and Electronic Equipment in Canada, both studies revealed that disposed computer equipment, phones, audio-visual equipment and small household appliances account for more than 140,000 tonnes of waste each year in Canada.

The ITWC report also estimated that out of the 33,972 tonnes of waste sent to the trash in 1999, the weight contained 1,356 tonnes of lead, 2.0 tonnes of cadmium and 0.5 tonnes of mercury.

The danger

The health and environmental impacts of lead, cadmium, and mercury should not be taken lightly. Natural levels of these three elements usually circulate within the human system and they are not a haz-

ard in themselves. These chemical elements become a health and environmental hazard when they are used in human-generated industrial processing and combustion practices.

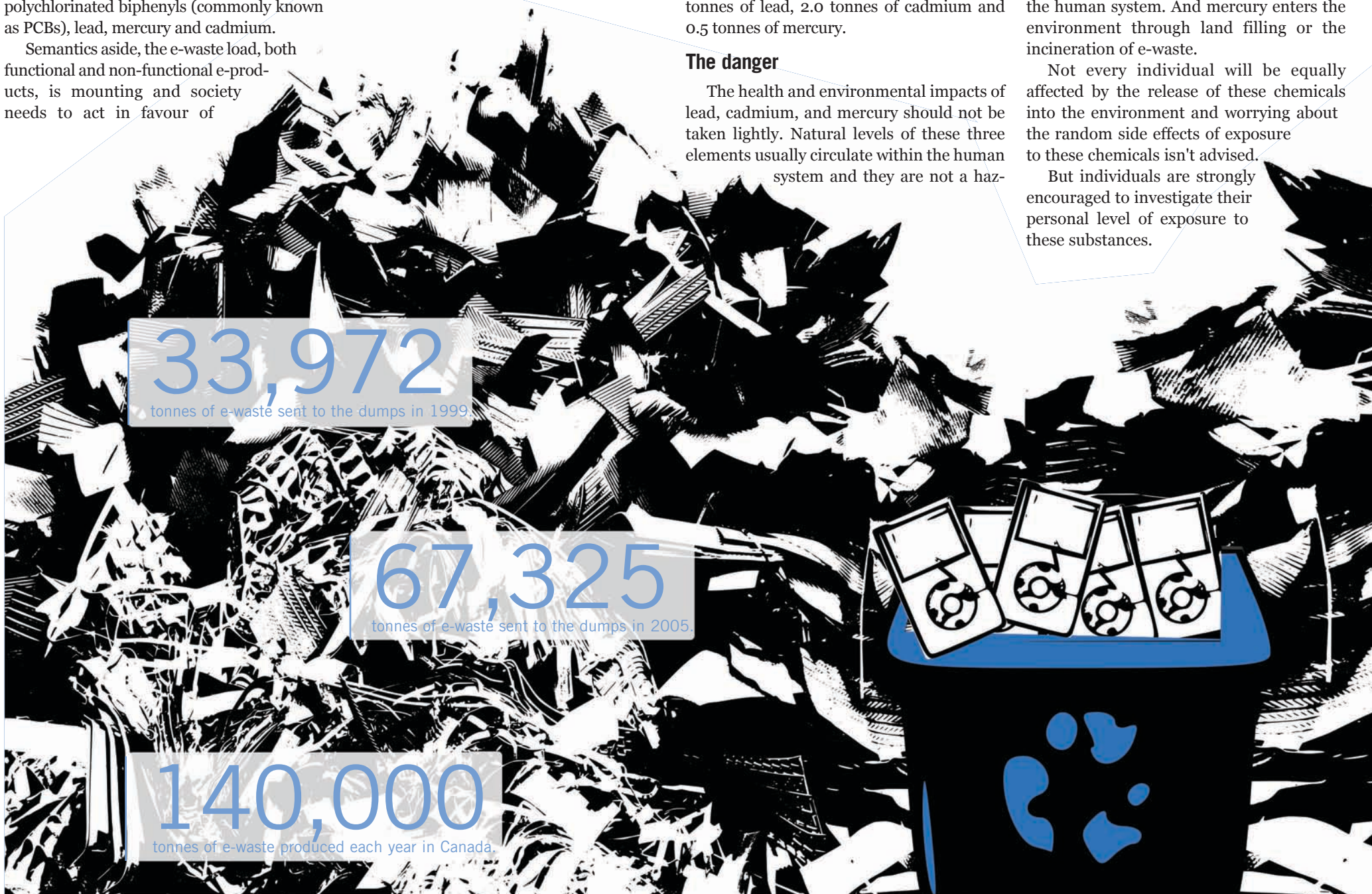
In the process of decomposition, these chemicals release toxic by-products that find their way into our water, air, and soil through fumes, liquids, and solid masses.

PCB is an organic compound used as a coating for electrical wiring and as a flame retardant. In the process of eliminating or degrading this compound, toxic substances, such as dioxin and dibenzofuran, are released from the combustion. Cadmium is toxic when inhaled through fumes from the burning of municipal waste.

The ingestion of contaminated water is the common source of elevated lead levels in the human system. And mercury enters the environment through land filling or the incineration of e-waste.

Not every individual will be equally affected by the release of these chemicals into the environment and worrying about the random side effects of exposure to these chemicals isn't advised.

But individuals are strongly encouraged to investigate their personal level of exposure to these substances.



How we deal with it

To safely handle hazardous chemicals and increase the amount of e-waste that goes to recycling and reuse purposes, an appropriate legal, social, economic and political framework needs to be in place. Canada needs a comprehensive plan to guide all actions determining who does the "what, how, and where" of how our techno-garbage is handled.

In Canada, managing hazardous waste is a shared responsibility between the federal and provincial/territorial governments. The federal government is responsible for the regulation of international movement of hazardous wastes, while the provincial government controls generators of waste, management facilities, and transportation.

The ITTWC report states that recycling infrastructure for IT equipment in Canada is far from uniform and has limited coverage.

So much so that Canadian waste is exported to the United States because Canada's ability to dispose or recycle its waste is inadequate.

Jim Wittwer, from the Transboundary Movement Branch of Environment Canada, states in the Hazardous Waste Management in Canada 2002 Statistics report that exportation increased from 313,000 to 340,000 tonnes between 2001 and 2002. This was due to increased hazardous recyclables going to the U.S. and countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

He says that 70 per cent of total exports were destined for recycling operations.

E-waste and the third world

These recycling operations need legal scrutiny. The e-waste contained in them include important elements, such as gold or metal, making the recycling industry a very profitable business. And funny money can accompany such a lucrative business.

Illegal Canadian exportation operations were recently exposed. This news shook the legitimacy of current exportation regulations and questioned the ethics of the recycling business in Canada.

CBC News uncovered an underground electronics recycling industry in China, making migrant workers custodians of wealthier nation's e-garbage. Technotrash, an electronics recycling organization based in Vancouver, sent cargos filled with non-functional e-waste to Hong Kong.

Jim Puckett, an environmental health and justice activist, as well as the executive director of the Basel Action Network, an international organization focused on confronting the global environmental injustice and economic inefficiency of toxic trade and its devastating impacts, explains in an interview with CBC over the case of Technotrash that citizens of Guiyu, China are surrendering to the choice of poison over poverty.

The lack of regulations around the export and import of electronics between countries is a serious problem because so much money can be made through the disposal of e-waste.

There is an economic logic to e-waste which goes: with lower environmental standards and cheap labour markets in developing countries, processing and eliminating e-waste in poorer countries is more profitable.

An increased regulation of e-waste and concern for the environment in Canada has had the effect of raising disposal costs. The result is e-waste dumping in India, Africa and China.

For citizens of developing countries, it is more lucrative to burn computer materials than to harvest a field. Without properly enforced and controlled trade laws, as well as common decency, e-waste can continue to cross the borders with Canada customs turning a blind eye.

Global action

The globalization of information technology calls for sensible action and relationships between countries. The Basel Ban Amendment, a piece of legislation put out by the BAN, forbids all forms of hazardous waste exports from the 29 wealthiest, most industrialized countries of the OECD, as well as all non-OECD countries.

Canada has never signed this amendment. However, Canada has made steps for responsible action with the recent e-Stewards program.

The BAN announced that the Electronics TakeBack Coalition, whose goal is to protect the health and well being of electronics users, workers, and the communities where electronics are produced and discarded by requiring consumer electronics manufacturers and brand owners to take full responsibility for the life cycle of their products, through effective public policy requirements or enforceable agreements, has joined with 32 electronics recyclers in the U.S and Canada to implement this program.

It prohibits the dumping of toxic e-waste in developing countries, local landfills and incinerators as well as using prison labour to process e-waste, and barring the unauthorized release of private data contained

in discarded computers. On an international level the direction of e-waste

management has to be common.

However, the initiatives, models and alternatives from country to country in responding to this multifaceted issue can differ.

Local action

If we flip the focus to a micro level, our provincial government has no e-waste recycling programs in place. Public awareness about the e-waste challenge is as important as accessible options from government, community groups, organizations and businesses.

The Quebec Residual Materials Management Policy 1998-2008 gives some direction for groups to implement sustainable residual materials management practices. To find a local organization or business that will take your IT or Telecom equipment, you can make your way to the Couleur Bazar repertoire, newly published by the city of Montreal on their web page.

There are options for recycling or sending your IT equipment for reuse that fall under the category of selling, donating and exchanging. Don't be surprised if some groups charge a fee when they take in e-waste, since most community or non-profit groups are barely keeping their heads above water with high operational costs, limited resources, limited funding and inadequate recycling technologies.

And to add to the complexity of IT recycling, the falling economy is lowering the prices of metals and plastics. Recyclers are facing financial challenges since they are not selling their recycled materials. Buyers are also reluctant to purchase since the value of the material is just too low.

The e-waste challenge needs more dialogue, public awareness, collaboration and consolidation from a number of information technology beneficiaries, keeping safety and ethical action as the main intentions.

Know your poisons

Dioxins -

A blanket term for a family of chemical compounds that are formed through combustion, chlorine bleaching and manufacturing processes. They are highly carcinogenic and toxic compounds.

Dibenzofurans -

A white, crystal-like solid created from production of coal tar. It is used as an insecticide, in the production of Polyvinyl chloride (plastics), industrial bleaching, and incineration. They are very toxic and have properties and chemical structures similar to dioxins.

Cadmium -

Used largely in batteries and the pigments in plastic products. Inhalation of cadmium-containing fumes in a concentrated enough amount can result initially in metal fume fever but may progress to inflammation of the lung tissue, swelling or fluid accumulation in the lungs, and death. It is known to be a carcinogen.

Mercury -

Used primarily in auto parts, batteries, fluorescent bulbs, medical products, thermometers, and thermostats. Mercury and most of its compounds are neurotoxins. They are extremely dangerous and are generally handled with care. It is known to produce effects such as tremors, impaired cognitive skills, and sleep disturbance in workers with chronic exposure to mercury vapour even at low concentrations. Long-term, low-level exposure has been associated with subtle symptoms of social phobia, and includes symptoms such as fatigue, irritability, loss of memory, vivid dreams, and depression.

Lead -

Used in building construction, lead-acid batteries, bullets and shot, weights, and is part of solder, pewter, fusible alloys and radiation shields. Lead, like mercury, is also a neurotoxin and accumulates in soft tissues and bone over extended periods in time. It is considered to be particularly harmful for women's ability to reproduce and young children are especially susceptible to its effects. It's been known to harm the kidneys and cause abdominal pain.

Montreal, meet Montreal

Before the Olympic stadium, and the Quebec referendum, there was Montreal

• GIUSEPPE VALIANTE

In John Kalbfleisch's *This Island in Time: Remarkable Tales from Montreal's Past*, thick ice infests much of the St. Lawrence River during the winter.

These days, the big freeze doesn't pose much of a problem for the city: the metropolis has many bridges and boats aren't used as frequently to shuttle people around.

But back in the late 1880's the frozen water was the ire of everyone who wanted to get to Longueuil—or anywhere else off-island. Travellers at that time had the choice between the majestic Victoria Bridge, on which a train passed, or walk across the ice.

But some ingenious Montrealer in 1880 decided to try and lay tracks over the thick ice. They called it the ice train. Sadly, this frivolity only lasted three winters.

This is but one of the stories compiled by Kalbfleisch in *This Island in Time*, published by Véhicule Press.

Everything in the book takes place before the 1970's. This means no Olympics, no six out of 10 Stanley Cup wins for the

Montreal Canadiens, and perhaps to the delight of the author, no mention of referendums that almost broke up the country or the exodus of the majority of English Montreal and a significant portion of the economy.

What Kalbfleisch does dig up presents a Montreal as the new frontier for pioneering Frenchmen and Europe's poor. Anything that happened before the visit of Samuel de Champlain is an afterthought. The natives were there to be conquered; the land to be cultivated, the streets to be paved and named the names of their religious protectors.

This book is a short, tight read for anyone who is interested in the city and its relationship to Europe and the U.S.

Who knew that Abraham Lincoln's assassin, William H. Booth, checked in to Montreal's most prestigious hotel six months before he was to become the most wanted man in America?

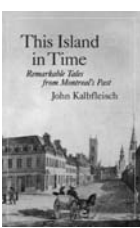
Apparently, Booth told one of his Montreal billiards buddies that "Abe's contract is up." The city was a hotbed for the Confederates who plotted ways to destroy the Union army. Who knew the part that the city

played when it was home to spies for Adolf Hitler or secret communists allied with the Soviet Union?

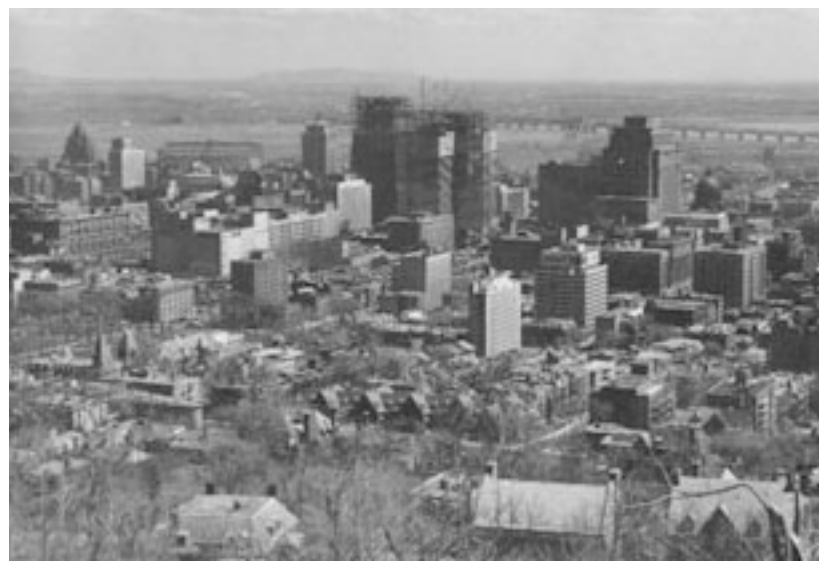
Unlike the St. Lawrence, there's no real flow to *This Island in Time*. It opens with the birth of the city as a mission colony for the pious French then describes its evolution into the cradle of Canada's industrial revolution, and then back again to the religious tensions between the Protestants and the Catholic before the turn of the century.

It's heavily tilted in favour of European colonization, but the author at times acknowledges that the settlers had little desire to accommodate the people already living there and concedes that perhaps this wasn't the most moral of positions.

Despite the precious little attention it gives to the other side of Montreal's history, there's enough un plundered material here to make the book worthwhile.



This Island in Time
John Kalbfleisch
Véhicule Press
May 2008
188 pp
\$17.95



Centre-ville 1961



Boul. Saint-Laurent 1944

Drop a few dollars for *Drop-In*

True tales from Toronto's Regent Park

• BONNIE ZEHAVI

Based on his experiences as an art teacher at a youth drop-in centre in Toronto's Regent Park, Dave Lapp's graphic novel debut *Drop-In* is a sparse and evocative work.

The stories Lapp tells are all true, and for anyone who has ever worked with kids and teens in a similar context, they will likely resonate as such.

...scrapping boys and giggly girls who between skipping rope and drawing animals exercise the wildest of imaginations

Presented as mostly short and often anecdotal vignettes, each narrative differs from the last as they weave an overall portrait of the centre and of the sundry characters found within. Through Lapp we meet a family that digs up worms at night, ex-cons and fiends on the street, Vietnamese refugees, scrapping boys and

giggly girls who between skipping rope and drawing animals exercise the wildest of imaginations.

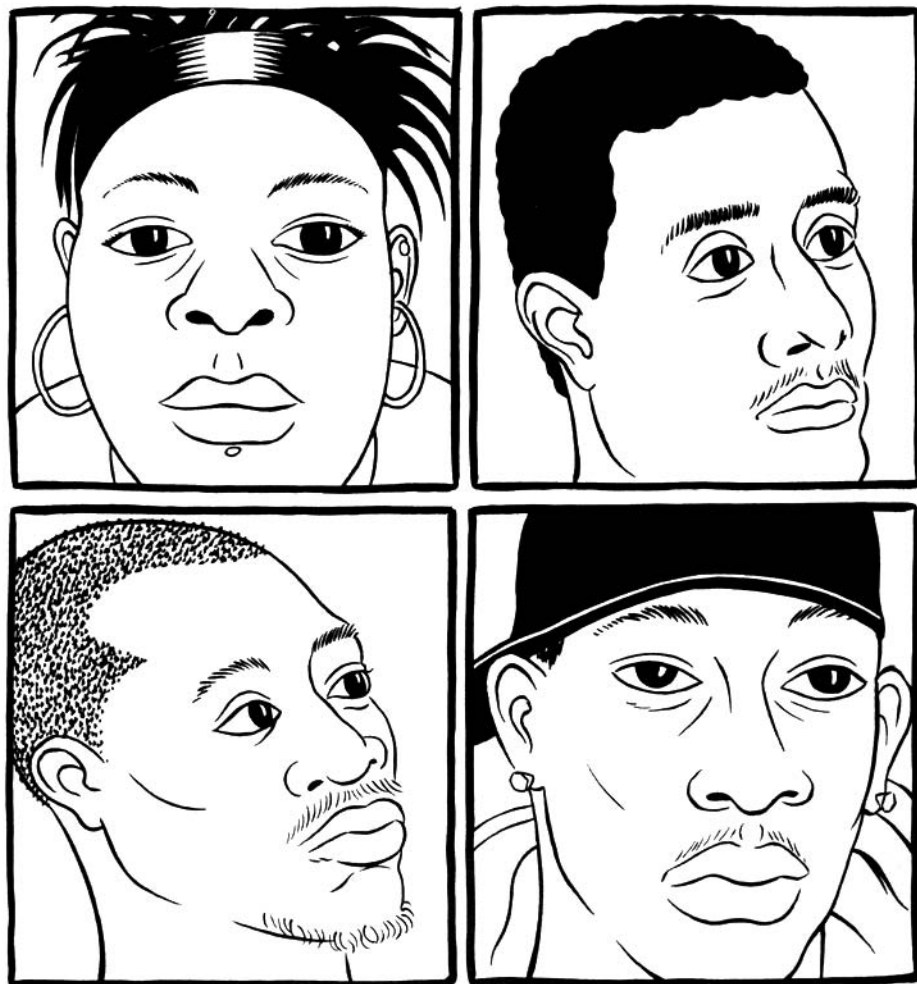
These slices of life, funny, sad and frequently awkward, give the reader a sense of Lapp's attempts to connect with a complex and multicultural community so far removed from his own homogenous suburban experience. The sentiment is effectively genuine as Lapp learns how to be supportive without being intrusive, be sensitive without appearing soft.

The intricacies of life and the vulnerability of the human animal is explored through Lapp and the individuals he encounters as they negotiate tense, often heart-breaking lessons in relating.

Starkly rendered yet surprisingly expressive, *Drop-In* is an impressive debut.



Drop-In
Dave Lapp
Conundrum Press
October 2008
140 pp



Drop-In illustrates the author's experiences at a drop-in centre in comic form.

Father of Saint Patrick

A second-hand perspective on the life and times of Patrick Roy

• JOHNNY NORTH

Patrick Roy was the heart and soul of the Montreal Canadiens throughout the '80s and '90s—he made spectacular saves almost every game and gave the impression of a hockey warrior in the nets.

Recently, the Habs paid tribute to Roy, the previous Conn Smythe winner to backstop them to their last two Stanley Cups. In October, his father Michel did his own tribute to his son, a biography entitled *Patrick Roy: Winning. Nothing Else.*

This is as close as one is going to get to a true Patrick Roy biography. For years Roy refused the help of ghostwriters wanting to publish his life story. His father, a full-time musician, writer and journalist, obviously has a lot of bias towards his son.

However, this bias doesn't ruin the exciting style exhibited in this new biography. He clearly showcases a passion for hockey when he tells of his son's games. Michel Roy also displays a great knowledge of history and how young hockey players are brought up in Canada.

The book is as much a biography of Roy as it is Michel Roy, who fills the reader in on his own life during the rises and falls of his son. Patrick Roy was not an instant success—he was seen as different due to his butterfly style of goaltending. But his determination and love for playing hockey kept him motivated and focused on his destined career.

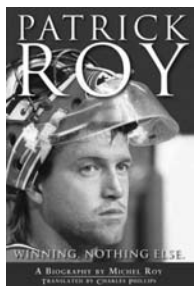
His father fills the reader in on almost every detail of Patrick Roy's NHL career, from a brief overview of each season to a detailed playoff run, including all of

his Stanley Cup wins.

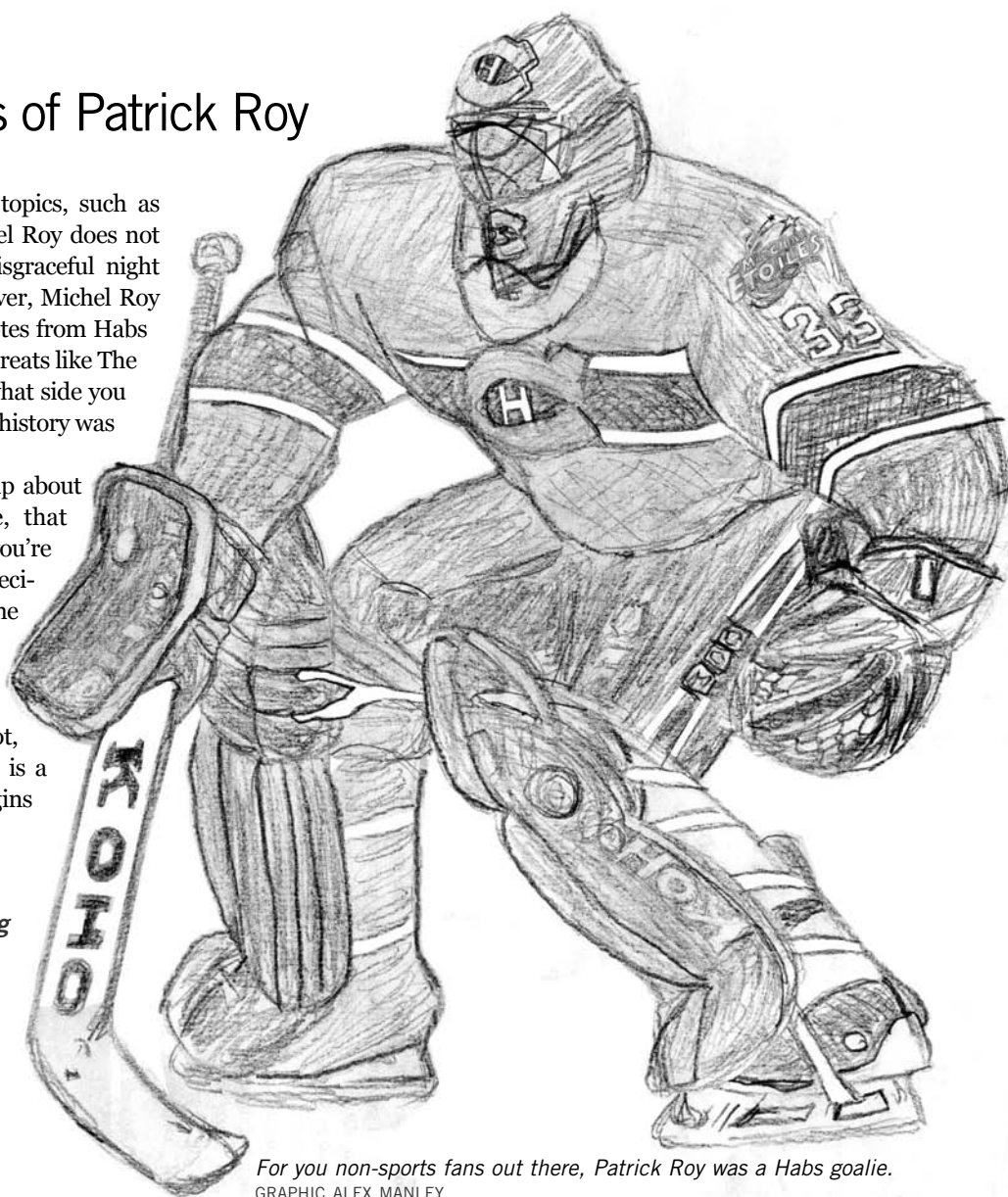
When it comes to conversational topics, such as Roy's departure from Montreal, Michel Roy does not hold back his own opinion of the disgraceful night against the Detroit Red Wings. However, Michel Roy backs up his argument with many quotes from Habs players on the team and former Habs greats like The Rocket and Ken Dryden. Regardless what side you take, the picture of a dark day in Habs history was perfectly illustrated.

