

THE

LINK

concordia's independent newspaper
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So we could fly

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY
MONTH IN THOUGHT, WORD
AND ART • SPECIAL INSERT

Former CSU executive accused of attempted extortion • News page 3
Founder of Concordia's Creative Writing program speaks out • Literary arts page 12
A world without TV—what would it be like • Fringe arts page 17

\$25,000 extortion attempt denied

Claim 'is outrageous,' says CSU VP communications

• TERRINE FRIDAY

Former Concordia Student Union executive, councillor and advisor Steven Rosenshein has been formally accused of trying to extort \$25,000 from the CSU's former health care administrator, Lev Bukhman, an allegation which the CSU executive says is false.

Bukhman, Faculty of Arts advisor of McGill University and president of the Quebec Student Health Alliance—or ASEQ—claims Rosenshein “asked me for a \$25,000 contribution to finance the election campaign for ‘his team’ in the upcoming election,” according to a sworn affidavit dated May 26, 2008.

According to the sworn statement of Bukhman—who’s also a lawyer—this conversation took place “on the evening of March 6, 2008,” immediately following the guest lecture of American civil rights leader Al Sharpton.

“I was shocked and stunned,” the affidavit continued. “I clearly understood that Mr. Rosenshein was asking me to pay a \$25,000 contribution to his CSU election slate, and making a clear threat that if I did not pay the contribution ASEQ’s business relationship with the CSU would be under threat. It was clear that what he was asking me for was unethical and likely illegal, to say the least.”

Rosenshein allegedly requested the money because “the ‘opposition’ had been traditionally backed by ‘15 or 20’ thousand dollars from the ‘Muslim students associations’, and that the Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR) basically [ran] its own printing press for elections,” according to the document.

The CSU ended up signing a contract with ASEQ’s competitor, Morneau Sobeco. The contract also included an agreement with the National Student Health Network, the health care provider of the Canadian Federation of Students—Rosenshein’s current employer.

Although the contract is signed by CSU President Keyana Kashfi and is dated Dec. 11,

Kashfi reported to Council at their last meeting on Jan. 14 that they were still in the negotiation process.

Elie Chivi, VP communications of the CSU, said the contract is fair game and simply shows a change in healthcare administrator.

“We don’t have a health plan yet,” Chivi said. “We’re going to tender for the best deal we can get.”

The problem, Chivi said, is Bukhman’s own negligence in tendering for a student health plan.

According to a statement released by the CSU, “Concordia students lost out on a savings of nearly \$250,000 last year due to the actions of Mr. Bukhman and his firm.” Both Kashfi and Chivi deny their association with Rosenshein.

“We’re very independent of Mr. Rosenshein,” Chivi continued. “[The current executive is] here as an independent body and aren’t swayed by people that were here before us.”

Chivi also said the \$25,000 extortion claim “is outrageous,” and it’s likely Bukhman was more interested in his own expenses.

“I clearly understood that Mr. Rosenshein was asking me to pay a \$25,000 contribution to his CSU election slate.”

—Lev Bukhman,
former CSU health care administrator
and president of the Quebec Student Health Alliance

“I can see how someone who’s about to possibly lose a lot of money would make those accusations,” Chivi said.

According to Bukhman, the extortion happened before any mention of switching health care administrators.

“When this incident happened with Mr. Rosenshein, it was brought to the CSU long before I’d even met Keyana Kashfi,” Bukhman said, “and my affidavit was signed before she took office and before I ever met her.”

Bukhman claims former CSU president



Although serious allegations have been made, no money exchanged hands. PHOTO JONATHAN DEMPSEY

Angelica Novoa’s reaction to the extortion last March was “shocked, but not surprised.”

In the final 2007-08 Council meeting held

“It just doesn’t add up,” Forget continued.

In light of an incoming 2008-09 CSU executive, Bukhman claims he tried to communicate with Kashfi about the monetary demand—but Kashfi took no action.

“It’s kind of hard to complain to Nixon about Watergate,” Bukhman said.

Bukhman says he’s not happy about the current situation and speaking publicly wasn’t his first avenue, especially since Concordia is one of ASEQ’s founding members. The other is McGill University.

“Blowing the whistle like this is something we do with a very heavy heart. It’s not fun when you become the target of a lot of mud throwing,” Bukhman said.

Bukhman requested the university’s administration take control of the situation. President Judith Woodsworth declined to comment.

Rosenshein and Novoa did not return *The Link’s* phone calls for comment.

May 14, 2008, Novoa had produced documentation that then-councillor Rosenshein was filling his post illegally—but only after a disagreement regarding the CSU’s health and dental negotiations occurred.

Former councillor Matthew Forget thought Novoa’s newfound awakening was just a red herring, especially since the issue was brought to Novoa on several occasions. The real dispute, Forget said, was behind the health and dental negotiations, which were up for renewal.