If you're looking for the juicy gossip about Patrick Roy's domestic disturbance, that eventually saw him in divorce court, you're out of luck. Although his ability to decipher what his son was thinking at the time of certain events is questionable, it is apparent that he had a profound influence on his son's life.

Whether you're a fan of Roy or not, *Patrick Roy: Winning. Nothing Else*, is a great hockey book and explains the origins of a Habs hero.



**Patrick Roy:
Winning. Nothing
Else**
Michel Roy
John Wiley &
Sons Canada
2008
518 pp
\$29.95



For you non-sports fans out there, Patrick Roy was a Habs goalie.
GRAPHIC ALEX MANLEY

Can you feel the vibe?

From the makers of Throw Slam Poetry Collective comes The Vibe

• PASCALE ROSE LICINIO
& ALEXANDRA MURPHY

The worlds of poetry, dance and music collided and continued with the same mood and rhythm for the rest of the evening last Saturday at the Mile End's E.M. Cafe.

A circle of expression and non-judgment, The Vibe aims at creating a safe space for artists to express themselves and to learn from each other.

The purpose of The Vibe, precisely, is to make everyone present feel like a part of the event.

"I don't like it when there's boundaries between the artist and the audience," says Christine Ghawi, a classical guitarist who sang and danced the night away.

Organizer Chloe Haboush and other poets from the Throw Slam Poetry Collective are responsible for creating this interactive space for artists in Montreal.

From now on, on the third Saturday of every month, dancers, poets and performers of all kinds can meet, jam, dance and "break the ice" at this artistic and collaborative gathering. Everyone sat in a circle and the night kicked off with a session of humming to connect people together under the dim lights of the cafe.

Special guests led others in a musical act. Laura Beach's chanting inspired others to join in the performance. Some people sang, some hummed while others shook their maracas and tambourines.



Christine Ghawi, standing, and Laura Beach, seated, collaborate their artistic talents in a jam session at the Vibe.. PHOTO ALEXANDRA MURPHY

Chris Masson followed with an improvised spoken word jam. He went around the circle, gave people new names and spouted one of his poems with frenzy.

As Haboush puts it: "It's not a show. It's a movement where people can feel each other's energy."

For more information on the next jam session, check out The Vibe's Facebook profile.

What has 288 pages and costs \$24?

Brain Fuel great for when you're sitting on the toilet, train

• JASON LAPOINTE

With a radio show, weekly newspaper columns, numerous awards for teaching and communicating science to the general public to his credit, Dr. Joe Schwarcz doesn't just write best sellers, he writes them in a way even I can understand. Such is the case with his latest book, *Brain Fuel*.

If it wasn't for Schwarcz's ability to explain chemistry and biology in layman's terms, I wouldn't know Sri Lanka has the highest per capita death rate from snakebites (I wasn't aware that was even a problem); or that I could come down with lead poisoning if I continued to drink from my garden hose.

Brain Fuel is a great read. The question and answer format is a little different from Dr. Schwarcz's usual style of short essays. Instead it offers a quick dose of science factual in a question and answer format.

He'll ask questions like, "What major change occurred in the production of M&M candies in 1976?" And you'll answer: I don't know, but I hope he tells me.

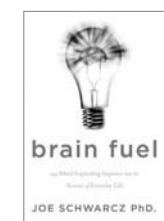
The book is teeming with interesting half page-long answers to ques-

tions seemingly unrelated to science that you never bothered to ask, but will appreciate—and may use as dinner table conversation material: apparently pumpkin seeds improve urinary flow in men with prostate problems. Discuss it with your father.

The writing style is enough to keep you intrigued and interested over long or short periods of time. It makes great reading material for a long bus ride or for a quick bathroom break.

You'll likely be able to read this book through several times, and this re-readability makes up for its steep price.

For those of you interested enough to question the mysticisms of everyday life, such as why table salt tastes saltier than kosher salt or why chickens have white and dark meat, pick this book up, if not for you, than for your brain.



Brain Fuel
Dr. Joe Schwarcz
Doubleday Canada
September 2008
288 pp
\$24.00

Cruel to be kind

Hood's first collection of short stories basks in the nastiness of the everyday

• JACKSON MACINTOSH

On the cover of Andrew Hood's debut collection of short fiction, *Pardon Our Monsters*, there's a stylized illustration of a Bic lighter roasting an ant. It neatly highlights a major element of many of the stories—the misdirected cruelties of youth.

Hood finds maliciousness in otherwise mundane situations and uses it as a fulcrum to get the rest of the story across.

In the titular story, the narrator describes the damage wrought by the unnecessary and meaningless death of a young local hoodlum named Dennis Miner: "Living, Dennis was tolerated or ignored, but dead, he could get away with anything."

There is no shyness about describing the faults of the characters in these stories, and there is no aversion to muddying the portraits by making the narrators completely unreliable.

The most notable constant in *Pardon Our Monsters* is the hatred the characters describe but rarely show. It isn't grand, epic hatred like the hatred of Milton's

Satan for God; this is the kind of casual hatred that we all experience everyday, and we feel guilty of when we acknowledge these feelings that are always bubbling but rarely percolating.

Hood has a very high batting average for crafting likeable, funny short stories.

Now, with all of this talk of hatred, I'd be remiss not to mention that *Pardon Our Monsters* is a very funny book, and that Hood himself is a funny, affable guy. He has a knack for replicating the cadences of speech of the hosers and WASPs of Southern Ontario, and it all feels very natural and unforced. He can knowingly use a phrase like "throw a conniption" and have it mark a character as a suburban doofus, instead of having it mark him as a bad, tasteless writer—which is a tough trick to pull off.

A town named Corbet, Ontario is the point of departure for all the stories, but Hood admits that it's really a fictionalized

version of his hometown of Guelph.

"The reason I chose to fictionalize the name was for the simple reason that I'd been away from Guelph for four years and I was having trouble remembering specifics," says Hood. "It sort of allowed me to have my cake and eat it too. I could use the town as a setting, but I could also fudge the specifics."

The specifics are very important to the story, and as much as the characters are jealous or weak, the setting is romanticized, the way a writer will often romanticize the home of his youth.

Hood has a very high batting average for crafting likeable, funny short stories, and the consistent setting allows the reader to create a sense of place that extends from one story to the next.

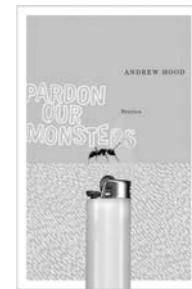
One story leans against the others, strengthening the whole—Hood intended this, saying, "I think it's all a cohesive piece. That's why it only says 'stories' instead of 'collection of stories.' I think that 'collection of stories' makes it sound like a greatest hits collection or something."

In short, this is a very strong first

book, one that bodes well for Hood's future work. The main criticism is that the copy-editing could have been a little more careful—I found about 10 obvious spelling and punctuation errors in the text.

For a book that was obviously painstakingly written, such mistakes shouldn't have been made. It's still a very good book, and the Writers' Union of Canada thinks so, too. They recently awarded *Pardon Our Monsters* the Danuta Gleed Award for the best first collection of Canadian short fiction written in English.

This prize carries a purse of a cool \$10,000, which makes me think that there might be something to this writing racket after all.



Pardon Our Monsters
Andrew Hood
Vehicule Press
October 2008
160 pp
\$17.95

Lit Writ

Microwavable Impotence

• SHANNA ROBERTS-SALÉE

I woke up feeling apprehensive. Another day stretched ahead, without purpose or promise. I pulled my old blanket off my legs with a limp shrug, the only remnant of the life I had before I realized I could fail, before I realized that life isn't all dreams and ambition and determination.

I got up and let the sun burn my eyes for a few seconds. I marvelled at the fact that it was taking longer and longer each day for me to feel blinded. Even the sun was wearing off.

I walked around my flat, surveying the mess of pre-packaged meal tinfoil plates, candy wrappers and empty Coke cans; a buffet of consumer products. If I could not accomplish anything, I would drown myself in hydrogenated fats, sodium and glucose-fructose. I slumped onto a kitchen chair, staring off into space. This hell of repetition was breathing warm stale time in my face, the seconds aimlessly ebbing away, a mild aggravation like waiting for bread to toast, or for coffee to infuse.

I sighed. Back to work.

I am a failed writer. My first—and possibly last—book seemed promising. It received mild critical praise. But the public hated it. Worse even, they ignored it. After being on the shelves for a mediocre three weeks, bookstores sold it at a loss in the discount bins, fated to be handled carelessly by ruthless consumers, non-discriminatory book-

worms and publishers who tossed it aside like an aging starlet. Apparently, the public could not connect with the main character, because he was an unworkable person. Irrelevant. Cold. One-dimensional.

The main character was based on me.

What do you do when the public at large openly admits to finding you irrelevant as a human being? When you pour your whole being into little clicks of computer keys, terrifyingly aware that you are stripping yourself of your skin, only to find out that people have mercilessly urinated on your open flesh, burning holes into your muscles, your core, your soul.

I became a sex addict. It did not work. I am not a sex addict.

I tried drinking. It did not work. My liver could not stomach such a blow.

I tried various addictions; methamphetamines, pills, hallucinogenics. None of it worked. It was all so tedious and painful that I gave up on being a martyr, a victim of my circumstances, an ill-supported sufferer of my fate.

This is not to say that I ploughed through valiantly, overcoming my weaknesses and failures. No.

I am a mildly overweight lurker. I lurk in my apartment. Staring at the gaping, frightening white screen of my computer. I endure its ridiculing whiteness, its constant reminders of my personal incapacity to be a compelling human being, or to have a compelling soul. I tried writing about other peo-



Thinking of something to write in this space is hard. GRAPHIC VIVIEN LEUNG

ple, I tried inventing characters, but I always found myself jealous of their charisma and thus incapacitated when it came to the writing process.

I have literary impotency. There are not pills for it; I even checked on the internet for quack doctors and charlatans. "New Creative Stimulus Packaging Pill" or "Hot characters waiting to get read," it doesn't exist.

I have a condition for which there is no name or remedy. Failure to comply with human warmth. So I lurk, and I try to face my fear of the big white screen: the gaping abyss of my existence. Some people fear spiders, or snakes, or one time I even saw a woman who was afraid of olives on "The Maury Show."

I can never face the notion that I am subpar as a human being, that my spirit is like

obsolete technology, a plug no one can connect with. So, I nuke my pre-packaged meals and enjoy a daily dose of microwave radiation with a side dish of sodium, and I sit in front of my white screen.

I laugh back at it, yes. Because at the end of the day, I have won. If no one knows that I lurk, that I sit here, staring into nothingness, into the constant reminder of my failure, then I am the best failure I can possibly be.

One day, I finally think of something. I start writing: "I woke up feeling apprehensive..."

This is the dawn of a new era.

To submit your fiction or poetry to the Lit Writ column, email them to lit@thelink.concordia.ca

In an ideal world, we'd all be idle

Mark Kingwell reveals the lazy bum inside the author writing this review

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

One of the perks of being your own boss is not having to deal with deadlines. On that note, I confess to handing this review in late, but doing anything else would be going against the spirit of everything that is *The Idler's Glossary*.

Born from a cocktail column in a men's magazine, *The Idler's Glossary* is a collection of slang speech and words meaning lazy, inactive, non-committal, and generally slow to action.

Usually a glossary comes with a text, but "this is a glossary without a text," says Mark Kingwell, a columnist for the *National Post* who teaches philosophy at the University of Toronto. "In a sense, the text is life itself."

When Kingwell was asked to write the book's introduction by long-time colleague Joshua Glenn, "these thoughts that had been in mind for so many years just crystallized," says Kingwell. "It wrote itself. There was no work in making it. [Doing so] would have been contrary to the spirit of the book."

Kingwell makes a strong distinction between idleness and procrastination, which he describes as feeling compelled to do something, but not desiring to do it. For an idler, however, "doing nothing is what he's not doing." In essence, idleness is being free from the expectations set upon us to do something with our lives.

"We're not defending idleness as a route to productivity," says Kingwell, although some statistics have shown that added leisure time can have positive effects on our output, just as a lack of leisure time can have its adverse effects. The word "death," notes Kingwell, is



Seth's artwork has a "whimsical look" says Mark Kingwell, author of the book's introduction.

implied in words like "deadline."

"An idler's utopia would be a place where you only did things that were beautiful and that really mattered," claims Kingwell. Like all utopias, true idleness is an illusion brought on by the desire to escape the grit of the daily grind. In reality, affirms Kingwell, "Idleness can only exist as an aberration, as an opposition to some other form of activity."

As a professor of philosophy, Kingwell is paid to ponder the ineffability of life, and claims to live the ideal of comfort espoused by *The Idler's Glossary*. But if he had it his way, grading his student's papers would be a simple

matter of pass or fail. Grades are another example, says Kingwell, of the "relentless quantifications of people's lives."

Like an erudite Tyler Durden, Kingwell believes the "way we live nowadays is sick," and that the true path to happiness is finding ways to let go of the things that demand so much of our time.

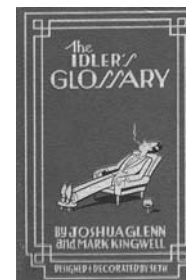
As a connoisseur of popular culture, Kingwell points to an episode of "The Simpsons" as an indication of what's wrong with forcing idleness onto a world that demands responsibilities from each of us as a whole.

"It's the episode where Springfield announces a "Do What You Feel Day" which of course, replaces "Do What We Say Day." On the one hand, it seems like an obvious message, but what happens is everything collapses."

However, "there's a danger that creeps up when you turn idleness into work," warns Kingwell. "We spend so much time keeping thought at bay, that even the weekend becomes another kind of work."

With students buried in exams and research papers stacking up, the upcoming holidays will be a welcome reprieve, what with all the endless shopping and accruing of financial debt, followed by the emotional exhaustion that's synonymous with the season. The transformation of the holidays into the busiest time of the year is a telling sign that idleness is missing from our lives. *The Idler's Glossary* was published in pocket-sized form for "small moments of openness," says Kingwell, but would also make a welcome stocking stuffer.

Like most procrastinators, Kingwell's work is never done, as he hints at the ongoing evolution of *The Idler's Glossary*: "People have sent us recommendations for new words, which means a new edition could be done relatively fast."



The Idler's Glossary
Joshua Glenn and Mark Kingwell
Biblioasis Publishing
October 2008
132 pp
\$12.95-

Acting ordinary

Former Concordia prof schools young writers on overwrought fiction

• MADELINE COLEMAN

It's often easy for me to tell when the author of a short story is under 25. I'm not sure what it is. There's just something about ham-fisted attempts to render the regular profound that screams "young writer."

An action as simple as lighting a cigarette is always related to strange and unusual mental torment. Many young fiction writers just seem uncomfortable with being—or letting their characters be—emotionally unexceptional.

My dislike of this kind of subject material was the reason I initially had reservations about *Character Actor*, Scott Randall's second book of short stories. While the former Concordia professor is no adolescent, all that talk on the back cover about "[getting] to the heart of ordinary characters" had me livin' in the fear.

I had assumed wrong.

Instead of the self-important prose

I expected, Randall's book turned out to be a compilation of character sketches more pragmatic than overdramatic.

The 12 stories in *Character Actor* depict all manner of everyday crises—from unexpected pregnancy to marital dysfunction. Refreshingly, Randall never blows any of it out of

Randall is a perceptive writer, but his style is almost too rational, too practical.

proportion. His characters are distinguishable as individuals, yet his writing style maintains a remove that always places their problems in a larger context. Yes, I have problems, the fictional protagonists seem to say, nudging each other between stories, but I'm not the only one!

The downside is that I never felt myself getting close to any of them.

Randall is a perceptive writer, but his style is almost too rational, too practical. The reader is rarely called upon to interpret anything. Instead of being able to consider what my own reaction would be to a given situation, I was quickly told whether the protagonist was uncomfortable or anxious or cheerful, and in words as simple as those. Randall's writing is not simplistic—it's just not relatable on a deeper level.

Reading these stories was like casual sex, without the emotional risk: kind of fun, mostly forgettable, with an illusion of intimacy that ultimately left me cold.



Character Actor
Scott Randall
Signature Editions
May 2008
176 pp
\$19.95



GRAPHIC MADELINE COLEMAN

Welcome to *The Link's* Sex and Sexuality issue

The definition of sex on the cover of this insert is somewhat outdated. Nowhere in the first three definitions in the Canadian Oxford Dictionary does "sex" refer to the carnal union between two people, even though it's the term's most common usage in dialogue today. Perhaps the term "gender" is more

equipped to tackle gender identity than the mere binary term "sex."

Traditionally *The Link* grouped discussion around sex and gender into the same special issue: the Women's Issue. This year, *The Link* decided to separate the two because they're not one and the same. As we are within the realm of HIV/AIDS

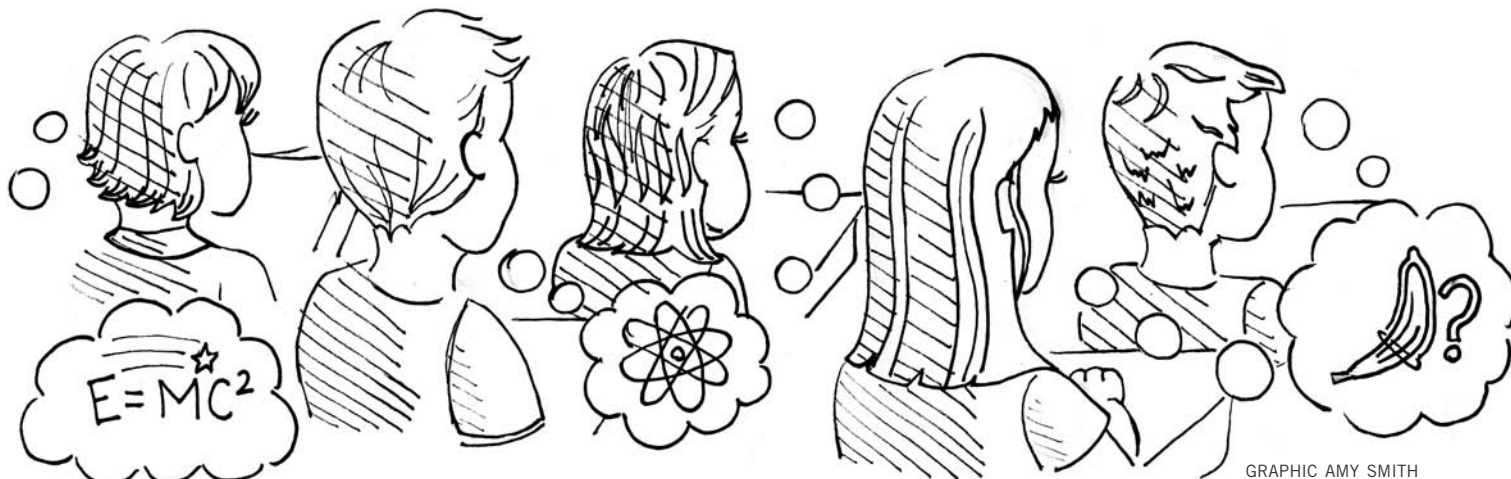
Awareness Week and World AIDS Day, this special issue will focus on sex, sexual expression and sexuality through sexual identity.

The goal with this special issue is to be the conduit through which people could share their own stories of self-actualization and social activism without the con-

straints of a strict, inverted pyramid-style news story. Those stories are the pith of this special issue, of which you're a part. A part of each reader is in every heartache and every guffaw.

So sit back, relax, and enjoy the show.

—Sex and Sexuality coordinator
Terrine Friday



GRAPHIC AMY SMITH

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How high school students see their lack of sex ed resources

• VALERIE CARDINAL

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that should've come in a biology or science class somewhere," she said. "If you don't understand what a cervix is, for example, or how conception works, how will you understand how to prevent [pregnancy]?"

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"The more education we do around it, the more we talk about it, the more open we are and the more we can help make sex a positive thing," she said.

However, Jocelyn said that having a few workshops on the subject isn't enough for students. "We really need to make this a part of the school curriculum. Then they get it no matter what."

"We talk about prevention, but we don't really know what we're preventing," agreed Alexandre, a student at McMasterville. Alexandre said in his biology class, "They don't prepare you for the consequences."

Although schools are important in sex ed, Fortin said that parents should still be included in the learning process. When it comes to sexuality, "I think parents are leaving behind their role and responsibility," she said, adding, "Parents expect a lot from the school. Way too much."

However, Fortin said that gov-

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"It's from some people being quite ignorant to quite informed," Moran said. "Some people still think birth control protects them from STIs."

Most of all, teenagers and adults alike are urged to get informed and get tested. Moran stresses that Concordia's health services does offer free STI screening.

As Moran said, "If everyone practiced safe sex, STIs would disappear."

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According to Trepanier, who saw two abortion cases last year, most of the teenagers at the school see her for information about contraception.

"They're young people who usually protect themselves very well," she said. However, Trepanier said, many students have family doctors they consult on the outside.

Even though sexual health might not be the top priority for teenagers, it's still an important part of health that they need to learn about, said Trepanier.

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"There's no less teenage pregnancies. There's no less STIs, either. And yet we have all this information and accessible products. So I can't say there's an improvement," she adds.

While all agree that lack of sex education classes are causing a gap in sexual education in Quebec, many mentioned that classes might not be as useful as they are thought to be.

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course offered before the cuts in 2005 and the sex ed given in science class today.

However, students like Dominique would like to see a sex ed course back in the school curriculum.

"What they're teaching us right now is a bit childish," she said.

Her schoolmate Laurence said that even though it might be embarrassing to talk about sex in class, it's important to be informed. She didn't seem very enthusiastic about the current sex ed curriculum: "It's alright," Laurence said.

Although some of the information might not be useful to all students, many agree that a class would still be useful for some.

"Most of the students are really interested in hearing about it but maybe they just haven't had an opportunity to be in that space before," said Jocelyn about the workshops she gives in high schools.

Fortin stressed the growing polarization between her students, which can already be seen by the ninth grade.

"We have two types of students [...] Some are starting their love lives and some are more advanced in terms of sexual relations," she said. "We have women and little girls." Fortin said that the boys tend to be more even in terms of development. She said, however, that her students are usually more concerned with their workload rather than sexual discovery.

...the
basis of their reproductive
functions. 2. the fact of
belonging to one of these. 3
males or females collective-
ly. **Sex** / seks / n., adj., & v.
o n. 1. either the main divi-
sion (male and female) into
which living things are
placed on the basis of their
reproductive functions. 2
the fact of belonging to one
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Welcome to *The Link's* Sex and Sexuality issue

The definition of sex on the cover of this insert is somewhat outdated. Nowhere in the first three definitions in the Canadian Oxford Dictionary does "sex" refer to the carnal union between two people, even though it's the term's most common usage in dialogue today. Perhaps the term "gender" is more

equipped to tackle gender identity than the mere binary term "sex."

Traditionally *The Link* grouped discussion around sex and gender into the same special issue: the Women's Issue. This year, *The Link* decided to separate the two because they're not one and the same. As we are within the realm of HIV/AIDS

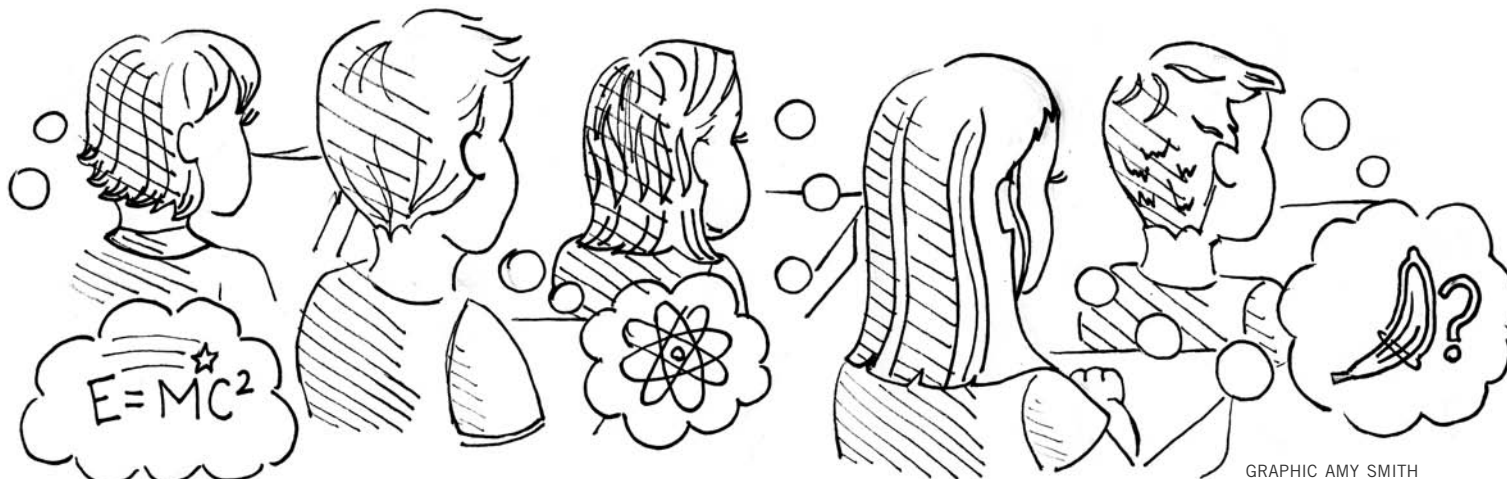
Awareness Week and World AIDS Day, this special issue will focus on sex, sexual expression and sexuality through sexual identity.

The goal with this special issue is to be the conduit through which people could share their own stories of self-actualization and social activism without the con-

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Just a love machine

Human-robot relationships to conquer the bedroom and beyond by 2035

• JOHNNY NORTH

Imagine a world where your sexual partner never says no, never breaks your heart, never gets bored of you and has the sexual energy to have sex for days. One catch—they're made of cables, metal and computer chips.

Whether you want to believe it or not, relationships with robots have matured over the years. Science fiction films such as *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *I, Robot* might scare us away from the possibility of robots being anything more than lifeless service boxes, but if you take a closer look at society, we've already come to depend on machines emotionally.

David Levy's *Love and Sex with Robots: The Evolution of Human-Robot Relationships* is a conversational and eye-opening read on how the evolution of technology and the desire for new sexual experience or

any at all, is pushing humans and robots closer together.

Levy, who is married, is a recognized expert on artificial intelligence and the president of the International Computer Games Association. He divided his book into two sections: the notion of love with robots and the reality of sex with robots.

By listing 10 different ways in which humans fall in love or are attracted, Levy is able to identify the relationships humans have already established with robots. Levy also explains how anthropomorphism—giving human characteristics to objects—has made it possible for people to have strong feelings even for non-humans.

Virtual pets, like Sony's AIBO, Furby and Tamagotchi—all artificially intelligent pets—were not only a hit with children, but also fascinated adults with the possibility of how far AI can go. Levy



Humans and robots having sex.
GRAPHIC GINGER COONS

believes that at least by 2035, AI will be developed to a point where marriage with robots will be possible. Legislation for robots will be a problem that will have to be dealt with, though.

Levy admits that suggesting human-robot relations might seem

far-fetched and “even impossible,” but there was a time when many thought the ideas of masturbation, homosexuality and the use of vibrators were unheard of or taboo.

Levy comes off as an expert when it comes to AI, but his idea of love lacks the same passion he displays with AI. The idea of how men and women will act differently towards a robot relationship is difficult to believe when there are only numbers, stats and Freud to go on. Levy does add his own thoughts, but lacks a female perspective.

The second section of the book is easily the most exciting read—sex toys, prostitution, differences of male and female sex habits and the role of Cybersex helps show that, “technology has allowed people who may have felt repressed, guilty, unimaginative or just basically sheltered, a way to express

their sexuality without boundaries and to explore different sexual worlds.”

Levy does not believe everyone will abandon his or her human partners in exchange for a robot one, but believes most people will open their minds to believe it to be ethical and healthy for those wishing to add a little spice to their current human-human relationship.

For some of us, it's the only chance to ever get laid.



Love and Sex with Robots: The Evolution of Human-Robot Relationships
David Levy
Harper Collins Canada
November 2008
320 pp.
\$27.95

sexy Lit Writ

There's no downfall that doesn't turn up

• BARBARA PAVONE

The water slowly trickled down the stone walls as it always did after a storm. Glancing out of the turret adjacent to her room she noticed the sun slowly emerging, and couldn't hold back the tears as she looked out onto the vast Scottish countryside.

Her room was filled with the basic amenities needed for survival. It had been her prison for the past 18 years. Whilst young nobles her age attended parties and were preoccupied with finding the perfect soul mate, she was excluded from the world.

Her father, a Duke, had seized the castle from its previous owner because he liked its isolation—the perfect place to keep a child safe from the dangers of the world.

The only person she ever saw, other than her family, was their cook Gerard. He came up to the tower thrice daily to deliver her meals. She had always fantasized about his lean figure and his messy chestnut hair swept up into a ponytail.

In times of sadness she'd be comforted by the thought that he would come by in a few hours and she could get another glimpse of those perfect lips, which she so longed to kiss.

She lay on a sheepskin rug picturing his body pressed up against hers, her teeth playfully biting into his neck, his fingers entangled in hers...

“You should do it!”

Leslea jumped several feet into the air startled by the unfamiliar voice. She glanced over the entire premise and found no one. The inevitable finally happened: she had lost her mind.

“I've had quite a few trysts in my day and witnessed hundreds more. Trust me.”

Leslea was now certain she had become senile; the bust of William Shakespeare, which sat in her room, had just given her advice. Like her, the bust had been the product of her parents' love, a gift to her mother upon the occasion of their wedding night. Soon after her mother's sudden and unexplained perishment, the bust and Leslea were relegated to the uppermost tier of the secluded castle; so as to ensure nothing would ever harm them. She slowly found her voice and asked “What ... what ...do you mean ... Sire?”

The bust curled its brow and continued: “He's the only man who comes to see you. If you don't make a move you'll die as the virtuous fool that you are.”

There was a thump and Gerard walked in with her dinner. When he turned on his heel to leave Leslea was leaning against the now closed door.

She glimpsed at the bard who offered no help.

Surprising herself she pressed her lips to his and awaited the moment she'd be pushed away. Instead, she felt one arm wrap tightly around her waist whilst the other passionately pulled at her corset. Her hands shaking, she clumsily tried to undo his shirt, to no avail.

“You're safe with me,” he breathed into her ear and the clumsiness turned into confidence.

His clothes were soon strewn on the floor and he slipped behind her to finish the tricky corset. She soon felt his lips making their way up her bare back and on her neck until he pushed her onto the bed. Her hands running through his hair, his strong arms on her thighs, Leslea slipped into utter bliss.

The unlikely lovers continued their rendezvous whenever circumstances would allow.



The fear of being caught led to a sense of urgency that intertwined itself into all of their liaisons and made them more exhilarating.

One gloomy winter night the bust spoke for the first time since that first faithful meeting: “You should do it. Tell him how you really feel.”

When Gerard appeared she greeted him with those three powerful words.

He stared at her bemused and let out a wicked laugh.

“You're the Duke's daughter, that's why I went along with it. I've already got one wife at home, it's more than enough,” and with that he slammed the door and left.

Gripped with pure rage, Leslea shoved the bust off her nightstand and it shattered into a million pieces, covering the floor with a blanket of marble snow.

Without looking back she ran down the stairway grabbing a torch on her way. As quickly as she could she made her way to the stable and untied the Duke's horse.

She didn't try to rationalize what she was doing; she just rode into the night. In an unexpected twist of fate the failed liaison had given her the courage and freedom she never thought she'd have.

sexy lil' Lit Writ

CAN'T WAIT 'TIL 9:30, YOU?

• NICOLA JANE YOUNG

“Like knives on frozen water,
Would you like to go and glide?”
She felt herself get hotter,
And she wanted him inside.

He wanted to go skating?
She would rather take a ride.
A change from masturbating,
With that KY-warming slide.

“You could glide over to my place...”
(She knew that it was hit or miss.)
I wonder if he'd come on my face,
If he even knows how to kiss...

“What time should I stop by then?”
(She is DYING to make out.)
I'm definitely going down on her,
Yo, it's what I'm all about!

How about nine but closer to ten,
Maybe we could watch a movie...
What she really meant (and so did he),
Was “DO ME! DO ME! DO ME!”

From the closet with love

‘You don’t choose who your parents are’

• PHILIP ZEIN

I think I was four years old and I was sitting on my uncle’s lap, and I wanted to kiss him like men kiss women. That was probably the first time I realized I really liked boys.

Being raised in such a religious household, I thought it was the norm to be attracted to women and really thought I’d grow out of that phase.

I went to a Catholic school, where you play by the books.

When I enrolled in an arts high school, it was like an outlet to be myself. I didn’t really have to lie about it anymore.

I met a guy at a bar one night and his name was Shawn. It was kinda like one of the *Queer as Folk* episodes when Brian was new to the scene and was trying to act “straight” by wearing a plaid shirt with khakis. It was at that moment in time when there was almost a loss of innocence and I knew it was surreal in a way.

I guess it was the way that Shawn looked at me. I’d never really been checked out by a guy. It made me really nervous...but really excited at the same time. It was when I was dancing on the dance floor to “Bootylicious” that I ended up taking off my shirt. Shawn was kind of trying to dance beside me and there were so many emotions running through my head. I was scared, I was nervous, excited... It was like a guy discovering girls for the first time. I was 17 and I was discovering guys for the first time in my life.

My grandmother [...] cried when she first found out. Not for being with a man that I love, but rather because she said I will never make it to Heaven.

In the following year and a half, I lived in the gay club scene with the gay friends, parties, random one-night stands—a very typical young gay life. It was right after New Year’s in 2003 that I came to the realization, after seeing a lot of my gay friends

sleeping together—everyone was sleeping with everyone in Ottawa’s gay community—that I was disgusted by the gay scene.

So I pretty much went back into the closet for a few months after that. I took a step back and I really looked at what I wanted and being a part of that scene was something I didn’t want because I didn’t want to be categorized as one of them.

I’ve done a lot of growing since then, and made my mistakes that I had to learn from on my own. Now I’m engaged to Diego and we’ve been in a committed relationship for the last year and a half. It’s very much like any heterosexual relationship.

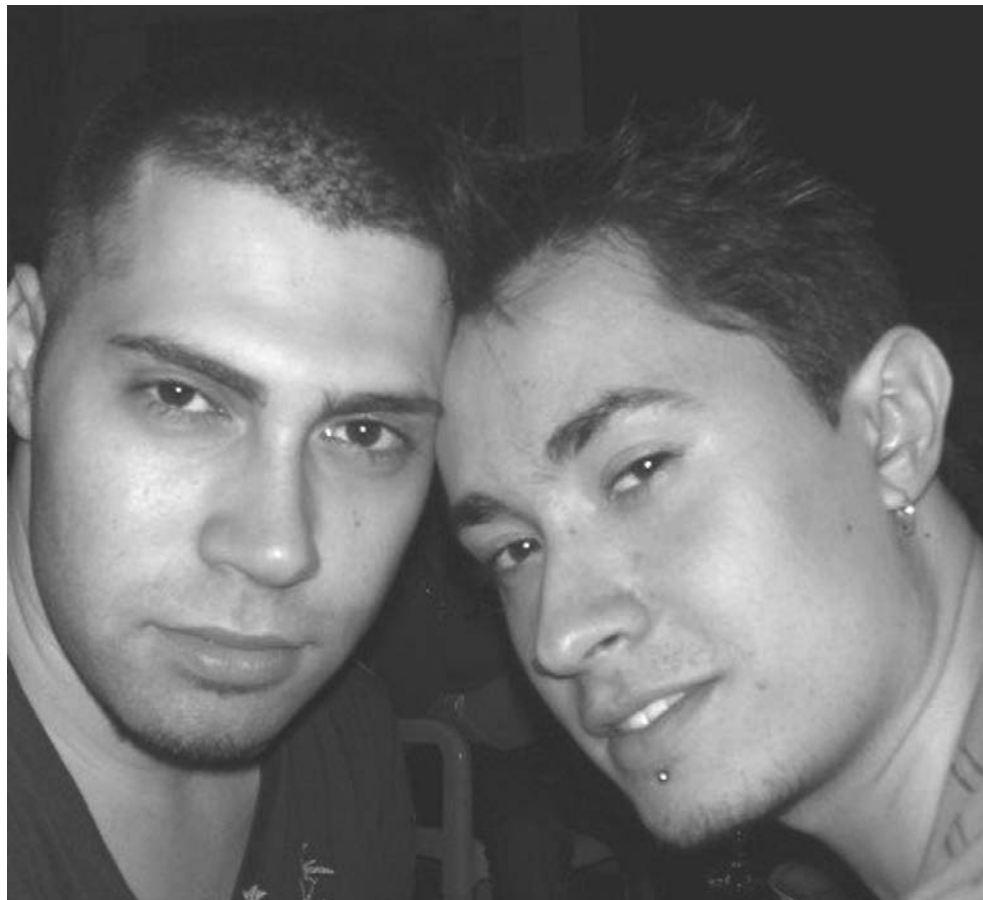
You know, there’s always commitment, there’s love, there’s helping out the other person, there’s trust, there’s having a house, having a family, having two dogs, having bills, doing groceries. We live a life like every other heterosexual couple lives, we don’t live differently any other way.

Diego’s mother was so excited when we got engaged. She was so excited that he found a man that has a good head on his shoulders and who has drive. My family, on the other hand, is Lebanese. I told my aunt and some of my cousins, and they just changed the subject. I never brought it up after that and I’ve noticed, ever since I’ve been engaged, there’s a deep distance between us. Our relationship has nothing to it anymore; it’s like, “I’m just talking to you out of respect for raising me.”

My grandmother, who took care of me my entire life, cried when she first found

out. Not for being with a man that I love, but rather because she said I will never make it to Heaven. Ever since I came out, our relationship has been different.

She no longer asks me if I’m dating anyone; she knows what the deal is. And she’s



Philip (left) says his relationship with his fiancée Diego is like any other couple. PHOTO PHILIP ZEIN

older now; I don’t want to give her a heart attack. I would bring my girlfriends over just so she could use her own imagination and be happy.

Being gay is never a choice. I always found it interesting that people think it’s a choice. You don’t choose who your parents are. You can’t help feeling the way you do. It’s like telling straight people ‘Stop what you’re doing, it’s wrong.’ It’s a double standard. At the same time, nobody wants to be told how to live their life or who you can or cannot love.

What I really find irritating is that people think that being gay is all about sex. It’s not. Straight people have one-night stands all the time. Being gay... it’s hard to define. It’s just loving someone of the same sex. I’m normal, I don’t really think of myself

differently, especially living in a city like Montreal.

My advice to young gays in the closet: it might seem hard at the beginning and you might be scared that you’ll lose your family or the friends you have, and most importantly the perception of those you love. But you shouldn’t be scared about that because real friends will love you no matter who you are and no matter what your sexual preference.

The same goes for your family. Mind you, coming out to your family is always the hardest because they have high expectations for you and they think you won’t fulfill them. But follow your bliss. Follow what makes you happy. Because that’s my advice. That’s the only thing that will keep you happy.

Of labels and lesbians

The sliding scale of sexual identity

• R. BRIAN HASTIE

When I was younger I was led to believe that sexuality was a person’s defining feature, especially if they were part of a societal minority. To be heterosexual was to be the norm, unquestioned.

When was the last time anyone ever walked up to me and asked me if I was straight? It was merely assumed. But to be anything but was considered different, and controversial.

When Ellen came out on her show in the mid ‘90s, she became known as “that lesbian comedian,” stereotyped and pigeonholed into

a defining niche. I paid no mind to this, as I believed popular conventional wisdom, and since the majority of people bought into it, then I should also toe the line.

But as I entered my post-secondary education path, sexual discourse entered my everyday discussions. Discussion of gender, sexuality and biology entered my headspace. Where I used to believe that someone’s sexual preference as well as their attitudes towards various sexual issues were features that were of paramount importance, I now understand that it was a lot more complicated than just the straight/other binary dynamic

that I knew as a child. A whole world of intricacies, exceptions and particularities existed that made me question my way of thinking.

In this search of self-reflection I realized that there are many types of people out there, and simply slapping on a label is doing them a disservice.

Some people attach their sexuality to their identity rather closely; to them it is their defining feature. They want to be known as “the gay guy” or that “riot grrl dyke” themselves, establishing their identity instead of being tokenized. They attribute these quali-

ties to themselves as a way of empowering their identity, by giving it a sense of direction.

Others, believe that their sexuality is but another component of their identity, much like their station in life (student) and nationality (Canadian). It is not a central theme to their life but rather one of the building blocks that form their identity.

My thoughts often drift off to consider a Kinsey-style sliding scale of sexuality/identity that would explain how closely linked their sexuality is in defining their person. On the one end would be someone who believes that their

sexuality takes a back seat to other characteristics. On the other, you would find people who tie their sexuality to their identity and use it as their defining calling card, whether gay, straight, bisexual or questioning.

But above all, I now understand that people shouldn’t be forced to be labelled by others simply because of societal norms, because it lends a disservice to the rest of the components to their identity. People should have the choice to be known as what they want to be known as, rather than have a label attached to them just because they may or may not be different.

Golden Girls gone wild

Taking the romance out of Cinema l'amour

• TRISTAN LAPOINTE

This place is not an ironic good time, or even a sincere one. It's a nightmare of violent porn and public sex acts—some more frightening than just old men jerking it.

Populated mostly by the octogenarians that seem to orbit between the theatre and Café Portugaise like they were planets on an axis of minor vice, this place is everything your brain wants it to be. Which is exactly why you probably don't want to go there. The 20 minutes I spent in that place mark the only time I can ever remember being afraid of sex.

Part un

Tuesday is couples night, meaning you and your significant other get in for free. If you really must go, choose this option so as to avoid dropping \$20 on what will invariably be a pretty short visit.

To L'amour's credit, the roped-off couples' section helps keep a respectable distance between you and the crowd of old men who'll be jerking off to your girlfriend.

I went with some friends to screen Rockman Entertainment's *Blowjobs Gone Wild*. We were expecting *Eat My Black Meat 2*, but there'd been some sort of mix up and we were left to wile out our jungle fever another day. Either way, whatever they were screening was extraneous to what ended up happening at the front of the theatre.

A few minutes into BJGW, a little huddle appeared up front; some of the old guys who were too shy to spank it in front of us kids settled for a circle jerk instead. I tried to run up front to verify this ritual but as soon as I tried to leave the couples' area, the porn manager ordered us to leave or sit back down. A strange demand, I guess the \$20 is more a buy-in on the midnight meth hookers than it is an actual admission price.

The mutual masturbation continued for several more minutes. During that time the chick on screen went from sucking dick to choking on it, puking on it, and tearfully back to sucking. The tide of cum soon ebbed and it seemed a bunch of the grandpas had finished up for the meantime, while a devoted core of oldies kept formation as their less robust counterparts trickled outside.

Part deux

We appreciated this lull; assuming that most of the weirdness had passed, our group relaxed, joked a bit. By now the dudes on the screen had lost their shit and we were treated to a new scene, a fresh girl, and a fresh location—a breezy, block apartment complex with all-weather carpeting. The girl wore a dog collar and an Aladdin costume.

As the scene progressed, the departed gentlemen made their way back to the front. Smoke break over, they were ready for another round. After a few minutes of reintegration and plot-building (it turns out the collared bumpkin had been a bad girl), something unexpected occurred. Two women showed up.

They looked bad, like the Golden Girls but with more meth and less soft-focus. Unaccompanied by the owner and unfettered by the ropes, which bound us to the couples' section, they walked to the front—something my two female companions, 30 years their junior, later admitted would have horrified them.

From where we sat they seemed to exchange friendly greetings with the huddle, hugs, kisses on the cheek. It was obvious this wasn't a rare treat. Then they went wild, with blowjobs. Clearly silhouetted against other wild blowjobs, we witnessed an elderly orgy.

The room got hot. The velvet curtains and plush seats that 20 minutes ago had charmed me into staying now seemed grotesque. I could actually smell the cum. Thoughts of sex became difficult to bear, and imagining what public perversions might come next was impossible. I needed out. Thankfully, so did my friends.

We fled from our seats and followed the aisle to a velvet rope. The house lights were off and while fumbling for the latch in the dark I failed to notice a man blocking our exit. He was tall and fat. Liver spots covered his face, and his pants were around his ankles. We'd been his entertainment for spankin' it.

The last moments we spent inside L'amour are a blur; maybe we pushed him, maybe he moved of his own accord, I can't recollect. I don't think we stabbed him though. We fled up the aisle, kicked through two sets of doors, and were soon free.



This hot spot on the Main features the hunters, the horny and the haunted. PHOTO TRISTAN LAPOINTE

Ladies and gentlemen, tonight

A Concordia student's confessional about chilling and treating

• THIS COULD BE YOU

I am a 22-year-old female student at Concordia. I am a busybody who is involved in too many activities. Many of you know me or have seen me around. Although I wish I could say that what I'm about to tell you didn't happen to me, this is a true story.

I was alone on a Friday night. I had no plans to party or events that I was obliged to attend. Homework was not an option so I was bored. I turned to MSN but I had zero friends online.

I surfed the Internet for a while until a little pop-up appeared on my screen. It said, "Corey Andreikowitz is online." Good old MSN had come to relieve my boredom.

Corey Andreikowitz was "Mister Popularity" in high school. All the girls wanted to date him and all the guys wanted to be his friend. As for myself, I didn't think much of him.

There was no denying he was cute though, but I didn't think he was into black girls anyways. Furthermore, I didn't like the high school rumours I'd heard about him with July, Cindy, and Martha in the parking lot. Back then I thought I would be a virgin until I was married.

We made small talk for a while: "How have you been?" "What have you been up to?" and finally "Are you single?" The conversation went on like that for a while and then we decided we would chill sometime soon.

Within the week I had gotten a call from a private number. It was Corey. The next Friday he was set to come over to chill for a bit before we went to a party.

Note: the verb "To Chill" is a very vague term for university students and so I prepared myself in consequence. I plucked, I shaved, I made sure everything was neat and tidy down there. Having grown out of my prudish phase, I was aware that anything could happen and since it had been a long time since I had done the deed, Corey seemed like a plausible prospect.

He showed up at my house looking better than I remembered. We watched a stupid movie-whose name I can't recall that I had

prepared, but 20 minutes into it, the movie was the last thing on our minds.

We moved to my bedroom. As he pushed me onto the bed I asked "So where's the condom?" Corey looked at me semi-perplexed and as he searched for an answer, I became too horny to wait. I pulled a strip of three condoms that I'd randomly gotten at a parade from my dresser and said, "Here you go."

He opened the small packet and handed me the condom. "You do the honours," he said. So in my most seductive stance, I rolled it onto his most intimate appendage and we were good to go. And go at it we did.

It was good... No, it was really good. It was so good that the condom came off. We had no reason to worry, we had another one at our disposal. We were up and running again in no time.

It was good again. Actually, I take that back. "Damn!" Corey said as the second condom popped off. I was a little frustrated but thank goodness we still had a third condom to resort to. This time it was great; third time's a charm. The climax was amazing. I noticed that Corey pulled out right before he came.

After that we chilled... for real, though. We lay on my bed and said nothing. I knew that after tonight I probably wouldn't talk to him again, but I was okay with that. I got up to take a shower to get ready for the party as he lay in my bed.

I cleaned up my room a little bit before we left. I picked up two condoms on the floor. I searched for the third but couldn't find it. We had to go, so I left my room as is and hoped that it would not pop up when my mother or friends were there. Although the party was fun, I had work the next day so I went my way and Corey went his.

The next morning, I took a shower before work. I felt something slippery between my legs. Amidst the suds, something made of plastic was lodged. I pulled it out. Oh my goodness, it was the third condom.