Loyola sports complex gets the go-ahead

\$60 Million project break down remains vague

• LAURA BEESTON

As plans for Concordia’s new sports and recreation facilities at the Loyola campus forge ahead, students may see their fees increase.

The project, whose urban zoning by-laws were approved unanimously at a borough council meeting on Feb. 2, is estimated at \$60 million—an increase in almost \$20 million since last year’s estimate.

Elie Chivi, the Concordia Student Union’s VP communications, said the student government was “still very much in negotiation” in terms of helping to fund the complex.

“The CSU is looking into all the

plans of the project to see what is a valid student fee increase should there be one,” Chivi said. “The CSU does not believe the students should carry the total weight of these projects and initiatives, especially when there are other levels of government involved to fund this project.”

Full-time students currently pay \$70 per academic year in recreation and athletics fees, as well as between \$40 to \$50 towards the CSU association fee.

Chivi mentioned that there would be no extra cost to students on the CSU’s end, but “obviously there would be a student recreation and athletics fee increase, which

needs CSU approval.”

Katie Sheahan, Director of Recreation and Athletics, said the goal was to have at least part of the first phase of the project completed in 2009.

But, Sheahan said, it was premature to comment on the exact costs or timeframes for each phase of the project as it continues to go through recommendations, approval processes and applications for funding from various levels of government and private sectors.

“There are a number of different scenarios and logistical issues,” Sheahan said. “All of this requires reflection and planning. We are

looking for a combination of government, private, and student contribution.”

“The intention is to build a larger gym and swimming pool, permanent football stands with a dressing room and cafeteria and a seasonal dome that would allow many outdoor sports to be played all year round,” said city councillor Warren Allmand. He added that Concordia would also “form an agreement with the borough that would allow minor soccer leagues from the community to also use the new facilities.”

Stingers football coach Gerry McGrath said this project would be an improvement for the community

as it moves forward.

“Certainly it will help the football team to have a facility to use in the winter,” McGrath said, “but even more so, it would be a tremendous boost for student and community life overall.”

A public question period will be held at the Côte-Des-Neiges—Notre-Dame-de-Grâce borough council meeting on March 2 at 6 p.m. at 5151 Côte Ste-Catherine.

For more information about the project or its preliminary designs, please visit buildings.concordia.ca/loyola/sports.php.

A new kind of eau de toilette

Metal contraption mimics human waste

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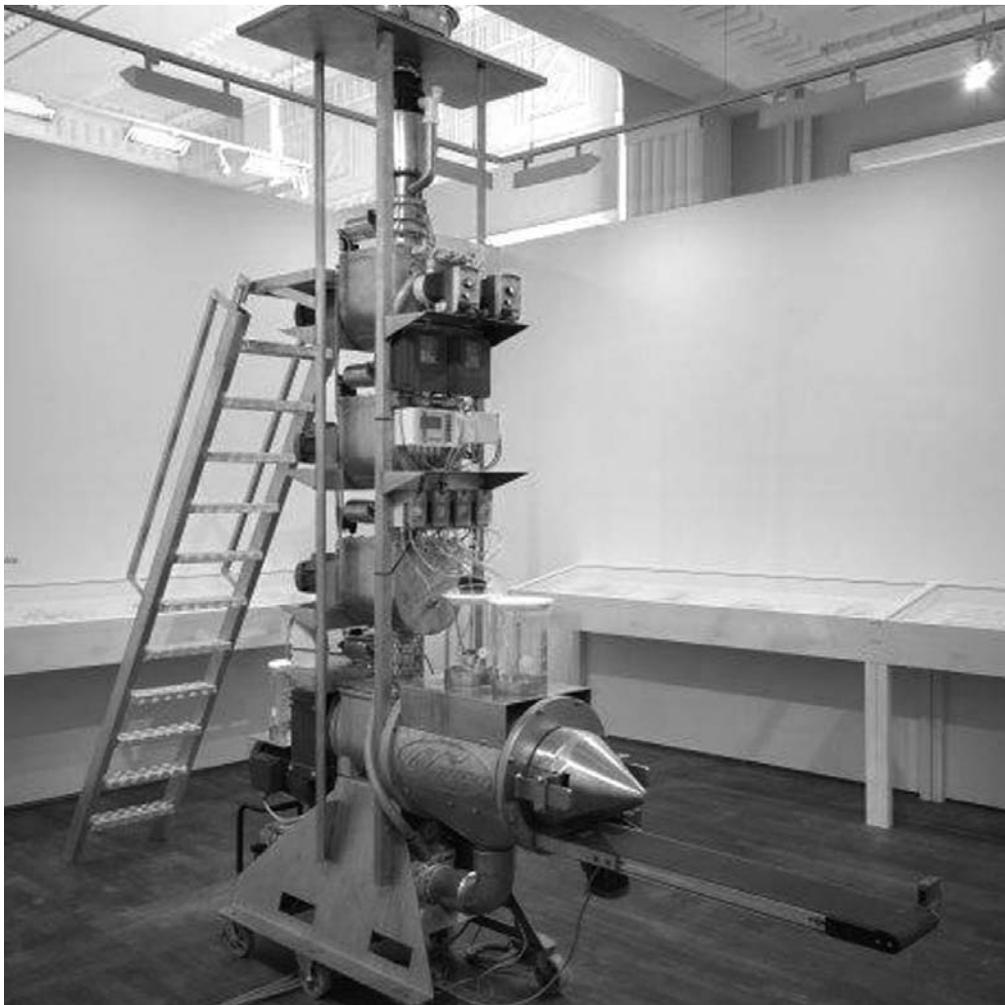
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But there may be more to *Cloaca* than just feces.