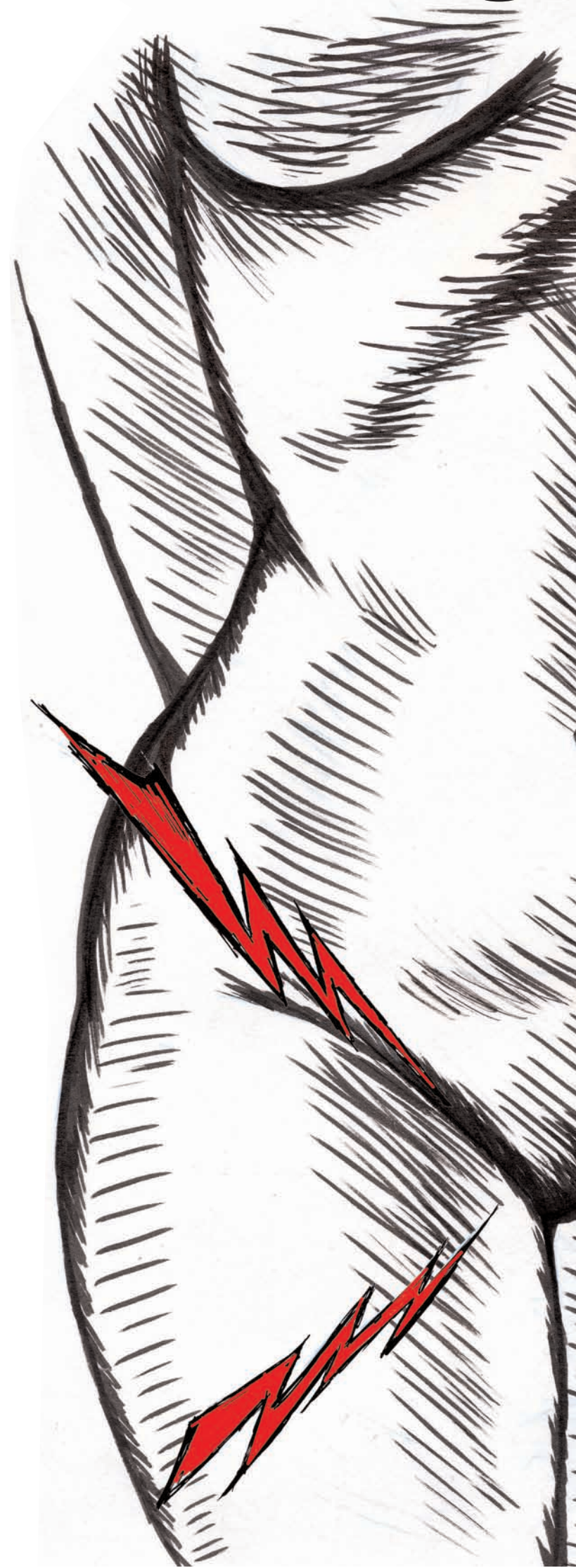
I was in a panic and couldn't contemplate the possibility of being pregnant. I damned my irregular period for possibly making the situation worse. I rushed myself to the phar-

macy and picked up the most expensive pregnancy test I could find. I took the test. I was not pregnant. That was a relief.

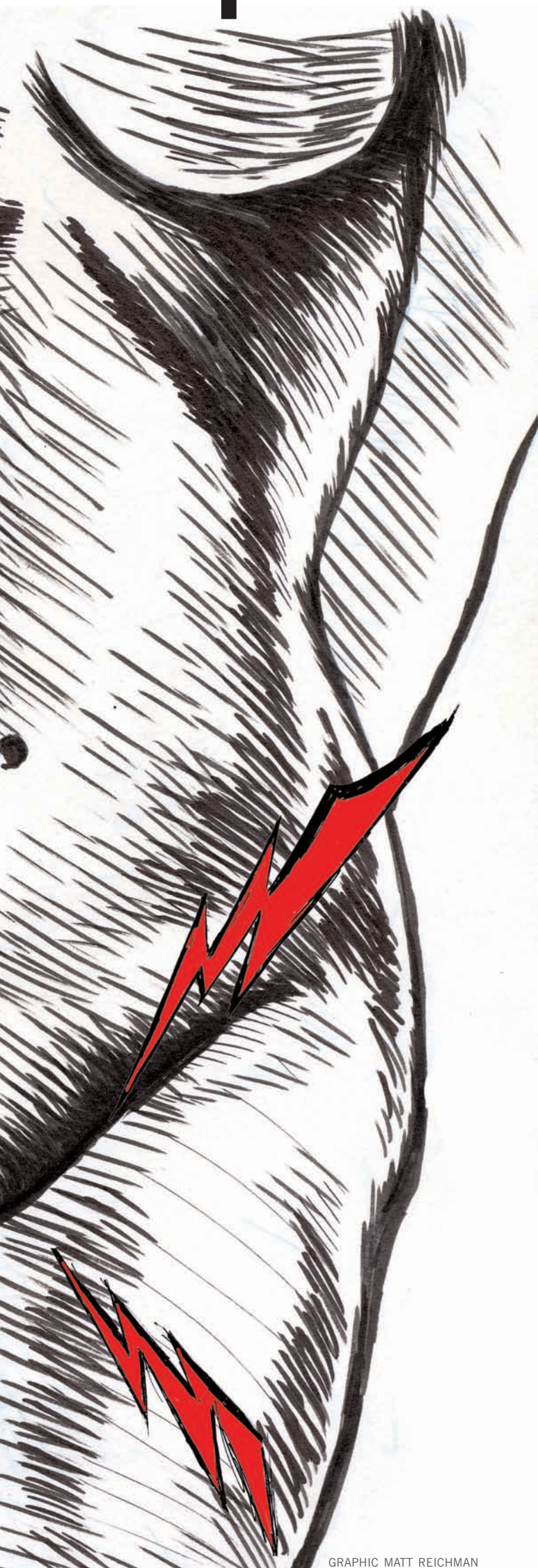
So I went on with my life. I kept myself busy and as I had suspected, I did not talk to Corey again. Six months went by and I was

alone. With no Corey to turn to I relieved myself (whatever, everybody does it!).

I suspected something was wrong with me, however because I hadn't had my period in six months. I knew I had an irregular period, but six months was a lot. I had to go to the clinic



nt's special: Chlamydia



GRAPHIC MATT REICHMAN

anyways because I was often feeling nauseous and somehow I had developed an eye infection.

For my eye, the nurse told me I had pink eye. I had no idea how I got it but I took the prescription to get rid of it. For my period, the

nurse said I had the symptoms of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome.

It's a syndrome that many women have where their periods are irregular and their estrogen levels are low. She told me not to worry, that it wasn't life threatening at all and

The verb To Chill is a very vague term for university students and so I prepared myself in consequence. I plucked, I shaved and made sure everything was neat and tidy down there.

that I could go on the pill to boost my estrogen levels and to make my period regular. So I did a pap test to confirm this ailment. The doctor did the test and at the same time did a routine STI test. The nurse said that I would get a call about my ovaries within a week and if my STI test was negative they wouldn't call at all.

A few weeks later, the nurse confirmed the POS and gave me a prescription for a birth control pill.

Two weeks later I was in a meeting when I received a call. I did not recognize the number and have a tendency to screen my calls, but something told me to pick up the phone. I answered. It was the nurse again. I knew something was wrong because they were not supposed to call back.

"Hello, this is nurse Turgeon from the CLSC."

"Yes?"

"I have your test results from your STI exam."

"Yes?"

"The results show that you tested positive for Chlamydia."

"WHAT!"

"Yes, but it is in the beginning stages. We caught it early and it has not made its way deep into your organs."

Knowing that there were other people in the room I tried to keep my cool, but I was pissed off.

"But I took precautions," I said.

"Well, you made contact with the virus at some point because it's only contracted through penetration," she said. "Are you allergic to penicillin?"

"No."

"There is a one-time prescription available to you at the CLSC. All you need to do is take the one pill and abstain from any sexual activity for 14 days. Has your partner been tested also?"

"I don't know, I haven't spoken to him since."

"Please inform him and make sure he gets tested as well."

"Okay, thank you, bye."

I did not want to hear anything else she had

to say. I was mad. I was embarrassed and I felt dirty. I didn't want to be one of "them," the "one-out-of-four" sexually active girls who get Chlamydia.

With the condom incident now behind me, I was scared of possibly being pregnant and having to tell my family. I told no one and when I got my prescription I wore the biggest sunglasses I owned. It was raining that day.

I knew it was Corey. I was clean before him and had no other partners after him. I went to call Corey, but then I realized that he had called me from a private number. I turned to MSN and he was no longer on my list. Good old Facebook failed me too. Corey and I were no longer friends. I was shafted, insulted and infected.

I couldn't help but think that it was somewhat deliberate. I remembered how he had struggled with the condoms. I then realized it was because he was not used to using them. I remembered how I was quick to pull out my own condoms and how a bell did not go off for the fact that he had come without even one. I mean, chilling does not mean "chilling." I know that he knew we would have sex that night.

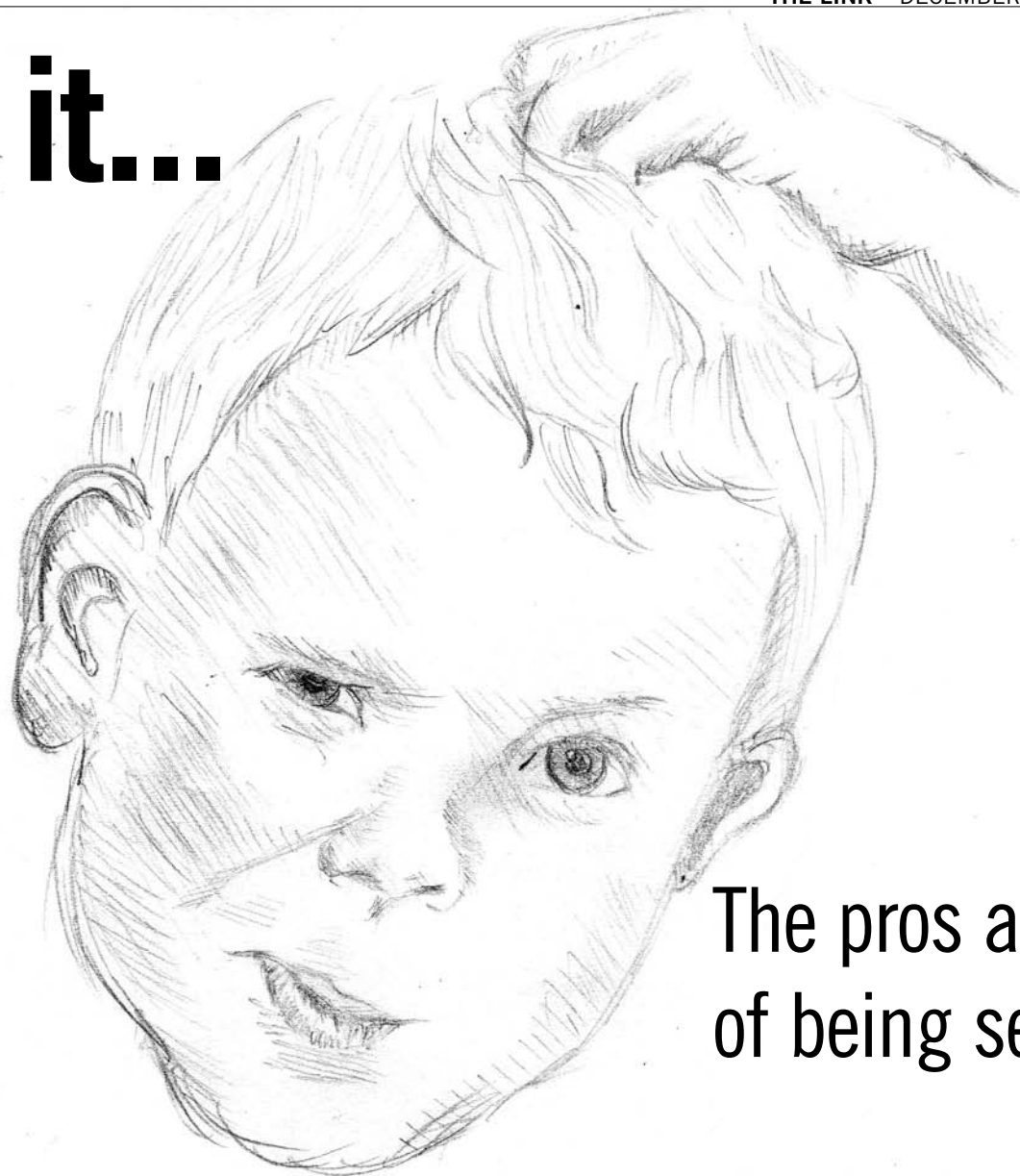
I wished I could have let him know because as I figured out during my browsing of the 'net, Chlamydia can go unnoticed in men for a long time. I also felt stupid when I read that conjunctivitis-or pink eye-was a symptom. Let's just say that since I read that, I no longer rub my eyes in the morning when I wake up.

For the record, I would like to thank my irregular period and POS for getting me to the clinic. After all was said and done, I felt bad that I couldn't contact Corey. I took my prescription and have had several clean STI tests since.

The only thing I can say is that life goes on, but don't think that it can't happen to you. I haven't told anyone about this incident except one person: you.

So don't be a dirty statistic. Now I make sure that I'm the one who pulls off the condom.

Just do it... or just don't?



The pros and cons of being sexually active

GRAPHIC AMY SMITH

Sex for all the right reasons

• JOELLE LEMIEUX

I'm ashamed to admit that the idea of premarital sex was never one of controversy for me.

In high school it was no question who would be the first to "lose it." Don't get me wrong, I was by no means the school bicycle. Rather, it was my particular group of friends who were unusually tight-thighed.

And shame on them! My best high school memories are tucked away in the corners where I locked lips with the best of West King's '06.

I remember the first guy I was ever with. The urgent pressing of his body against mine was so desperate I'd have done anything for it.

And why shouldn't I? Why deny myself the sweaty delight that is the horizontal mambo? The naked bump-and-grind that brings us closer to nature than the drive to your boyfriend's country house his mother calls "scenic."

Fucking is a rite of passage. And, although in the beginning it's never something to write home about, there is something irresistible about young love.

Who wants to cash in their V-card to that newly-found partner, 'til death do us part? After all that waiting, your expectations are bound to be high, but in my experience the longer I wait with a guy the worse he is in bed.

Imagine, waiting so long for someone only to find out his penis is so small he might as well be a woman, and thank goodness you got married in Canada because somehow you've become a les-

bian... Forever.

What could be the benefit of abstaining from sex until marriage (especially with the concept of "I do" becoming more and more archaic)? Except for the possible fact that if I were peeking but not receiving the package, I'd be giving the world's greatest head by now.

I don't see it.

And if you're willing to go down, why aren't you willing to go all the way? Why give your guy the climax of all climaxes if he's not returning the favour? At least if you're "making love" (or whatever other sugar-coated name you've given it) you can wrangle that cowboy beneath you and really start riding.

But if you can't dominate him sexually, can you dominate him anywhere? You may think your winter-inspired demeanor just makes him want you more, but when he gets what he wants, how keen will he be?

The people who caution against sex before marriage are worried about the emotional and physical implications of break-ups and pregnancies, and lifetime illnesses. I'm not advocating against daddies who might be afraid for their daughters' well-beings, or Mama Bears who don't want their baby boys coming home with... baby boys.

I'm just saying, sex is kind of awesome. Why not do it for as long as you can? Don't be stupid, don't do it without protecting yourself, and don't do it with people you don't know.

Let the CBC's revival of *The Tudors* be your lesson: there's a reason Henry VIII founded the Church of England—no one wants to be around when the heads start rolling.

Knowing the risks and alternatives

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

When I told my colleagues that I was going to write a piece about alternatives to sex, their answers were as revealing as they were worrying. With undue machismo pride they told me that they had "needs," that sex wasn't bad and that this wasn't the 1950s.

My answer to them is this: you should wish that this was the 1950s. Rates of sexually transmitted diseases were significantly lower and HIV/AIDS didn't exist.

Due to the fact that people couldn't fall back on oral contraceptives and that barrier methods of prevention were not socially accepted, levels of sexual education were actually much higher, and honest.

The nearly 40 million people around the world today who are infected with HIV/AIDS and the one million more who are infected daily with syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia and trichomoniasis present an interesting quandary.

All of these diseases, nearly 350 million additional cases yearly, are completely avoidable. STDs are the easiest diseases not to catch—inaction literally leaves you healthy.

But the government has decided not to ask the difficult question—which is why so many engage in useless and dangerous sex with multiple partners—and has left us the responsibility of practicing "safe sex."

Calling it "safe sex" is tantamount to taking all of the bullets out of the gun but one and playing Russian roulette. Sure it's safer, but why take the risk?

But how can we expect responsibility from ourselves when the government's reaction to skyrocketing rates of sexually transmitted disease, and plummeting levels of sexual education, was to rename it a 'sexual-

ly transmitted infection?'

With all due respect to the government, an infection is like a quiz in school: you just don't worry about it. You may be comforted when the doctors tell you that you simply have an "infection," but you are still going to suffer a slow and painful death.

You may consider it callous, I consider it honest.

Quebec is a special case in this country when it comes to teen sex, according to data from Statistics Canada. As the rest of the country has seen a marked decline in sex among 15-19-year-olds over the past decade, from 47 to 43 per cent, Quebec's percentage has increased to nearly 60 per cent.

Concurrently, as condom use has gone up in the rest of Canada to nearly 80 per cent among males and 70 per cent among females—a problem where females lag behind males in nearly all indicators of safe sex—Quebec's condom use stands at 66 per cent.

What makes Quebec so different from the rest of Canada?

With all this talk of morning after pills and other contraceptive methods, the idea of abstinence has been left to the religious fringes. This is irresponsible. Sex shouldn't be treated as a duty or a societal pressure; it is a choice and a risky one at that.

If you are unable to think of the alternatives, ask yourself why. Are your "needs" genuine? Don't blame it on biology. You might have the tools, but trust me, you 'aint using them how they were intended. Keep in mind your biology also wasn't constructed for beds, automobiles, or a life expectancy past 25.

There are times in life when you just have to throw the dice and hope for a hard six. Sex isn't one of those times.

Get to know your *Boobs and Dinks*

• FIONA O'CONNOR

Penis puppets, crocheted cocks, and malleable mammaries; Shannon Gerard makes them all. The 34-year-old, Toronto-based artist is the force behind *Boobs and Dinks* early detection kits, the plush, crocheted breast and penis sets that take a fresh and creative approach to sex education.

She is also the author of the comic book series *Hung*, from which her *Boobs and Dinks* work stems. The third issue of the autobiographical zine deals with themes of fear and human vulnerability as it tells the story of Gerard's partner who, one day, discovers a mysterious lump in his testicle.

"My response to being afraid of something is to write a story about it," she said. "I started crocheting penises with little lumps in them" and in turn, the project "became a primary focus."

A mainstay of the indie zine community who also teaches a course on nano-publishing at the Ontario College of Art and Design, Gerard's inspiration for developing a separate work based on Hung

was two-fold.

Firstly, in the wake of her partner's scare, she found that while information relating to women's reproductive health was abundant, resources on men's was considerably scarcer.

Secondly, Gerard was artistically compelled by the possibility of establishing a "continuous creative process" related to but distinct from her comic series.

"I like the idea of having a companion to the story," she said. Whereas the relationship between author and reader ends once a book is published, a work like *Boobs and Dinks*, with its tangible quality and "personal and freaky" dimensions, opens the channels for "an ongoing personal dialogue with the readers."

The project is Gerard's first venture in the crochet medium, and since 2007, the artist has been crafting the plush privates with love and dedication. Each boob and dink is made with a lump sewn inside of it, and by following the instructions in the early detection kit's accompanying booklet, people can learn how to check their own nether parts for potentially unwelcome bits

and bumps.

"A lot of the medical tools make assumptions about gender and about people's bodies," said Gerard. Making the toys in a range of sizes, colours, and with optional fore-skins, she hopes that the practice of self-examination will become more accessible and familiar to all.

"It's about breaking down barriers so that people laugh," she explained. "The medical dialogue around the value of self-examination is regimented, clinical." Instead of the traditional mantra of "Check your breasts" or "Check your balls," approaches that, by Gerard's count, inject unnecessary anxiety into the feeling foray, the artist's message is "Know your body," a motto that alternately encourages overall body consciousness.

Gerard has presented *Boobs and Dinks* with a variety of adaptations in a range of contexts, including art galleries, book fairs, and Planned Parenthood.

"As it's branched into different communities the vocabulary has changed," she said, a process that has undoubtedly contributed to the



This flaccid friend can teach you how to spot-check your member.

project's multi-faceted relevance.

Incorporating illustration, print techniques, and crochet, *Boobs and Dinks* straddles the conceptual divides of art, craft and education, with its genre classification ultimately decided by a public's unpredictable reactions.

Last year, a collaborative installation called *Playing Doctor* featuring a display of Gerard's work—this time a pair of crocheted breasts and a pierced penis mounted on large cut-out dolls—was dismantled from the York University Bookstore. Allegedly considered offensive to an

unidentified professor, Gerard said that the much-blogged about controversy failed to push the debate towards what she sees as its constructive limits.

"I wanted it to create a dialogue that went beyond censorship to one about the fear of the body," she said, "but that didn't happen."

Apparently, she added, "people are okay with boobs, but not okay with a giant crocheted cock with a Prince Albert."

To see more of Shannon Gerard's work, visit shannongerard.org

Fearless, shameless, and instructional video-less

• KATHLEEN K.R.
& NIKKI MACMILLAN

Kathleen and Nikki work at Head & Hands, a Montreal-based organization devoted to informing youth about physical and mental well-being, as well as counselling youth without discrimination.

Head & Hands has been servicing the Montreal community since 1970 through dynamic youth outreach and advocates for social change at the local level.

It's a fact: Youth know a lot about sex. They're talking about safer sex with friends and siblings; they're researching sexual diversity on the Internet; and they're learning about pleasure and consent through hands-on experience.

As our government continues to disempower young people and segregate them from sexual information (i.e. by raising the age of consent to 16 and essentially taking sex education out of the Quebec education curriculum), youths are educating themselves through informal avenues.

Head & Hands' Sense Project recognizes the experience teens already have when it comes to sexuality and seeks to ensure the information available to youth is as comprehensive and empowering as possible.

Working with youth, our mission is to minimize risks by providing: holistic, non-judgmental information on safer sex methods and sexual health; inclusive explorations of sexual pleasure, diversity and gender identity; and strategies and support around issues of sexual consent.

Contrary to popular belief, sex ed doesn't have to be about awkward silences and outdated videos. Approached with an open and positive attitude, youth are enthusiastic about the

chance to explore sexuality.

Through workshops and Peer Education Training in local high schools, youth examine gender identity, sexual orientation, sexism, feminism, racism, transgenderism/ transsexuality, cultural diversity and more. We're training youth to become not just condom enthusiasts, but sexual rights activists as well.

Most often, youth just want to know if their experiences, expectations, fears and body parts are normal. They want to know how to protect themselves (questions like "How do I use a condom?" and "why would I want lube with that?").

Students also frequently hit on some of the toughest issues that question sexual stereotypes, sexism and societal norms: What is virginity? Why is a sexually-active guy called a stud while a girl is called a slut? If I want to kiss another girl, does that make me gay?

Transmitting information on STI prevention and contraception is at the forefront of the Sense Project's mandate, as is breaking the silence around issues of sexuality. At the same time, Head & Hands has a long-standing commitment to supporting queer and transgender/transsexual youth in their choices and encouraging all young people to consider an anti-oppression stance on sexuality and gender identity.

From our peer educators, to our volunteers, to the young activists who are leading our World AIDS Day campaign this week, youth continue to shape Head & Hands' ongoing dialogue on sexual health and diversity—for a fearless, shameless sex ed future!

For more info on Head & Hands and the Sense Project, call 514-481-0277 or visit headandhands.ca.

Banging to the beat

Sex columnist rings a new flava in your ear

• CAROLYNE WELDON

Angelica LeMinh is hardheaded. When the head honchos at Montreal's *Nightlife* magazine told the Vancouver export that they already had all the music writers they needed, thank-you-very-much, but had an opening for a, ahem, sex columnist, LeMinh decided to take the gig and just write about hip-hop anyway.

The product of that union, "Sex Talk", has delighted and shocked readers since its debut in early 2007. It's the kind of sex column that'll serve you an incest special for the Christmas issue, followed by an anal sex exposé just in time for Valentine's Day (title: "Cupid Takes It In The Ass"), while keeping you current on the vagaries of rap stars.

"One thing that worked out good for me at first was the editors were french," LeMinh said. "My friends could never believe the stuff I'd get published."

Her piece on anal sex, however, had to go through eight rewrites before entering the realm of publishability. Even after vigorous whitewashing, the column caused quite a stir. Amidst talk of enemas and lubes, it broached the topic of figging, or inserting pieces of ginger or garlic in the anus for pleasure. She says people are still talking about that one.

"But I always try to bring it back to hip-hop," said LeMinh, who also contributes to Pound, the Toronto-based hip-hop magazine. "It's sort of become a running joke over at "But I always try to bring it back to hip-hop," said LeMinh, who also contributes to Pound, the Toronto-based hip-hop magazine. "It's sort of become a

running joke over at *Nightlife*," she added.

Luckily for her, few entities make for more likely bed companions than sex and rap. Indeed, what more auspicious gateways exists to delve into the eternally fresh topic of getting down-be it oral, anal, inter-racial, group or exhibitionistic—than Ludacris, Foxy Brown, Plies, or 2 Live Crew?

As a sex columnist, LeMinh has established a full ex-lover typology based on rappers ("Do you tend to date and dump the Will Smiths, or the ODBs?") and has liberally sprinkled her work, irrespective of topic or tone, with all types of hip-hop innuendos. It's not often you read about love letters and Soulja Boy in the same sentence, let alone in a piece on food and sex, but in "Sex Talk," that's just same old, same old.

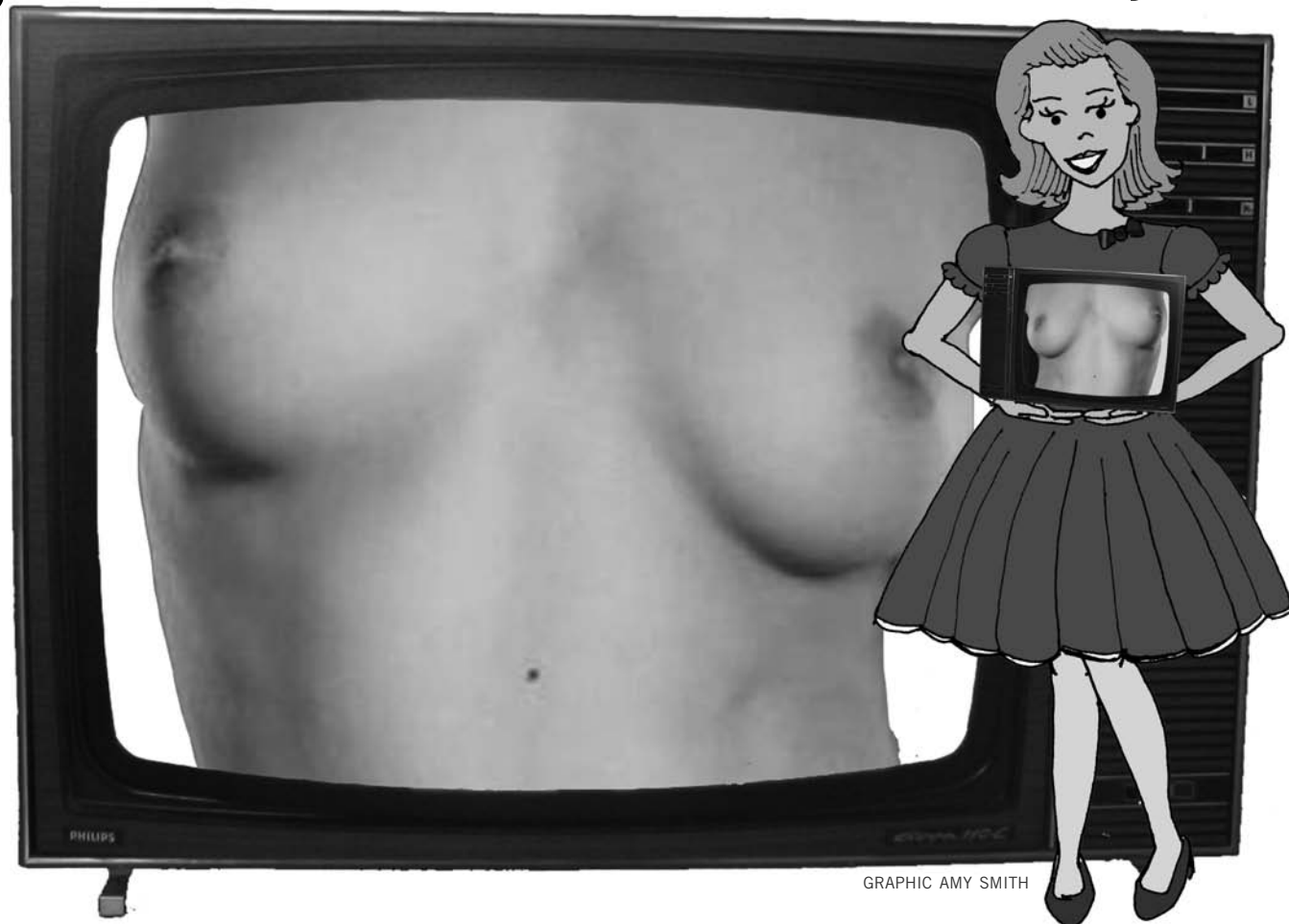
If you ask LeMinh, she'll tell you the wonderful thing about being a writer in Montreal is that you have the luxury of time. "Here, you can't take your sweet time to write stuff you care about," she said. "You won't have a lot of money. But in Montreal, you don't need a lot of money." Amen to that.

And with times getting tougher, and winter at our door, true Montrealers know they can always depend on one form of entertainment that's both easy on the wallet and carbon-neutral. That's right: hopping in bed for a bona fide round of hanky-panky, bonus points for the bangin' soundtrack.

For more info on "Sex Talk," please visit nightlifemagazine.ca

Oh, how the times have changed...

The revolution and discovery of sex



GRAPHIC AMY SMITH

'Many years ago, we knew nothing'

Name: Nicole Biard

Age: 51

Religion: Catholic

Let's start by saying that 35 years ago there was no sex education in school nor anywhere else. When I was about 13, I remember asking my mother how babies were made and how to make love. When she explained it to me, I was confused, trying to figure out a position that would make that possible.

We didn't hear about sex or talk about sex. I only saw that word when I had to specify my gender when filling out a form: 'M' for male, 'F' for female.

The most common way of thinking in those days was that when you give yourself to a man it's a gift, so I wanted to keep it for my future husband. It doesn't mean that nobody was having sex though.

There was also fear that was controlling us—fear of deceiving our parents, fear of being judged, fear of getting pregnant.

When I got married, I was still a virgin. We learned everything together. Even though we were inexperienced, the love we had for each other would get us through every time. Love cures everything.

So talking about it, learning what my needs were, being respectful, were part of the recipe.

Now it's a completely different world. There's nothing left to the imagination. I hear that children are having

sex at the age I was still playing with my dolls!

Instead of falling in love first, people are having sex and if it doesn't work out, they go their separate ways. If I had done that, I would have missed out on a great life with my husband of 32 years.

Today, there is nothing more to discover; boys and girls know everything about sex and have experienced everything, often before their 16th birthdays.

A few years ago, I heard a girl on the radio. She was 21 years old. She felt like she had missed out on her childhood, being sexually active since the age of 14. She said that if she could go back in time, she would make different choices because at 21, she was already bored with sex.

I really think that there are two extremes. Many years ago, we knew nothing. Now, they know and see too much. So many things are now based on sex. I feel there is a problem when a little six-year-old wants to be "sexy."

The pressure is mostly on girls wanting to be perfect to please boys. They lack self-esteem, searching constantly outside of themselves for what they could improve about the way they look, always thinking about how to please, please, please.

If young people would realize that making love is far more meaningful than just "having sex," they would enjoy falling in love first and then choose to give their partner the greatest gift of all: themselves in body, soul and spirit.

How sex goes down in 2008

Name: Sagine Cavé

Age: 24

Religion: Catholic

The first time I heard about sex, it was the summer before grade six. This girl came up to me and asked, "Do you know what sex is?" Of course I didn't, so she told me a man puts his penis inside a woman's vagina. I didn't believe her.

In grade seven or eight, I watched this movie called *Kids*. It's a really graphic portrayal of teens having sex, getting STIs, and what have you. So I was more confused after that.

Then in the ninth grade, I finally figured out what it was because in my Catholic school we had a class in sexual health. Monsieur Babin went through all the steps. For example, step one was 'guy gets hard.' It was the whole shebang; pregnancy, STIs, it was everything. The guys were giggling, the girls felt uncomfortable.

In the ninth grade, I didn't know of anyone having sex. We were Catholic, after all. But in the tenth grade, a lot of people just started doing it. I wasn't one of them.

I didn't really think it was a sin or that I'd go to hell for having sex, mostly because other kids were doing it and they seemed perfectly okay to me.

I had friends in public school at the time and a lot more of them were having sex. I remember thinking that different schools must have had different views about sex.

My parents never talked about sex. Ever. They left that in the hands of the educational system. And I don't think I would have wanted to hear my mom talk about it. I'm actually happy we never had that conversation.

In school, we were generally taught to save sex for marriage. It wasn't just taught in sex ed, it was a big thing that was in the air. I thought I was going to save sex for marriage.

I thought so because when you don't know much, you're like, "okay." But then you get a little older and your hormones start kicking in.

It's 2008 and things have changed, so not everyone believes in saving sex for marriage. Those kinds of people are disappearing; it's important to know how you're going to vibe with your spouse sexually before you take the plunge.

When I have kids, I'm going to tell them to choose a partner wisely. It's kind of unrealistic to tell people to follow the word of God when no one is really listening to God right now.

I'll also tell them that sex is normal and that they're gonna do it one day. But when they do it, they have to know it should be consensual. If I have sons, they must respect women to the nth degree. If I have a daughter, I want her to use her best judgment.

I think some people aren't having enough sex; it's a good stress reliever. Some people are too stressed, in a whack relationship, and on top of that they're not getting any. The more restrictions you put on sex, the more people start acting crazy and make it a bigger issue than it really is.

I hope the next generation knows to be safe and not to rush. And they should always speak to someone they can trust about it because they don't have to be afraid or ashamed to ask questions. If they're that curious and think they're that ready, they should make sure they're not getting into something just because everyone else is doing it.

Does penis envy really exist?

The long and short of male anatomy

• ALLISA SCOTT, *THE LANCE*
(UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR)

WINDSOR (CUP) — Everyone's heard the saying "size matters," but does it really? And for whom does it matter?

To answer these questions, you have to consider many factors, like history, social norms, and personal preferences.

History of penis envy

According to Sigmund Freud, every biologically born female has penis envy.

His theory of psychosexual development refers to what he called the phallic stage or Oedipus complex, which sparks between the ages of three to five, when children focus on their genital areas during a time of physical and psychological development.

According to Freud, a young girl will notice her father's penis and recognize that she does not have one, so she feels inferior.

This becomes more complicated when jealousy is directed toward her mother, because she is viewed as a threat to the relationship between the young girl and her father. So the young child is understood as loving her father, but also envious of his penis because she does not have one. According to this theory, the young girl blames her mother for taking her father's penis from her.

Freud's critics have shown his theory has many flaws.

Some believe that he was

describing early 20th century European culture, but this notion of development cannot be applied cross-culturally.

Other critics note that gender identity occurs across several years, and for some theorists, across a lifetime, so the age that Freud was discussing is questionable.

Some psychoanalysts have argued that Freud's notion of penis envy is only one small part of the puzzle for female gender development, and that many other considerations should be recognized as significant during this stage.

Feminist criticisms argue that Freud's theory of penis envy is problematic because of its patriarchal assumptions.

Feminist Karen Horney even came up with an opposing theory called womb envy, which states that men are envious of women's ability to give birth.

Other feminists have explored Freud's theories through a Marxist lens by using a capitalist analogy of penis envy.

To counter-balance some of the negative messages sent out by Freud's theory, some women have also pronounced pride in their anatomy by claiming that they have vagina pride.

Social norms and penis envy

There has been a lot of theory developed about female gender identity development, but very little about young male gender

identity development.

Though penis envy seems to be concerned with young females, males are also affected by penis envy, and they may even be affected to a greater extent.

From a young age, boys associate their identity with their penis. Young boys are more aware of their genitals than females because they are external to their bodies. Boys often play with their penises at a very young age.

Research shows that the majority of males masturbate, so they get to become aware of the pleasure associated with their penises. They also realize the cultural power it possesses as they age.

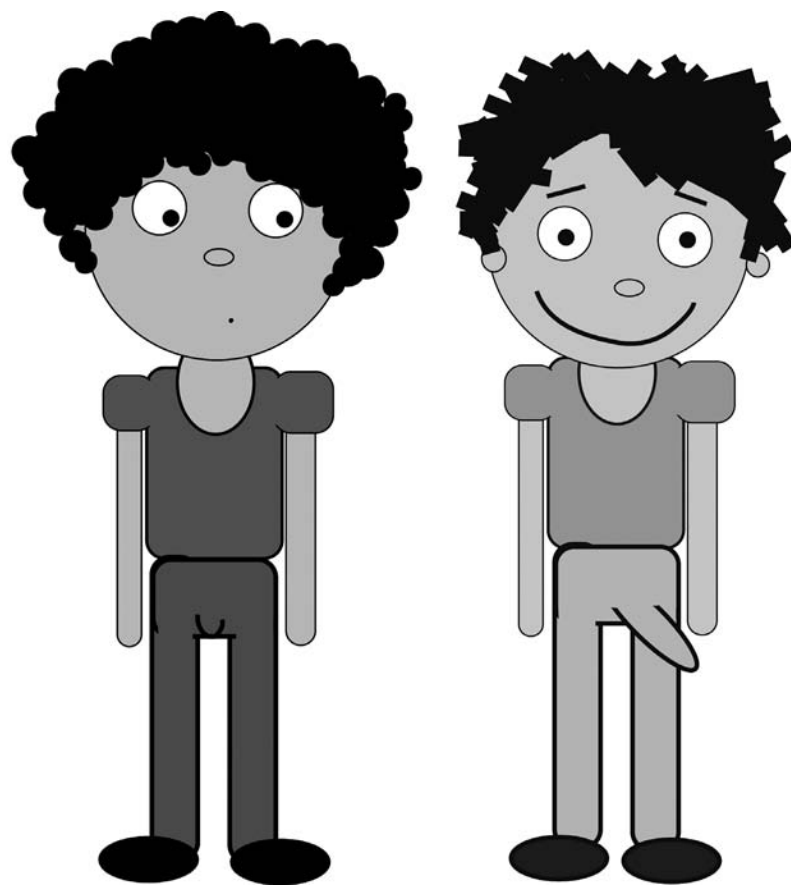
In the Western culture, the penis is a sign of power, masculinity, and status. It is seen as something that conquers.

But for some males, this is not their experience.

For many men, penises can be a sensitive issue to discuss—because they feel they do not measure up to others.

From a young age, boys compare themselves to each other, and many are known to measure their penises. This competitive nature can be damaging to a guy's self-esteem.

When you factor in the controversy of circumcised-versus-uncircumcised men, it gets more complicated, because circumcised male penises tend to seem larger.



GRAPHIC SAGINE CAVÉ

There is a masculine culture that says bigger is better, and this is an issue for some men, to the point where they will have surgery or take medications to try and elongate their penises.

Personal preferences and penis envy

Women often care less about a penis' size and more about a man who is confident in himself

and his size.

Some women do care about the size—some length and others girth—however it is often men who are hung up on the size issue.

So perhaps the modern form of penis envy is actually a form of social conditioning, which teaches men they must measure up when they should be taught that they all measure up.

Sex sells: How to make money off dirty words

A look at the hottest erotic web zines

• LAURA ROBERTS

Laura Roberts, founder of Black Heart Magazine, makes her living writing about sex.

Roberts, a former literary arts editor at The Link, runs her "V for Vixen" weekly sex column in Hour.

When the editors of *The Link* approached me about writing an article for this year's Sex and Sexuality issue, I was excited. It's great to be able to participate in my favourite issue, as I credit this paper with much of my journalistic training—the occasional near-lawsuit included. This time I even get to contribute as a Real Live Sex Writer! At the same time, I was also apprehensive. Why? Well, these are tough economic times and while publication in *The Link* is always awesome, it unfortunately doesn't pay a writer's bills.

On the other hand, there are plenty of great places that do, and if you're a sexpert-in-train-

ing, you should get to know a few of them. To that end, I've assembled a brief list of my top five paying erotica websites, for your reading (and writing) pleasure.

The Naughty American—thenaughtyamerican.com

Oh, Americans and their weird views of sexuality! Your outsider status as an enlightened Canadian may or may not come in handy when submitting to this web-based magazine, which is looking for well-written articles of 800 words or less, all with an American spin. Whatever your definition of "naughty," this website has probably covered it. You can email the editors with your pitches at editor@thenaughtyamerican.com.

Hips and Curves — hipsandcurves.com

This may look like just another lingerie site for full-figured women, but this website

also commissions erotica writers for their newsletter. You can find more information on what they're looking for, as well as instructions on how to submit, on the site under the "Steamy Stories" link.

Ruthie's Club —ruthiesclub.com

Do you write longer-form erotic fiction? Check out Ruthie's Club, an illustrated erotica website. They pay \$75 to \$350 U.S. for installment stories, which is pretty darn hot. Unfortunately, they have limited openings for serial pieces, so be sure to send them a juicy sample to get them all fired up. Send 'em to Neil@ruthiesclub.com for consideration.

For the Girls —fortheirls.com

Paying up to \$100 for featured articles, this is definitely the hottest adult website and ezine available to hetero females. With full-on porn content, you have to subscribe for a peek at the goods, but you

can always submit your work via email to submissions@fortheirls.com.

Kasidie Magazine —kasidie.com

Want to write about swingers? Kasidie is the ezine for the swinger community, and is always looking for erotica, articles, interviews and cartoons. They prefer submissions be sent via their online form, which is available at kasidie.com.

Finally, if you're just starting out and don't have any erotica clips yet, you might want to consider submitting your work to my ezine, *Black Heart*. I publish fiction updates every Friday, in addition to short reviews each Tuesday. Though the only payment currently offered is for reviews, we're always open to publishing new and exciting writing that explores the literary and philosophical sides of erotica. For more info, check us out online at blackheartmagazine.com.

Good luck, and happy erotic writing!

Keeping the meat kosher

Which contraceptives are best for you?



GRAPHIC ALEX MANLEY

The A-team

• CLARE RASPOPOW

The Pill

The Pill works by releasing hormones into the blood stream to prevent the ovaries from releasing an egg and must be taken every day.

Cost: Between \$20 and \$30 per month

Pros: Good news. The pill is one of the most researched methods of birth control in the world. With proper use, the Pill is 99.9 per cent effective and is touted as the most effective method of birth control available. Most health care providers also cover it. In addition to preventing pregnancy, the pill can regulate or reduce the menstrual cycle, and reduce acne.

Cons: Despite being one of the most effective methods of birth control, there is a three per cent user failure rate (the Pill should be taken at the same time EVERY DAY). The pill is known to cause side effects such as: irregular bleeding; breast tenderness; weight gain; headaches; or nausea (though most of these should be temporary effects), and some women report that it decreases their sex drive. The Pill can cause blood clots in regular smokers, especially older smokers.

Note: Any method of birth control that alters your hormones should be taken responsibly and requires the user to educate themselves about possible side effects.

Patch

The patch (Evra) has been available in Canada since January 2004. It works similarly to the Pill. The small patch releases pregnancy-preventing hormones through the skin. Each individual patch is worn for one week for a total of three weeks a month, and should be changed on the same day every week.

Cost: Between \$30 and \$40 per month

Pros: Similar to the Pill, the Patch has the same rate of effectiveness (99.9 per cent). The benefits are also similar (lighter periods, etc...), but the patch can be a better fit for those women who have trouble remembering to take a pill at the same time every day.

Cons: Again, similar to the Pill, the patch also has a three per cent user failure rate. The same side effects might also be noticed (bleeding, tenderness, etc...), but with the added possibility of skin irritation. The patch is known to be less effective in women who weigh more than 198 pounds. Despite its similarity to the Pill, some health care providers do not cover the patch.

Injection

Injection (Depo-Provera) is a hormonal birth control method that contains a progestin and is administered by a needle in the muscle of the arm or buttocks every 12 to 13 weeks.

Cost: About \$60 a shot (not including doctor's costs)

Pros: It is 99.7 per cent effective in preventing pregnancy and you only have to think about it four times a year. This is an advantage for those who find daily or even weekly birth control a problem. In about half of the women who use it, it prevents periods altogether which could be an advantage for women who have extremely painful periods.

Cons: The injections have been proven to weaken women's bones while they are using them and are therefore often only recommended to women who cannot use another form of contraception (especially in the case of young women). Women must also return to their doctor every 12 to 13 weeks to have the shot re-administered. The user may also experience weight gain, headaches, irregular bleeding, or mood changes. Not recommended for those with a pathological fear of needles, like yours truly.

The Ring

Don't worry. This ring prevents creepy children from following you around everywhere. The vaginal ring (NuvaRing) is a new resource. It is a soft, flexible, clear plastic ring that is inserted into a woman's vagina, where it slowly releases hormones to prevent ovulation. Each ring lasts three weeks.

Cost: \$30 to \$35 per ring

Pros: Women cannot usually feel the ring once it is inside and you can insert and remove it yourself—which I'm told is relatively easy to do. The ring is at least as effective as the Pill or patch and has the added bonus of only having to be replaced once a month. It has the same benefits as the Pill and patch making some women's periods lighter, more regular, or more bearable, but is not found to cause weight gain and has not been found to increase the rate of vaginal infections.

Cons: Like the Pill and patch, some women experience breast tenderness, headaches, etc... Unique to the ring, however, is the possibility of vaginal irritation, discomfort or vaginal discharge. As it's a method that involves the alteration of a woman's hormones, the Ring has the same risks for older women and smokers as the Pill and Patch.

IUD

An IUD is a small, T-shaped device with a copper wire that is inserted into the uterus. The copper wire changes the chemistry in the uterus and destroys sperm.

Cost: \$60 to \$100 (not including doctor's costs)

Pros: The IUD provides five years of sweet, baby-free contraception and is 99 per cent effective. It contains no artificial hormones, so it poses no threat to nursing mothers or women who might have problems with hormonal contraception.

Cons: Common complications associated with the IUD are irregular bleeding, perforations (small holes) in the uterus wall, infection, or expulsion (the IUD falls out). Because of the perforations many doctors will only recommend an IUD to a woman who is in a stable monogamous relationship as the risk of contracting an STI can increase. There is also an increased risk of pelvic infection or ovarian cysts just after the insertion of the IUD. As an added bonus, this puppy hurts like a motherfucker going in (especially for women who haven't had a child yet) and is prohibitively expensive for some.

Male condom

We've all seen 'em. We've all used 'em. Your sex ed teacher probably had you roll one onto a banana at some point. Made from latex or a latex alternative, a condom creates a physical barrier that prevents sperm from entering the vagina.

Cost: a box of condoms can cost anywhere from the low tens and up (the sky's the limit). Many places give them away for free.

Pros: Not only do condoms have a 97 per cent rate of effectiveness, they also protect against most STIs when used properly (something that all other methods of birth control do NOT do). They're portable, easy to find, and affordable. Some are even flavoured!

Cons: Some guys complain about a lack of sensitivity and there's a wide margin for human error. Condoms can slip off during sex or even break. And damn that foil wrapper!

Female Condom

This attractive polyurethane sheath is shaped like a round, upside-down baggie and is inserted into the vagina before sex. The baggie holds in the sperm, preventing it from entering the vagina.

Cost: Where a male condom can cost about \$1 each, a female condom will probably run you about \$2.50.

Pros: It's a contraceptive controlled by women that protects them against STIs!

Cons: They're not as accessible as male condoms and more expensive. On top of that, the failure rate for female condoms is higher than male condoms (about five per cent). Some women might also have problems inserting them and there's the possibility of a rustling sound during sex.

The B-squad

Diaphragm or Cervical Cap

If a condom is a barrier, we'll call these barricades. A diaphragm is a latex cap that covers the cervix and prevents sperm from entering. A cervical cap fits over the cervix and prevents sperm from entering the uterus. Both are made to be used in conjunction with spermicide.

Cost: \$30 to \$100 (not including doctor's fees)

Pros: Women can insert it before sex. Also, it's good for two years.

Cons: The failure rate for a diaphragm, even if used perfectly, is four to eight per cent, and when human error is factored in, can be much higher. The failure rate for a cervical cap in women who have never had a child is about nine per cent, but for women who have given birth, it's a whopping 26 per cent. And that's when it's used perfectly. For the average user, the failure rate is about 20 per cent, 40 per cent for women who have given birth before. Cervical caps cannot be used by women with abnormally shaped cervixes and can also fall out of place during sex. Some women find these difficult to insert and effectiveness is lost if they're not put in properly or not fitted properly to begin with. Some women might also develop urinary tract infections.

Hall of Shame

(Yes, some people believe that these work)

Withdrawal

Also known as pulling out, this 'method' consists of pulling out of the vagina during intercourse before the man cums.

Pros: I guess it's better than nothing... maybe?

Cons: Oh, where to begin... First off, withdrawal isn't really effective because the pre-cum that comes out when your little friend starts getting excited contains sperm, and it only takes one, so it doesn't really matter that you didn't blow your load, friend. If you really feel like playing Russian baby-roulette, enjoy your Baby-Bjorn. This method requires a great deal of self-control, practice, and timing. It has a failure rate of about one-in-five, and also does nothing to protect against STIs.

Saran Wrap or Balloons

Just because it could kind of look like a condom, doesn't mean it'll work like one.

Pros: The emergency medical staff will have a laugh while they try to pull the balloon off your painfully strangled penis.

Cons: Saran Wrap and balloons will not prevent pregnancy or STIs, so you've just wasted... I don't know how many dollars and ruined a perfectly good balloon. Don't put that balloon on your penis, give that balloon to a needy child and go buy a condom.

Standing up while having sex/Jumping up and down

These aren't methods, it's just sad. Standing up or jumping up and down do NOTHING to prevent pregnancy, not to mention STIs.

Pros: Sex standing up is pretty hot and fun. And I suppose jumping up and down is good for your calves...

Cons: The nine months you'll spend bearing your life-long burden, and the lifetime you'll spend raising it.

Failure rates for birth control methods when used correctly

(Number of pregnancies per 100 women per year)

Male condom alone 11

Female condom alone 21

Diaphragm with spermicide 17

Cervical cap with spermicide 17-23

Sponge with spermicide 14-28

Spermicide alone 20-50

Oral contraceptives 1-2

Contraceptive patch 1-2

Vaginal contraceptive ring 1-2

Hormone shots less than 1

Hormone shots less than 1

IUD less than 1

Periodic abstinence 20

Surgical sterilization (female) less than 1

Surgical sterilization (male) less than 1

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration Birth Control Guide

Mint condition

Montreal-based band The Mints are bringing back the love song



The Mints are (from left) Thom Gillies and John Batt. GRAPHIC MADELINE COLEMAN

• MADELINE COLEMAN

“I’m in love and it’s wonderful? Does that sell?” laughs John Batt, the guitar-strumming half of pop duo The Mints.

He and drummer Thom Gillies are pondering what it means to write a love song in a time when detachment is king. Forget laptops, forget irony—The Mints just want to write catchy tunes about love.

“Irony isn’t beautiful,” says Batt. In a world where everyone and their teenage brother rejects traditional harmonies in favour of undiluted noise, he says, “it’s actually relatively avant-garde to pick up instruments and write songs about girls.”

Both band members admit to having a “shared fascination” with the ladies. A fixation that has been, well, a little too shared in the past; the two friends, who played in

bands together during high school in New Brunswick, actually stopped talking to each other for three years after a falling out over a girl.

The feud continued from afar when Batt moved to Montreal to attend Concordia. It wasn’t until the pair swallowed their pride and shook hands during one of Gillies’ visits to the city that they (finally) made amends.

So, Gillies moved here six months ago knowing they would eventually start playing music again, and The Mints were born.

To hear them tell it, the duo’s reconciliation could not have come at a better time. While Gillies professes a love for minimal electronic music (“there’s a time and place for that kind of thing,”) Batt says his own move to Montreal actually turned him off of making it.

Surrounded by newfound friends with a penchant for laptop melodies, Batt says he felt “disillusioned” by the impersonal approach and wasn’t feeling inspired to write until he and Gillies started playing together again.

Listening to songs like “Upright Pretty Dame,” it’s obvious that The Mints are all about celebrating everything touchy-feely—as long as that doesn’t include laptop keyboards.

The band’s vocals may be reminiscent of Wolf Parade’s Dan Boeckner, who they admire, but Gillies and Batt take their inspiration from a much more senior crooner.

“We don’t mind that kind of coy cheesiness that guys like Morrissey nail,” says Batt.

The Mints aren’t the only ones in

Montreal wearing their hearts on their sleeves. They cite Edmonton transplant Sean Savage as someone whose heartfelt songs they really dig. They also shared high praise for Matt Perri, with whom they’ll be playing at Le Cagibi next Wednesday.

“Alternative is far more fashionable and marketable than pop is,” admits Batt, but he and Gillies are only doing what feels natural.

Honesty, after all, is what they aim for. “If there’s a thesis [to our music], that would be it.”

The Mints play with Matt Perri at Le Cagibi, 5490 Blvd. St-Laurent 8:00 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 10. Before then, check them out at myspace.com/lesmints and myspace.com/mattperri

The D.I.Y. Provider

Montreal’s own The World Provider releases third album

• JAMES LYNCH

From a man whose ideal music video features him making love to a giant dragon, it’s no surprise that musician Malcolm Fraser has enough imagination to realize his pop ambitions.

Under The World Provider moniker, he just released his third album entitled *Hard Feelings*, an oeuvre that combines Devo’s electro pop sensibilities with a lo-fi gloss, ready to appeal to the indie rock loving elite.

“My vision with this album was the pursuit of pop perfection through my own lens,” says Fraser, explaining the message he wanted to convey with the new album.

“I have a pretty direct approach to artistic vision, so I leave the end analysis to the critics.” But critics and fans have a surprise in store if they think they’ll find his new CD in stores.

There’s no physical version of the album available yet, only a \$10 *Hard Feelings* zine including puzzles, jokes, drawings, lyrics

and a code for downloading the album online.

“I think people have to think outside of the box when releasing albums these days, because people aren’t buying CDs so much anymore [...] that’s how I came up with the idea of the book.”

Since its debut in 1999, Fraser has remained true to himself with his musical creations. He may have never had a hit on the radio, but in true D.I.Y spirit he’s released over 40 songs over a span of eight years.

“You need to be original when

making music, you can get into the business to make money, but I don’t think that way. I think it’s for glory,” he said.

Speaking of glory, Fraser has grandiose aspirations for an ultimate The World Provider concert. “I had a dream not long ago that I saw a band play that had a forest on stage, with waterfalls, little animals and I thought it would be something I would like to realize.

“I think somebody like Tom Waits is kind of an ideal to look up to, his shows are very theatrical, he uses sets, props and light-

ing but also has great musicians, music and people appreciate it.”

Despite the lack of funds to realize such a reverie, Fraser gives a pretty solid stage performance, like that of last Friday’s album launch at Club Lambi. With cute melodies and silly prose, The World Provider had even the hipsters shaking their booty, usually too wedged in their skinny jeans.

The World Provider’s album, *Hard Feelings* is available at theworldprovider.net

What's going on

Events listing
for December

Art galleries

Aleesa Cohene — *Something Better*
Now until Dec. 14
262, Fairmount W.
514-842-9686

Titanic: L'exposition

Now until Dec. 31
705, Saint Catherine Street W.
514-524-6645

Allyson Mitchell

Now until Dec. 14
4296, Saint Laurent
514-871-0268

Comedy

James Bond Improv Tribute
Spotopussy: The latest James Bond interactive improv adventure by ON THE SPOT.
Dec. 2, 8:30 p.m.
Comedyworks, 1238 Bishop Street
Tickets \$7, \$5 for students

Music

Commodity Meat!
Rock/garage/soul etc.
Mondays, 10 p.m.
Blue Dog, 3958, St-Laurent
Free

Skinwell CD Launch
with Sleep Research Facility + Visions
Dec. 5, 8 p.m.
Katakombes, 1222 Saint Laurent
\$10

Beat Me Up Thursdays
This Thursday: DJ Mary Hell and guests.
Weekly, 10 p.m.
Saphir, 3699a Saint Laurent
Tickets \$5

Intensive Care
with Katie Loves Pain
Dec. 5, 9 p.m.
Barfly, 4062a, Saint Laurent

Crystal Stilts
Dec. 10, 8 p.m.
La Sala Rossa, 4848 Saint Laurent
\$15

Theatre

Mary Poppins
Now until Dec. 14
3975, Notre-Dame Street W.
514-483-5526

Lortie

Now until Dec. 6, 8 p.m.
Espace Libre, 1945, Fullum Street
514-521-4191

All My Sons

Dec. 9 to Dec. 13, 8 p.m.
Monument-National, Ludger-Duvernay
Theatre
1182 Saint Laurent
Tickets- 514 871-2224

—compiled by Johnny North

Language of brutality

Death metal band The Black Dahlia Murder overcomes rumours of a breakup

• JOHNNY NORTH

"It's kind of a view of human nature," said Trevor Strnad, vocalist of The Black Dahlia Murder when asked about the inspiration behind their lyrics of horror, corpse brides and betrayal.

"Sometimes I wonder if you could really touch another person, or if we're so selfish in our ways. I see a lot of ugliness in humanity."

Founded by Strnad and songwriter/guitarist Brian Eschbach in 2000, in Detroit Michigan, BDM also features bassist Bart Williams and drummer Shannon Lucas.

"[We were] just kids that wanted to play in a band," Strnad says. "We want to write music that we want to hear. It wasn't necessarily influenced by any band locally. We pretty much imported our sound from Europe."

Their first EP, *What a Horrible Night to Have a Curse*, was inspired by *Castlevania II: Simon's Quest*: "That game used to scare the shit out of me when I was a kid," Strnad admits.

"I was thinking what would it be like to live there, to go into the environment where Dracula has a curse over the land and people are being distorted by Dracula's evil magic."

But it hasn't been all fun and games. Until they joined Metal Blade Records, BDM struggled with making it in the metal scene, having no label and no means to tour.

"We didn't have a big record out, we didn't have any money," Strnad says. "We couldn't afford a van or anything. We were kinda stuck at that time, but we had desire to go out and tour."

"That is a world away now. Since Metal Blade, it's like being in a whole new band. Going out and making records and being a professional metal band. It's been a really cool experience."

BDM's albums, *Unhallowed* and *Miasma*, may have gained them notoriety but that did-



These days, The Black Dahlia Murder have a lot more on their minds than video games.

n't stop fans from talking of a possible breakup.

"Dramatic stuff has gone down with members changing, particularly with Zach Gibson," says Strnad. "Since then, seems to be always someone somewhere talking shit about us, online or wherever. In one respect, it's cool that our name is always in somebody's mouth. As long as they're talking about us."

Strnad found this did not take away from the band's music or ability to perform last year's release *Nocturnal*.

"We pretty much maintained one sound throughout all the albums. I think our ene-

mies or naysayers are fuel for wanting to push it even further," he said. "It's like, 'Oh you don't like me, well I'm going to be up your ass now!' Every time we go back to do another album, we're pushing the limit of our material."

Currently, BDM is working on a new release for 2009. With three and half songs already complete, Strnad is excited for "one of the best songs we've ever had."

BDM will perform with Soilent Green, Misery Index and Shades of Dusk on Dec. 17 at 7 p.m. at Le National, 1220 St. Catherine Street E. For ticket information call 514-845-2014.

spins

Various Artists *We Wish you a Metal Xmas and a Headbanging New Year*

Armoury Records

The names Alice Cooper, Lemmy Kilmister, Dave Grohl, Steve Morse and those of other notable metalheads gives the impression that this 12-track compilation is going to be a tremendous headbanging Christmas experience, but fails to deliver.

While it's cool to hear Motörhead's Kilmister blast out "Run Rudolph Run" (the songs keep their original lyrics, for the most part); it's the combination of Chris Wyse, Chuck Billy, Scott Ian, Jon Donais and John Tempesta on "Silent Night" that stands apart with solid guitar solos and powerful growls.

The mixture of thrash, rock and one death metal song shows why metal songs usually

sound the same; less intense riffs and weak solos are a slap in the face.

Though Cooper is entertaining and creepy, the majority of the album lacks the passion he was known for pulling off, proving that watered-down metal music produced for commercial benefit isn't worth it, no matter what the season.

2/5

—Johnny North

The Killers *Day & Age*

Island Records

After a two-year hiatus, not counting last year's b-sides *Sawdust*, The Killers are back and better than ever. With *Day & Age* the band has taken their signature extravagance, and innovative sound to a new level by opting to use saxophones, harpsichords, and even steel drums.

With "Joy Ride" that's exactly what the band takes you on, treating the listener to a ridicu-

lously catchy, upbeat and surprisingly Copacabana-reminiscent tune. While "Neon Tiger" offers what seems to be a fitting analogy for the band's music; "I don't want to be kept, I don't want to be caged."

Flowers' vocals have always been filled with passion, but this time around they'll melt your heart. Especially on the closing track, "Goodnight, Travel Well" a surprisingly emotional tribute to Killers guitarist Dave Keuning's recently deceased mother.

American critics may disagree and claim The Killers' magic is over but, I'm going to have to side with Europe on this one—the fabulous foursome is at the top of their game.

4.5/5

—Barbara Pavone

Crystal Stilts *Alight of Night*

eMusic Select/WOODSIST



If any sound makes its way out of Brooklyn this year, it should be this one: moody-sound-

ing, doors-reminiscent garage-pop. The kind of sound that makes me want to simultaneously skinny dip and fall asleep—which isn't to imply it's coma-inducing. In fact, it's pretty upbeat and if it weren't so grey and cold outside I'd lace up my high-tops, throw my sunglasses on and skateboard to the beach. Founded in New York in 2003 by Brad Hargett and JB Townshed, the Crystal Stilts have a sound that pays homage to a time of drugs, pop art, and a scene all-too familiar to New York. Lead singer Hargett is a tribute to both Lou Reed and Joy Division's Ian Curtis with his ridiculously self-indulgent laments.

No matter how you put it, the Crystal Stilts have something original. Their indiscernible lyrics, and brooding surf sound combine flawlessly with the laid-back sound so signature to The Doors. Add in a little tambourine and we've got ourselves an album. Check out cool tracks like "The sinkKing," "Crystal Stilts," and "Shattered Shine."

4/5

—Joelle Lemieux

Con U alum takes a bite of the Big Apple



Pol Turgeon's work entitled *Aries*. GRAPHIC POL TURGEON

Artist Pol Turgeon, gets ready for his retrospective show in New York

• BARBARA PAVONE

How does one decide to become an artist? If you're Pol Turgeon it's because you're dyslexic, at least according to him.

"I was poor at writing and reading so I went for visual expression [...] I read a lot of cartoons well, looked at a lot of cartoons because I wasn't good at reading," he recalls. He laughs, a "dangerously infective" laugh that can only be signature to a genius or a madman.

From an early age Turgeon "couldn't picture [himself] doing anything else." He attended Concordia as a Graphic Design student and, after some experimentation, found himself in the world of commissioned illustrations.

Since then, he has garnered a variety of clients across North America and Europe thanks to his images, which are simultaneously bizarre and beautiful, not unlike his signature laugh.

Nowadays his commission illustrations still flow, but he also produces personal work. Although he

"can't picture doing one without the other," he admits there are pros and cons to both.

You can "reach many people through print media [whereas] exhibits are more limited," he begins. But, with "personal work there's no one over your shoulder, no censorship [...] you can go all the way."

After three decades in the business he continues to produce refreshing and magical works of art. Inspiration comes from "sex, drugs and rock and roll," he jokes dryly.

In reality "for illustrations [you] read the story or read about the subject," and then it's all about sitting and drawing. "Something comes out and it's never good," he jokes, and then you go from there.

Other times he explains he'll "lie down on the bed to get to the subconscious. [I] shut down the rational mind; it's the best way [to get] more interesting ideas that go further."

Throughout his lengthy career Turgeon has experienced "great

moments and [moments] of doubt. It's a roller coaster but that's what makes it fun."

This month he'll be experiencing one of his best, and surely most rewarding moments, with his first retrospective show opening Dec. 4 at the Museum of American Illustration in New York.

Entitled, "Threshold of the Eye" it describes "what happens at exhibitions. [You're] on the threshold of the artist's mind."

The exhibit will feature illustrations, of course, but also "3-D objects, toy prototypes and decorative boxes," because as an artist, "there's no end to what you can do."

At the end of our interview Turgeon reveals that he used to work at *The Link* "28 years ago [...] I had the night shift," he jokes, and for one last time I am treated to his infectious laugh.

The retrospective will run until Jan. 4 at the Museum of American Illustration at the Society of Illustrators in New York. If you're in the area over the holidays, GO!

"The Night Starts Here"

Indie band Stars talk retrospectively about life in the limelight

• JOELLE LEMIEUX

"I don't think we've ever been 'hot.'"

Really?

"Maybe it happened and we didn't know about it," suggested Chris Seligman, keyboardist and co-founding member of Montreal-based band Stars.

"Maybe it was *Set Yourself on Fire*," he continues, naming the band's 2004 critically-acclaimed album.

Whatever it was, Stars are indie legends, proving they've still got it with this year's *Sad Robots* EP.

"I think we wanted to touch on our roots a bit more; the thing that was the initial birth of the band. Get back into that," he explained. "We also wanted to do it quickly. We wanted to be unprepared for it, in a way."

They also didn't want to release their album on a label: "That was another thing we wanted to experiment with. Releasing it on our own and seeing what that entailed."

Apparently, it was a little more than they could handle, "I think we maybe wanted to sell a few more copies online. That kind of showed us all the things that go into selling records."

But that didn't mean it didn't "work out well."

After all, Stars have come a long way. "I think we've been together almost nine, 10 years. [...] Our first show was on Crescent Street, in front of a hundred people."

With eight albums under their belts, what's next? Indie won't always be so popular, and Britney's rumored to be on the mend; are Stars worried about getting old?

He laughs, "We are too old."

But that's ok because Stars seem to have a built-in fan base. "We seem to be the band that's not trendy," says Seligman.

"We seem to be the band that's not trendy."

—Chris Seligman,
keyboardist,
co-founder of Stars

Reluctantly, I'd like to agree. But it's not for lack of talent. "There's an obvious movement in music which is about making a shit load of money," he agrees. "Selling something that kind of seems perfect."

Are Stars the indie combatants of this image of perfect pop?

Seligman is thoughtful, "I don't think we necessarily think about that."

"At the end of the day we want to write music that inspires us. There are obvious pop influences to our music; things that are catchy, you know."

"I don't want to say we're serious people, but I think we want to get beyond the surface level of things. We like the stuff that lies below, that's where we're inhabiting."

And Seligman would know, as he's been there from the beginning, having formed the band with Torquil Campbell. He describes his role as being "like the ears of the band."

He clarified, "I'd hope that the good thing about the band is that we all bring a certain character to [it]."

Seligman's job is "being there when all the chaos is over, sitting there and kind of going: this works a bit, this could come out. Actually really turn it into a painting, a piece of art."

An artwork like their show last Friday at Metropolis, where Campbell and Amy Millan sparkled as a duo, and all the Stars shone brightly.

"It's like a flower that grows," said Seligman. "You know, and that's why I keep doing it. If you start stagnating, it's a little bit depressing. Hopefully it keeps growing."

Fingers crossed!

To another winning season

Concordia Stingers baseball team come together for annual team banquet



Concordia's men's baseball team came just shy of going back to Nationals for a second year in a row. PHOTOS ION ETXEBARRIA

• JOHNNY NORTH

Howard Schwartz got his yearly revenge on the Concordia Stingers baseball squad by defeating them in games of squash before coaches, players, and Concordia recreation staff toasted their season at the Atwater Club last Friday.

"Old man," "be careful not to hurt yourself," and "can I get you a chair?" were some of the lines that head coach Schwartz remembered as he enjoyed his victory over the loudmouths.

"I love it when the rookies' eyes widen thinking about the pain they are going to inflict upon me," he said. "I line them

up in a row and take them on one at a time until they are bringing up their lunch from all the running I cause them to do chasing the ball on the court. I call it 'PBP'—pre-banquet payback."

While the Atwater Club staff complained of the team's lateness for their dinner, the atmosphere soon became filled with loud discussions of a season that saw the Stingers end with 8-7, coming up a little short in the final game of the provincial championship in October, and how painful it was to hear Jose Theodore had shut out his former team that night.

Before the awards for Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable

Player were presented, Schwartz and Con U Recreation and Athletics Director Katie Sheahan got the team organized in their upcoming endeavour to help the poor. This Saturday, the Stingers will be taking part of NDG Food Depot starting at 9:30 a.m. in front of the Loyola high school.

"I can promise you that while a number of [other Stingers] teams have gotten involved on a number of different levels, by participating in this drive you will completely outclass everybody else with this effort," said Sheahan to the ball club, whose efforts will help the poor for at least three to four months.

Schwartz told the team how

proud he was of them all, regardless of not making to nationals this year.

"We didn't do that well on paper this year, but last year we had a couple of horses we kinda rode on. We had a couple of guys on the mound we knew no one was going to score on. This year, even though we didn't go as far, we were just one game short, one pitcher short for that matter.

"In many ways I find this season was a lot more meaningful one as a coach, for staff, and I think for players as well. We really worked our butts off. We had to pitch our guts out to win those games. This was much more of a team effort than last year."

Schwartz then announced the award winners for the year. Rookie utility player Edward Evans took home co-Rookie of the Year honours along with pitcher Emmanuel Hamel-Carey. Hamel-Carey also won the MVP award for his stellar pitching that put him among the league leaders in all aspects, including his batting average.

"I'd like to thank God, my mom, my dad [...] no, seriously, what helped got me here is the guys I knew and wanted to play with [...] This year was an amazing experience, next year we're going all the way," said Hamel-Carey during his acceptance speech.

scoreboard

	Home	Away	Record
Men's Basketball	Concordia 102 Bishop's 51	Bishop's 61 Concordia 59	4-2-0
Men's hockey	RMC 7 Queen's 0	Concordia 6 Concordia 2	8-7-0
Women's Basketball	Concordia 59 Bishop's 85	Bishop's 84 Concordia 55	1-5-0
Women's Hockey	Carleton 0	Concordia 2	2-7-0

schedule

	Who	When
Men's hockey	vs. UQIT vs. Queen's	Friday, Jan.9, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan.10, 2 p.m
Women's Basketball	Concordia/Reebok tournament	Sunday, Dec.28, TBA
Women's Hockey	Theresa Humes Tournament	Friday, Jan.2, TBA
Men's Basketball	Surf and Slam Tournament	Sunday, Dec.28, TBA

Stingers shut out competition

Two weeks and three shutouts for the men's hockey team

• JOHNNY NORTH

Concordia 6 RMC 7

Despite falling behind twice to the Royal Military College of Canada Paladins, the Concordia Stingers men's hockey team's powerplay helped them almost escape defeat in a 7-6 shootout last Friday in Kingston, Ontario.

Stingers defender Jesse Goodsell tied up the game at 1-1 with a powerplay goal a little over eight minutes into the first period. Marc-Andre Element and Brad Gager assisted on the goal. Con U was down 4-1 until another Stingers defenceman Eric Begin scored a goal assisted by Mike Basyk to bring Con U within two.

Con U rookie rearguard Lyle Van Wieren came back with another goal almost two minutes later. Gager assisted on the goal making it a 4-3 game. RMC came back to make it 5-3, but Concordia scored two goals late in the game to tie it up at five.

RMC scored early in the third period, but Goodsell once again scored on the powerplay with under two minutes left in the game to send it into overtime and an

eventual shootout.

Both teams recorded 43 shots each. Stingers backup Sheldon Baerg started in nets but was pulled in the second period.

Concordia 2 Queen's 0

Concordia's second straight game in Kingston saw them record two points as they defeated the Queen's Golden Gaels 2-0 victory at the Kingston Memorial Centre last Saturday.

Stingers goalie Maxime Joyal recorded his fourth shutout of the season making 27 saves. Stingers right-winger Nicolas D'Aoust scored the first goal of the game on the powerplay with just over three minutes gone in the first period. Goodsell and Begin assisted on the goal.

In the third period, centre Simon-Pierre Sauve got the insurance marker. Goodsell and Renaud Des Alliers assisted on the goal.

The Stingers are off for the holiday season, but are back in the action starting on Jan. 9 with a home game at Ed Meagher Arena against the UOIT Ridgebacks.



Stingers defender Justin Ciampini gets ready to jump on the ice. PHOTO JOEY TANNY

Doyon-Lessard bounces back

Women's hockey shuts down Ravens for second win of the season

• JOHNNY NORTH

Concordia 2 Carleton 0

Following a brutal 16-1 loss to the McGill Martlets and three spirit-boosting exhibitions games, the Concordia Stingers women's hockey team continued to show improvement following a 2-0 victory over the Carleton Ravens last Sunday in Ottawa.

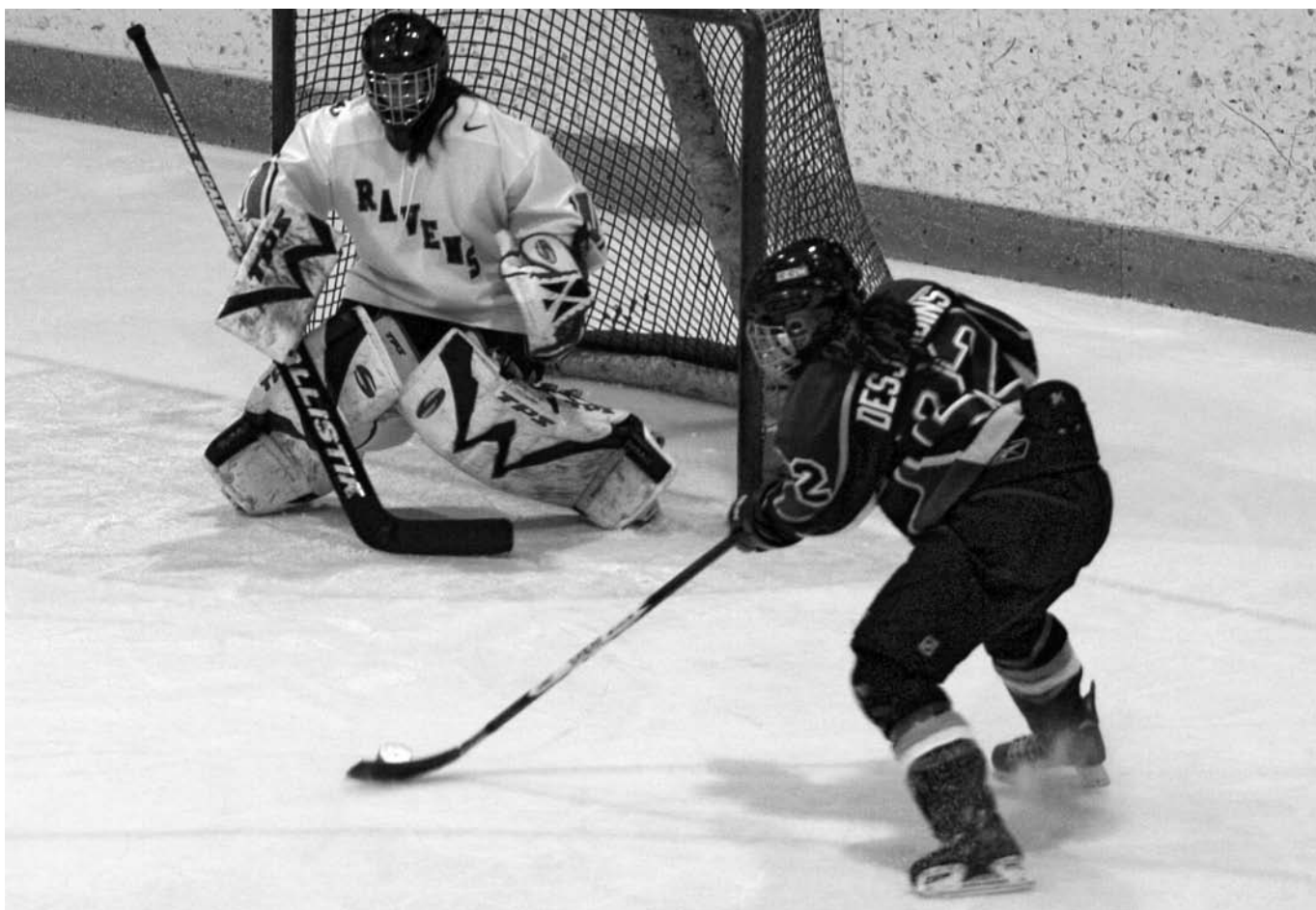
Stingers starting goalie Audrey Doyon-Lessard backstopped the Stingers to their second victory of the season (2-7-0-0). Doyon-Lessard made 24 saves, with the majority of her shots coming in the first period.

Mary Jane O'Shea, a fourth-year Stingers forward, buried home the first goal a little under four minutes into the game. Stingers captain Esther Latoures and Catherine Desjardins got assists on the play.

Second-year Stingers forward Catherine Rancourt got the second goal of the game halfway through the third period. Stingers forward Donna Ringrose chipped in with an assist on the play.

Although Con U went to the penalty box five times their penalty killing did not allow Carleton to get back in the game.

The Stingers are off for the holiday season, but are back in the action starting on Jan. 2 when they host their annual Theresa Humes Tournament. The Stingers' tournament is named after a former Concordia Director of Women's Athletics from 1976 to 1984.



Stingers defender Catherine Desjardins prepares to unleash shot. PHOTO ION ETXEBARRIA

Con U's heavy hitter

Stingers' all-star Corey Greenwood explains his football passion and his frustration with the Laval Rouge et Or

• JENNIFER AOUD

Being named outstanding defensive player is no walk in the park—it takes hard work, dedication, and one heck of a hard hitter; and when it comes to Con U's defence, nobody hits like Cory Greenwood.

"I just like hitting people and I'm not even a violent guy," said the third-year Stingers linebacker. "When I get on the field, it's that gladiator mentality."

That very mentality got Greenwood named to the all-star team two years in a row, and made him one of the top four defenders in the Quebec conference, alongside McGill's Anthony Lukca, Bishop's James Yurichuk and UdeM's Josh Gesse.

All-around athlete

Cory got his start in Kingston, Ontario, as early as grade school, and he admitted that, even then, he was no stranger to competition. "Recess was pretty competitive back then; my grade would play the grade older than me every recess for the whole year, and we would keep track of every win and loss."

Organized football wasn't yet on the agenda. Despite his exposure to football early on, his passion at the time was hockey. "I started playing hockey at the age of six and immediately fell in love with the sport," said Greenwood.

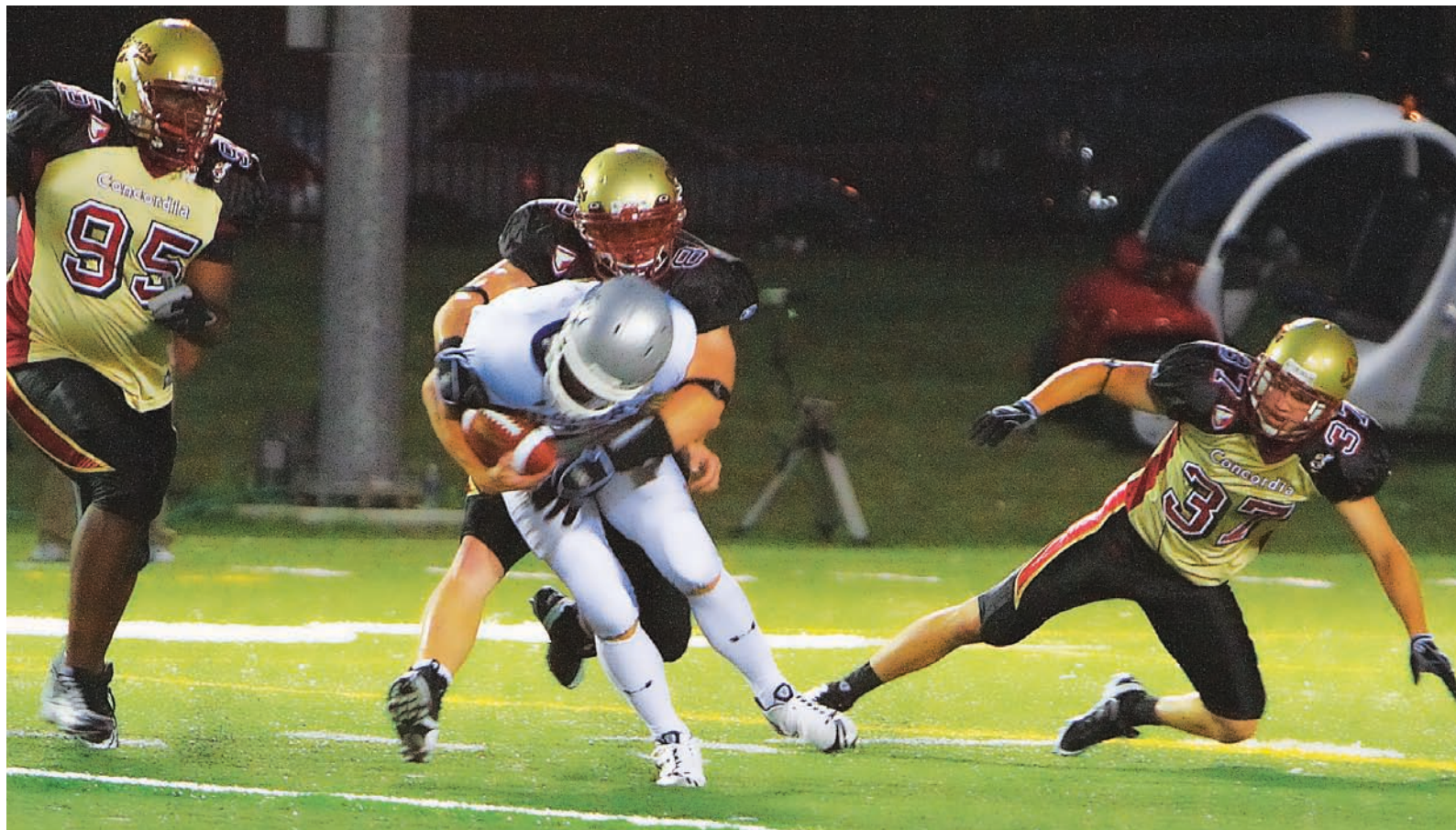
Once the AAA defender entered high school, his focus shifted to football. "After my first training camp, I realized this was the sport I should have been playing my whole life," said Greenwood.

"The position comes with a lot of responsibility; you're the quarterback of the defence as far as calling plays and recognizing formations. You can make an impact for your team on almost every play."

—Cory Greenwood,
Stingers linebacker

Playing both sports was not an option, so Greenwood made the decision to dedicate himself to football entirely.

"I think I liked how much preparation went into every season with all the training in the weight room and on field, running," admitted Greenwood. "It was the whole build-up until day one of training camp [...] just training to get your body in the best possible shape for the season."



Stingers linebacker Cory Greenwood (#8) does what he does best, with a solid open field tackle. PHOTO ION ETXEBARRIA

Upon graduation, Cory already had big plans. "I realized I had the potential to play at the university level, so the next step was to try and get recruited," he explains. His ultimate goal was to play in the U.S. through an NCAA Division I Scholarship, yet he kept an open mind towards Canadian Interuniversity Sport.

Plan B

The two following summers were dedicated to training and creating game films to submit to recruiters, not to mention studying for the SATs. With Connecticut, Buffalo and Illinois State all interested in Cory's abil-

ities, the only thing that remained was to secure the scholarship through the SATs. Unfortunately, Cory was 20 points short of achieving that goal, and was forced to opt for plan B. "It was an easy decision," he said. "Concordia was there, recruiting me from the start."

Donovan was, in Cory's eyes, one of the many perks of playing at Con U. "Quebec football has the reputation of being the best conference in the CIS, and if I wasn't able to play in the States, the next best thing is to play with and against the best players in Canada," declared Greenwood.

But once the Stingers' star middle linebacker completed his final year of eligibility, it was time for Greenwood to step in. "The Donovan brothers left big shoes to fill, but that's all part of the challenge that I took on," said Greenwood.

"The position comes with a lot of responsibility; you're the quarterback of the defence as far as calling plays and recognizing formations. You can make an impact for your team on almost every play."

With a cumulative 61 tackles this season, 50 of them solo tackles, five sacks and an interception, Greenwood's impact on the team is undeniable. Yet he remains humbled through the awards and nominations. "You can never be content with individual successes when your team fails to meet its goals set at the beginning of the year," said the team-first linebacker.

Earlier this year, Greenwood set his personal and team goal for the season: to win the conference final and go on to play for the Vanier Cup.

Unfortunately, the heartbreaking loss in the Dunsmore Cup against Laval hit him hard. "[It] was the toughest loss of my career [...] It's a horrible way to end your season when you know you had the momentum, and your opponent, right where you wanted them. I feel even worse for our seniors that had to go out in that fashion.

"But for the remaining players, it gives us a lot of motivation to work hard this off-season and be back at the Dunsmore Cup for the fourth straight season next November."

Life after football?

Because of the many years Greenwood has spent playing at a competitive level, he can't picture his life without sports.

"I've always lived a structured lifestyle surrounded around athletics," he said. "[Whether] it's hockey or football, always organizing my life around whatever sport was my focus at that time. Football was my ticket to pursue my education and earn a university degree."

Currently studying in the field of Human Environment, Greenwood says that football dominates his life. "During the season I really don't have much of a social life. We only have one day off a week from football and that's Sunday."

With meetings and practices every night, added to the many

hours dedicated to watching game film and weight lifting, he doesn't have much time to spare.

When he's not in football mode, he's busy studying and making sure he eats enough to keep his body fuelled all week long, but he says his parents are always there to help.

"I wouldn't be where I am today without their help and guidance. They've never missed a game played in Quebec in my three years playing for Concordia. Not to mention, on every trip up they bring my roommates and I food for the week, which makes life really easy with our busy schedules."

With only two years of eligibility remaining, Greenwood's goal for the future is to play professional football, and coach Gerry McGrath is helping him get there. Not only did McGrath introduce Greenwood to Doc Ping, a sports agent for both the CFL and the NFL, but he also sent the star linebacker to the East West Bowl last year, an all-star game for CIS players entering draft year. "I'm truly grateful for everything McGrath and his staff have done for me," said Greenwood.

All in all, Greenwood has a bright future ahead of him. Yet, through the wins and the losses, he reiterates a motto that keeps him constantly striving to achieve his goals; "stay humble, stay hungry."

“The Rock’s” comeback fuels Stingers

Evens Laroche returns, energizes Con U in key victory

• DIEGO PELAEZ GAETZ

**Concordia 102
Bishop’s 61**

The Concordia men’s basketball team sent a clear message of “we mean business” to the rest of the Quebec conference on Friday night at the Loyola sports complex, battering the Bishop’s Gaiters 102-61.

The Stingers wasted no time jumping all over their seemingly overmatched opposition, as they raced out to a 32-12 lead after the first quarter behind strong play from guards Damian and Dwayne Buckley.

The Stingers were clearly uplifted by the return of star recruit Evens Laroche, who hadn’t yet played in a regular season game. The versatile wing player brought a healthy dose of athleticism and energy to the Stingers, and showed why he was one of the most coveted recruits in Canada coming into the year.

“It was a bit emotional [coming back],” said Laroche. “I was angry, I really wanted to play. I exploded on the court today, I just played ball,

doing what I love. The Rock is back!”

His teammates saw immediately what Laroche brings to the floor. “Evens is huge,” said Damian. “He’s a rookie playing in a veteran’s body. He comes in, he hustles, and along with my brother [Dwayne], he’s one of the most versatile guys on our team.”

The Stingers didn’t get complacent with the lead, and continued to relentlessly hammer the visiting Gaiters.

“We played great team defence, and we hit some shots,” said Stingers coach John Dore. “This game is a stepping-stone.”

Gaiters forward Cameron Mowat tried to give the visitors some life heading into halftime with a three-pointer followed by a lay-up, but Stingers guard Decee Krah found forward James Clark with a great pass in transition to stop the run and give Con U a 54-27 lead heading into the half.

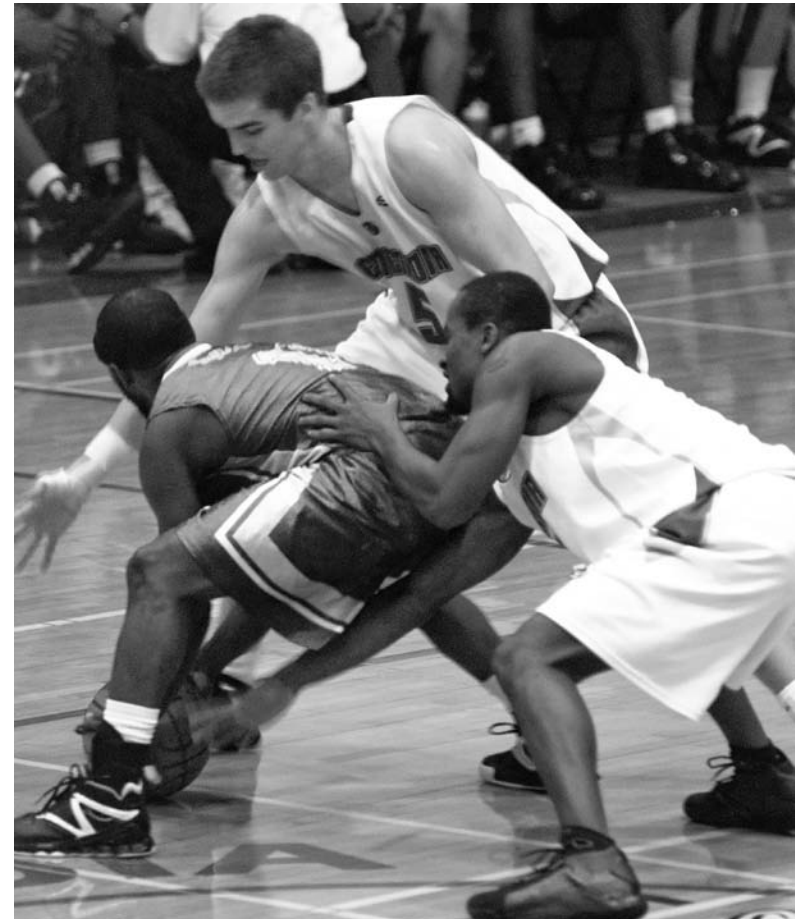
The second half was more of the same, as the Buckley brothers continued to terrorize the Gaiters’ backcourt. Damian showed his great

full-court defence, and continued to exploit his quickness advantage on the perimeter to get to the foul line. He finished with 14 points, five rebounds and eight assists.

The Stingers played their reserves for the fourth quarter with the game well out of reach, and they didn’t disappoint. Con U guard Hamza Ruhezamihigo always seemed to answer every Bishop’s run with another three pointer, as he knocked down five on the night to finish with 19 points. The Stingers as a team showed how many dangerous shooters they possess, hitting a whopping 13 three-pointers on the night.

Laroche provided some more entertainment for the home fans, as he once again showed off his elite athleticism with a staggering one-handed alley-oop that elicited a roar from the capacity crowd.

“We weren’t consistent early, but we’re starting to come together now,” said coach Dore. “We’ve had a lot of guys coming in and out of the lineup, and we’ve been trying to find our identity. This game is very important.”



Stingers forward James Clark (#5) goes for loose ball. PHOTO CAT TARRANTS

With the lineup taking shape, the potential of this year’s squad is starting to shine through. “This is the most talented team I’ve been on, but I’m not sure it’s the best,” said

Damian. “I was on a team with Pat Perrotte and my brother that went to nationals. This team has the potential to be just as good, if not better, than that team.”

Another step backwards

Women’s basketball squad can’t get consistent effort

• DIEGO PELAEZ GAETZ

**Concordia 59
Bishop’s 84**

An inconsistent performance ultimately doomed Concordia’s women’s basketball team in an 84-59 loss to the visiting Bishop’s Gaiters last Friday at Concordia’s Loyola Gym.

The Stingers came into the game missing leading scorer Krystle Douglas, who was on the bench in street clothes as she heals from a broken nose.

“She broke it against UQAM and the plastic surgeon said it should be repaired as soon as possible,” said Con U head coach Keith Pruden. “She shouldn’t be out long.”

The game was evenly matched in the opening quarter. The Stingers attacked the offensive glass, and Con U guard Felon Harris’ jump shot cut Bishop’s lead to 20-15 near the end of the opening frame.

However, the Stingers ended the

quarter on a sour note—the Stingers turned the ball over twice in a row, leading to two easy baskets for the Gaiters. The visitors held a 27-17 lead at the end of the first quarter.

The Stingers stormed out of the gate in the second quarter, using their quickness to fluster the Gaiters. Con U had a 10-0 run to start the quarter and tie the game at 27.

Con U’s offence fell entirely flat for the rest of the quarter and Bishop’s guard Melanie Ouellet-Godcharles got the Gaiters back on track with two consecutive baskets. Gaiters guard Sarah Back added an exclamation point with two long jump shots to end the half and give Bishop’s a 45-33 lead.

The second half started in a promising fashion for the home squad, as Con U managed to stay within striking distance for most of the third quarter. Forward Kristin Portwine’s lay-up brought the Stingers to within 10 points near the

end of the frame.

The Stingers finally let the game get out of hand in the final quarter. Gaiters forward Amanda Piribauer proved too much for the Con U frontcourt to handle, finishing the night with 20 points and 10 rebounds.

Stingers forward Kendra Carrie made things interesting midway through the final quarter, hitting two consecutive three-pointers to cut the lead to 15. However, Con U turned over the ball on consecutive possessions to halt their momentum, and they couldn’t recover, ultimately succumbing 84-59.

When asked how to limit turnovers, an incredulous coach Pruden responded, “ask the other team to wear more distinctive colours? It’s a sign of being flustered [...] we didn’t adhere to what we were trying to do on either end.”

Despite the lopsided final score, the Stingers showed flashes of being an elite team, but unfortunately



The Stingers were swarmed by Bishop’s defense all night. PHOTO CAT TARRANTS

they were just that: flashes.

“We played some good basketball, but only five minutes here or there,” said Pruden. “Bishop’s played very well, we were very soft.”

Looking to the future, Pruden had a serious conversation with his team about where they’re headed after a disappointing 1-3 start. “We had a conversation about who the grown-ups are,” said coach Pruden.

“We should be pissed off after today.”

While the loss dropped the Stingers near the cellar in the division, there is still hope for Con U. “We were in a similar situation last year, and we made a second half run to get into the playoffs,” said Pruden. “We need to make progress tomorrow, even if it’s just playing a little better.”

Something for everyone

Concordia student's answer to the corporate bookstore

• LOUISE BIRSELL BAUER

With over a 1,000 members, it is quite possibly the worst kept secret at Concordia. A short walk up Bishop from the Hall building and past the dumpsters is the Concordia Community Solidarity Co-op Bookstore.

If you've ever been in the co-op bookstore, chances are you've had a chance to discover one of the most valuable student initiatives at Concordia's downtown campus. From the Gandhi t-shirt to the racks of neatly-organized books of local poetry and information about global activism, the co-op bookstore prides itself on being "not Chapters."

While this may seem like a recipe for bashful media and dreamy socio-political prognostication, the variety of publications is appealing. The low—read: accessible—price of books is not only student-friendly, it recalls what reading should be.

A visit to the co-op is more than a bland corporate jaunt. Local writers are often around looking at how their books are selling, or recommending them to the unsuspecting. Poets fresh from *Expozine* may also be hanging around, looking to refresh in a space that represents Concordia's potential.

The co-op is more than an intellectual melting pot, it is also a space to serve student's needs. At the beginning of each semester, the co-op's expedient consignment service allows students to name a price for their used books, leave them at the co-op and come back to collect their money. This is a real working alternative to the 20 per cent "buy back" policy and long lines of Concordia Bookstore.

After six years of continuous service, the co-op put forward a petition on Nov.

28 calling for students' help. If all goes according to plan, students will vote for an extra nine cents per credit during a fee-levy campaign in mid-March, keeping one of Concordia's few student run and supported institutions running.

To be clear, signing the petition means that students consent to the co-op applying to the Concordia Student Union for a fee-levy referendum. By signing, you are making a strong statement about a student's right to vote on how and where their money is spent.

As a full-time student taking four courses, a fee-levy of 9 cents per credit works out to \$1.08 per semester—less than a cup of coffee. If you buy a single book over the course of the semester you will save much more than \$1.08.

In September, I bought a consigned textbook at the co-op for \$40.00—\$26.95 less than the Concordia Bookstore's price. That is only one textbook for one class in

one semester, but it is a practical sign of what we stand to win and what we could lose.

More than money or time, the consignment service has made selling textbooks—and by extension helping the environment—bearable. I've sold a variety of different textbooks at the co-op and I have bought Sociology textbooks. For a student, the fee-levy is a small investment with a big payoff, and the co-op bookstore is perpetually giving back.

Supporting a not-for-profit student initiative like the co-op is a worthwhile and gratifying experience. The co-op stands for something that we should encourage at Concordia: it strives to make education more accessible, provide a viable alternative to the big-box bookstore, endeavour to make environmentally friendly business decisions and offer students above minimum wage employment.

As a sign of success, professors are increasingly choosing to order course textbooks from co-op. Attesting to the

small student bookstore's increasingly important role in Concordia's culture.

Additionally, the co-op is always open to collaborating with student projects and writers—the space of the co-op has been a venue to many readings, workshops, and even impromptu dance parties.

While it is certainly not the ideal time to be soliciting students—all of us being buried in exams and papers—a five-minute study break to sign the petition will give you a fresh mind and a clear conscience.

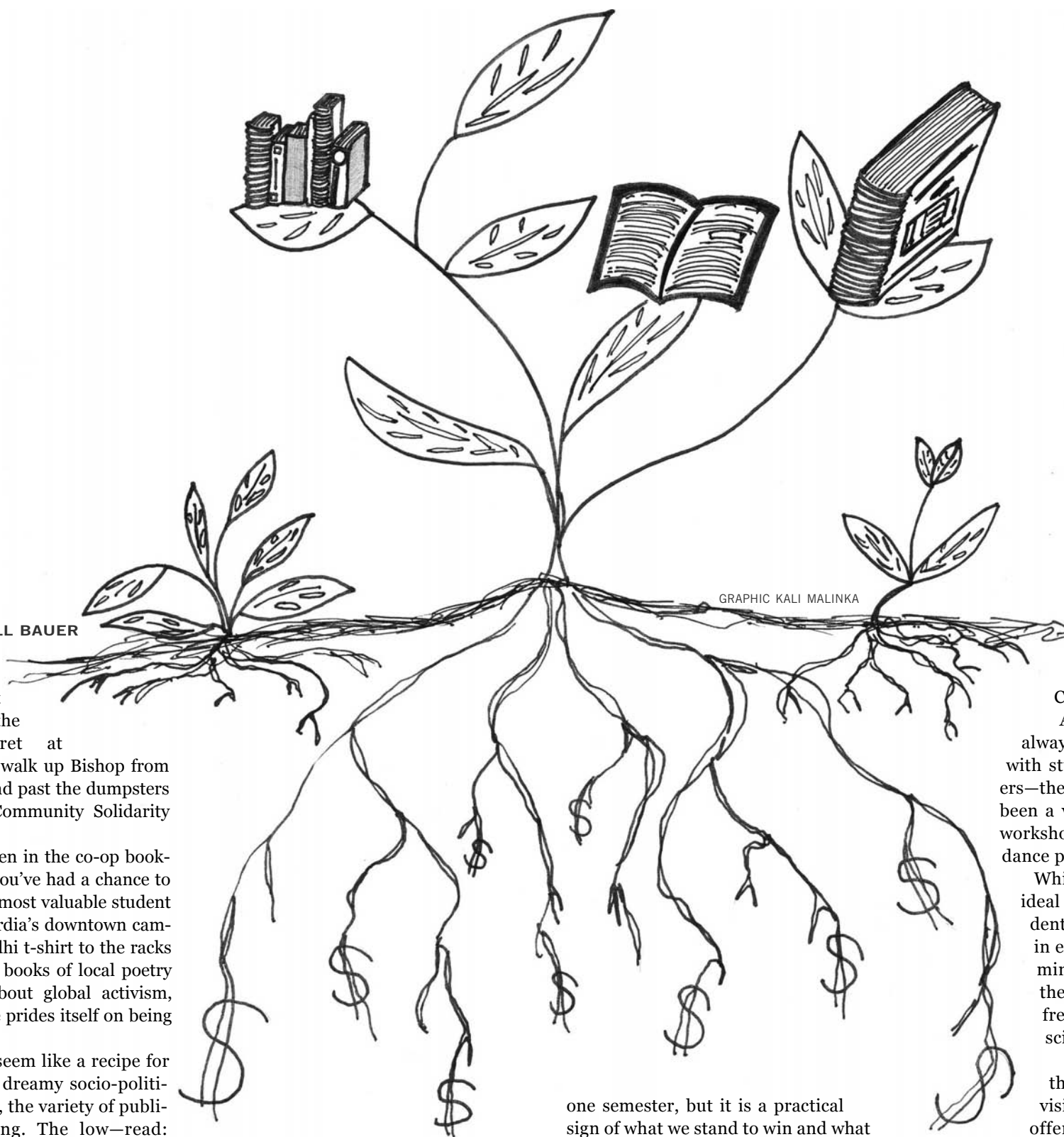
If you've never been to the co-op, stop in for a visit and consider what it offers: a local, low-priced,

wide selection of textbooks and books, a consignment service, and the value of supporting a community based co-operative. Think about perusing the co-op's well-tended walls for cheap fiction to read over the winter break with a cup of hot chocolate.

Stop by the co-op and ask Larissa, the co-op's unfalteringly effervescent manager, what you should be reading over the holidays, or for suggestions if you need a literary gift for that special someone—she may even give you advice on your love life.

The co-op does pride itself on having one of the widest selections on women's and sex studies books in the city.

Whether you are a laid back student, a budding writer or a potential volunteer, the co-op has something for you. Student-run is not a synonym for dirty or cheap, and the co-op is neither. It is a gem, in every sense of the word.



What ever happened to...?

The semester in review

• TERRINE FRIDAY

As the semester comes to a close and we all leave our beloved university behind for the holidays, there's no better time than now to reflect on the happenings within the three walls of Concordia. Where the fourth wall is kept down by independent observers.

Concordia Student Union

The student union has had their share of blunders and gaffes this semester, from broken bylaws, to conflicts of interests, to inappropriate remarks during formal meetings. Although it remains the job of the press to play the role of watchdog by being an acute observer, the student body has become increasingly engrossed in the politics of Concordia.

Of course most of us were expecting a bunch of power-hungry ninnies in student politics and incessant infighting for a measly piece of breadcrumb. But the surprise of the past few months has been how much more involved and informed council is this year.

Council ask questions, they're critical of their own job and each other, and they've somehow managed to repair as many of their own mistakes as can reasonably be justified in a short semester.

"My experience [with students] has been, 'Why would I go and vote? The student union doesn't listen to me anyways,'" said Fine Arts councillor Katherine Belanger. Council is waking up to the fact that the nit-picking isn't doing justice to larger student issues either stalled or forgotten: where are the gender-neutral washrooms? How will the Loyola Luncheon be sustained? Whatever happened to the Concordia Coffee Co-op card?

And we can't forget the council chair, Jessica Nudo. It's obvious when she applied for the position last summer, Nudo had good intentions at heart. This aside, Nudo had no idea what she was getting herself into as an outsider to Concordia University politics.

"There's a bunch of stuff in here that actually contradicts itself," Nudo said of Robert's Rules of Order. That's the hard part about being chair: you must be the voice of reason and make the tough decisions that the job requires.

The Dawson Student Union and the CSU will be faced with critical financial decisions in the coming months. Questions of fiscal impropriety have been raised, and in the next semester, those questions will hopefully be answered.

In 1997, Dave Smaller, VP external of the CSU, was given control of Eco-Cartier Peter-McGill and with it control of all environmental affairs between Dawson and McGill. This

fall, the CSU has contemplated the relevance of the Sustainability Action Fund and the legitimacy of Sustainable Concordia.

It seems as though the CSU has been doing a great job cleaning up their inherited mess, but what external initiatives are they taking? We're students, we're supposed to be dreaming big and making it happen.

When it comes to working with the city, we have gone from students thinking large and being independent to students working through the administration.

University Administration

Former Concordia President Claude Lajeunesse seemed more interested in his salary and toting Concordia swag than about the future of our institution. At the October Board of Governors' meeting, Lajeunesse's payout of \$1.3 million was made public—that's \$1.3 million, on top of his inflated salary, for just over two years of work.

After a year without leadership, Judith Woodsworth was officially installed last month as Concordia's president. Woodsworth's transparency and openness seems a step in the right direction for a school that is bogged down with a \$10 million deficit.

Although most student faculty associations remain wary of their relationship with the administration, Woodsworth insists that her main priority is reaching out to alumni, working with current students and getting media attention to get her word out.

University faculty

How is it possible that full-time faculty and Concordia experts are harder to get a hold of than an Uzbek mountain peasant? Are they not getting the support and the resources they need so that students may find professors in their offices...other than their required office hours, for perhaps a few more hours per week?

You know there's a problem when it's easier to contact administrators and full-time professors at McGill University for information and resources than in our own backyard.

The Concordia University Part-time Faculty Association reached an "agreement in principle," meaning the administration acknowledges the need for a new contract. After teaching for six years without a contract, it's long overdue.

After a semester of sanding down rough edges, it is time to move forward. The first few months of 2009 will offer students and Concordia the opportunity to move forward and work together.

It is time to prove that our campus is full of mindful, forward-thinking individuals. Let's keep that fourth wall down by being an astute audience of critical observers.

✉ Letters@thelink.concordia.ca

The state of the CSUnion

After reviewing the misleading accusations presented in a petition being circulated by a group called Democracy, Sustainability, and Accountability led by lawyer Patrice Blais, it has become apparent that I must provide the student body with correct information instead of the propaganda and fictitious claims that Blais is spreading.

The petition claims that the CSU was unable to stop international student fees from being raised. What it conveniently excludes is that the CSU made national news by preventing the increase for an entire year, saving students over \$1.4 million by holding four massive protests and taking Concordia's Administration to the Quebec Superior Court for raising the fees illegally in June.

The petition conveniently fails to state that it was the CSU executive who took the initiative to stop the October Referendum from occurring when we found out that the CEO was no longer a student.

The CSU executive has reached out to the People's Potato in the form of financial aid to help them improve their operations over the next few months until students get a chance to vote to increase the Potato's fee levy, which I sincerely hope students do.

The CSU executive has also put forward a motion to rescind the original motion that put the Sustainability Action Fund's fee levy to referendum to display our commitment to building bridges with members of our community, as well as the CSU's intention to work with the SAF to improve its by-laws and operations.

The petition accuses the executive of failing to appoint a new CEO when it was the executive who extended the application deadline for the position—since the online posting and emails were inaccessible due to a server crash—to ensure that as many students are informed of the vacancy as possible.

Blais' friend, Louise Birdsell-Bauer, presented complaints regarding extension to the Judicial Board and they ruled that the executive's actions were appropriate considering the circumstances.

In our perception, Birdsell-Bauer's hidden agenda and subsequent track record on council has now become glaringly obvious seeing as her persistence to hire a CEO immediately is a clear ploy to help her friend's attempt to recall the executive via fictitious information.

I urge students to vigorously research the information presented by Blais since it unfortunately seems that Blais' vested interest in the CSU has led him to fabricate the truth with a smear campaign in his attempts to gain power over our student body.

—Keyana Kashfi
President of the Concordia Student Union

Why the SAF's rep was removed

There are several points from the letters last week that need to be addressed.

First, Audrey Peek has done an outstanding job representing Arts and Science students. I can testify that her integrity as the President of ASFA—or as an individual—was never questioned.

Rather, Peek has opinions on this issue (i.e. she feels the SAF should be dissolved) that she previously sought to implement (i.e. motivating a referendum that could dissolve it). More importantly, these objectives do not reflect the Arts and Science community.

Councillors elected to refrain from having Peek serve in that particular position. We decided that an alternative member of our con-

stituency should hold that capacity—one with opinions that are more aligned with the students we represent.

This process in no way, shape, or form brought either her character or mandate into question.

Second, allegations that this process was "undemocratic" fail to recognize that, fundamentally, this motion sought to reform ASFA's representation on the SAF: to have a representative that supported the organization's continued existence. If it is undemocratic for council to decide that an individual should not represent Arts and Science students in a specific position, then I guess we're guilty. I thought that was the spirit of democracy itself.

Third, it is correct that closed sessions and secret ballots are sacrifices to transparency, albeit regular and relatively minor sacrifices. However, these ensure that councillors openly express and discuss their opinions and those of their constituents without fear of reprisal. Considering that this motion involved the exec-

utive, and that closed sessions are held for virtually every appointment made by council, this was far from abnormal. And in the same way that cabinets have strong principles of secrecy to guarantee honest expression, we must sometimes do likewise.

Regardless, individual votes are never recorded—even in open session.

Fourth, Emilie Marcotte alleges ASFA Council misrepresented students and held "backdoor dealings." For the former, I would like to remind Emilie that the SAF was approved by 82 per cent of students in 2007; appointing a representative that will defend the organization is hardly 'misrepresenting' these same students. For the latter: backdoor dealings are news to me!

Finally, accusations of ulterior motives being involved are typical of ivory tower Concordia politics. Really, has anyone stopped to think that maybe I introduced this motion because it was the right thing to do? I think not.

—Gregory Johansson
Political Science

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

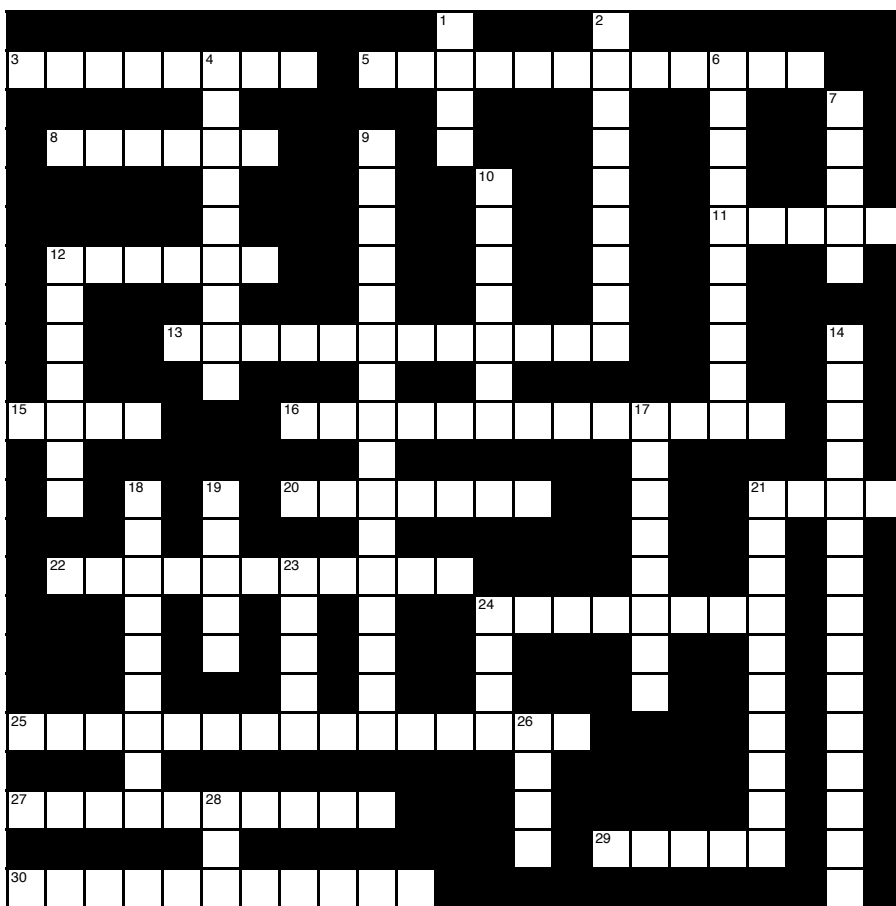


crswrdpzzlol

WORST CHRISTMAS GIFTS • R. BRIAN HASTIE & CYBEROSA

ACROSS

3. now you're forced to buy something at AutoZone, even though you don't own a car
5. cheap storage device for a 25-year-old; cavernous adventure for a five-year-old
8. romantic, potential fire hazard
11. reams of this mean you can now start work on your first novel. Yeah, right
12. usually Christmas-related materials are given before Christmas, grandma
13. *The Link* graphics editor Amy Smith got this and promptly never spoke to her best friend ever again. This band also sang "She will be loved..."
15. the perfect gift for your ox to clear your field
16. now you have no excuse not to do your essay
20. we corrected your vision just in time for holiday festivities
21. we here at *The Link* have been saving our slammers for this occasion
22. "Why would I want to carve holes in my cantaloupes?"
24. inappropriate personal gift from your married uncle Steve
25. boxers with elves, or briefs with reindeers on the crotch
27. headache-inducing, red-tinted videogame console that sold 15 units. Also for fans of masochism and Nintendo collectors
29. come in packs of 10; eight for your feet and 2 for your hands. Puppet theater enthusiasts rejoice
30. *The Link* features editor Clare Raspopov was given this tome by an uncle in hopes that "[she] wouldn't screw up [her] own life," she promptly ignored it. The author's claim to fame was using the words 'shacking up' on her radio show



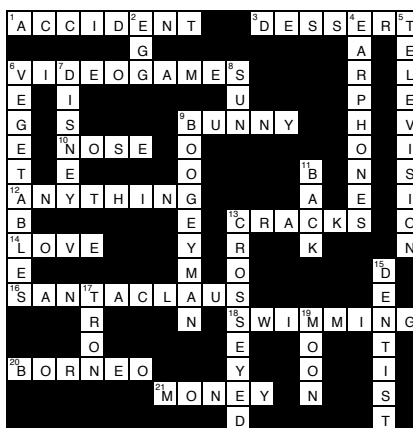
DOWN

1. its periodic table designation is Fe, can also be used on clothing
2. wall-ruining pseudo sport that can not be given to five year olds; good with photos attached
4. *The Link* opinions editor Justin Giovanetti's best Christmas just got a whole lot more nuclear. Skirmishes on every front
6. though VHS won this battle, this format will always remain in our '80s-tinged hearts
7. the easiest way to show you don't care; not legal tender on moon
9. *Lee Carvalho's* _____, but we wanted

Bonestorm instead

10. your grandmother already knit you 80 of them, why did you get another three?
12. stale, ridged breakfast food that shouldn't be mailed
14. "Now the bank won't get pissed at me when I show up with socks filled with pennies"
17. Colbert's worst nightmare. Cute and cuddly if domesticated, but angered when forced to dance while wearing a tutu
18. Vince McMahon has a warehouse full of this headgear, part of his failed venture to become beloved in the hearts of all American blood sport enthusiasts
19. you give this when you recycle your Halloween loot
21. Tim Allen's eventual downfall will be led by these
23. protects against spaghetti sauce, cake batter, and animal blood; not listeria
24. the cheapest, shittiest gift your significant other can give you

issue 15 solutionz



26. the door-to-door saleslady hit her monthly quota when mom bought you perfume from this company, whose current spokesperson is Reese Witherspoon
28. the gift that nature gives to us, can be used on the moon, artificially

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

DECEMBER 2, 1997

Ecoquartier rolling on

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

In late 1997, two Concordia students and a member of the Concordia Student Union were given control over Éco-quartier Peter-McGill. For the first time in Montreal's history, students were given the authority to direct the city's environmental program.

"The students presented original ideas and had a clear vision," said Ville-Marie chair Georgine Coutu. With control over Éco-quartier Peter-McGill, which covers the area between avenue Atwater and rue University, Concordia students called for a platform of recycling, cleanliness, beautification and renaturalisa-

tion that has stood to this day.

Although the Éco-quartier program is still in place, the CSU no longer runs the organization. Concordia's current contribution is managed through the university's sustainability program and R4 Concordia.

"It is an absolute necessity that students become part of the solution," said Larry Freedman, president of the Shaughnessy Residents Association. In the past 11 years, students seem to have taken a step back from community environmental planning. Although students now have a large role on campus, through organizations like the Sustainability Action Fund and R4 Concordia, minimal direct student control is present.

Ecoquartier rolling on

Trudeau, along with VP external, Dave Smaller, already have numerous ideas on the table about their plans for the eco-quartier. The CSU plans to focus on recycling, beautification, cleanliness and improving green space. "We have a program for recycling in residential buildings with more than nine apartments," said Paul-Amélie Trudel in his presentation to the Peter McGill council. He, an urban planner, and Smaller have been involved in the eco-quartier in NDG. "In NDG we worked on extending recycling," said Trudel. "We also set up a successful community garden called 'Jardin Caratoupe.' Trudel is not only hoping for student involvement but also strong participation from the Peter McGill area residents. Emma Mason, a geography graduate from McGill university, sees a stimulating challenge in the work that is waiting to be done. "It will not be easy to install a recycling programme in apartment buildings with 50 floors," said Mason.

Students have even taken a back-seat in the direct redevelopment of Quartier Concordia, leaving the city of Montreal to push forward with its own plans and good intentions.

Concordia's students have not fallen behind on their commitment, but they have stopped leading. Paying your tuition is not enough.

editorial

Money is fleeting, a sense of community should not be

With the global economy in the dumps, spending of all kinds is under intense scrutiny. In an atmosphere where every dollar must be justified, sports seem to many to be an unnecessary expense and a low priority.

It may be true that the effect of sports on a community is hard to quantify. Public spending on new stadiums for professional sports teams has time and again proven to do more harm than good to the taxpayer. The effect a new venue has on the local economy is nearly never enough to pay for itself and justify the expense.

Concordia is not a city and doesn't have a tax base. In light of the yet to be finalized plans to expand the sports complex at Loyola campus, the priority of sports at Concordia should be addressed. The price of the plan is significant, first announced to be in the \$40 million range, one could argue that the money could serve the student body better in other ways.

Someone who has never seen our athletic facilities could make that argument—no one else. While the hockey rink is sufficiently large to suit the fan-base, the basketball court is probably the smallest facility in Quebec university basketball. When American players visit to play our team in the pre-season, they all can say that their high school had a bigger gym than our proud university.

If we didn't take sports seriously at Concordia, the inadequacy of our facilities could be understood, if not entirely condoned. But Concordia has long been a renowned sports program not only in Quebec, but also in the entire country.

Our wrestling coach, Victor Zilberman, is a part of the Canadian wrestling hall of fame, and his son and Concordia alumnus, David Zilberman, represented Canada at the Beijing Olympics.

Our men's basketball and football teams are consistently ranked at a national level; our basketball team is currently the pre-season favourite to win this year's conference. Our women's rugby team came close to recapturing the Quebec championship again this year, as did our baseball team.

Our soccer teams, while struggling considerably over the first half of the season, showed flashes of what is to come, and the men's hockey team currently stands a fighting chance to win it's conference final.

Despite our considerable successes in athletics, our school's spirit has not grown commensurate to our achievements. Compared to other universities, there seems that a certain buzz is missing from our sporting events—perhaps with the exception of football.

While it is understandable that a downtown university might not have the same sense of community as a more remote school, sports is one tool that can be used to develop that sense of community. Providing better accommodations for fans is one step towards getting more students to attend games.

In order to foster a sense of school pride and a great recognition of community among our student body, first class sport's facilities would provide a unifying symbol. We should all be proud to go to this school, and although our sports facilities are currently in a state of extended disrepair, we should all make a point to support our consistently excellent athletic programs.

In addition to improving both the student and student-athlete experience at our school, these improved facilities will also bring a considerable benefit to our community. Unlike hulking professional sports facilities, improved fields and arenas at Concordia would be integrated into the city's existing public arena. Greater space means more room for community organizing and activities for the youth groups.

The problem with Concordia's current—and unfinished—plans is that they might not integrate so well into the surrounding neighbourhood. If we go forward and finance a seasonal dome over the Loyola sports fields, we will in effect, privatize a part of our school. Concordia has stated that it would rent the fields out as a money making endeavour, restricting the use of our facilities to the well endowed and willing.

Furthermore, why would a seasonal dome, that must be dismantled in the spring and reassembled in the fall, be good use of our money, when an investment in a permanent facility would seem like a smarter choice?

Pissing away money in a half-hearted gesture is senseless and irresponsible. Ultimately, it's debatable from an economic perspective whether this move makes sense for a school on a tight budget. After all, Concordia is an institution of higher learning, and perhaps that's where the money should be spent. University is about supporting education, not the top quintile.

In these tough times, it's more important than ever to remember the unquantifiable. It's important in these times of less that we cultivate a sense of community. Sports is something we can all share and take pride in.

Upgrading our athletic complex will not only make our athletes even more proud to wear "Stingers" across their chest, but it might also make us a little more proud to wear "Concordia" across ours.

—Diego Pelaez-Gaetz, Sports editor