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The *Cloaca No. 5* exhibition can still be seen at La Galerie de l’UQAM until Feb. 14. For more information, please visit galerie.uqam.ca.

Resurrecting Bill 107

Opposition mounts against provincial university legislation

• MATTHEW BRETT

Universities and student unions are in consultations with the provincial government to curb legislation from being introduced that would impose restraints and oversights on the highest governing body of universities across the province.

Bill 107, a law tabled by education minister Michelle Courchesne last October, died when premier Jean Charest dissolved the National Assembly and called the December provincial election.

The bill would have required universities across the province to regulate everything from the size of the Board of Governors to what Boards should post on their websites.

Boards would have to achieve gender parity under the new legislation, and establish three com-

mittees to improve ethics and oversight within university administrations.

The bill was created in the wake of a government bailout to save Université du Québec à Montréal from financial collapse, and may be proposed when the National Assembly reconvenes on March 10.

“We’re very concerned with the government getting involved in the governance of universities,” said Bram Freedman, Concordia’s vice-president external relations. “We do see it as an attack on the autonomy of the university.”

Student unions across the province are also opposed to the legislation as it could reduce student, faculty and staff representation on the board.

The Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec, a student lobby group recognized by the

provincial government, met with representatives of the ministry last week.

“We know the ministry is working on a new version of the law,” FEUQ president David Paradis said.

FEUQ is demanding that student and faculty be represented proportionally to reflect the university’s demographics.

Another “problem” with the former bill is a section stating that two thirds of a university board be composed of external members not associated with the institution, Paradis said.

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Freedman said he was surprised by “the lack of interest that there seems to be from the student movement as well as the faculty unions, and I’m not talking specifically about Concordia.”

“Certainly if there’s a new piece of legislation, we’ll let everybody know,” Freedman said.

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For guidelines on how to submit, visit qpirgconcordia.org/studyinaction. Proposals can be submitted to studyinaction@gmail.com.

Concordia burns amid racial slurs

Discrimination and defiance: Computer Riot remembered, 40 years later

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

Sirens reverberated through downtown Montreal as fire trucks and police cars rushed towards the three-year-old Hall Building. Surrounded by riot police clashing with protestors, the ninth floor of the jewel of Sir George Williams University was on fire.

Black smoke billowed from open windows and onlookers watched with horror and disbelief. "Let the niggers burn!" some yelled.

Forty years ago, on Feb. 11, 1969, almost 100 Sir George students made international headlines when their 13-day occupation of the Hall Building's computer centre ended in flames. The demonstration had begun when the university's administration allowed a Biology professor accused of racism to keep his post.

Perry Anderson was a young lecturer at Sir George, on track to complete his PhD. During the 1967-68 academic year, he was teaching Zoology 431, a prerequisite for medical school. Among the class of 48 students, 13 were of West Indian, or Caribbean, descent.

"When the term started, you could feel that something was wrong," Rodney John, a West Indian student in Anderson's class, told *The Link* in 2004. "Anderson would address the white students by their first names, and he would address all of the West Indians as 'Mister.' On the surface he was treating the West Indian students with respect. He wasn't calling you 'boy,' he was addressing you as 'Mr. John.' But it was differentiation."

Of the 13 students in Anderson's class, none received a grade higher than C. Due to the lecturer's behaviour and his discriminatory marking, the 13 West Indian students filed a formal complaint with the Dean of Students.

Over the course of the following summer, the Dean's office prepared a report that exonerated Anderson of all charges. When the students who filed the complaint asked to see the report, they were told that they had been sent a copy, but that it had been lost in the internal mail system.

Outraged that they could not see the document absolving Anderson, the six remaining students—the rest had quit school or graduated—asked for the establishment of an open hearing committee.

On Jan. 29, 1969, the committee—composed of four white professors—met in H-110. After several hours, hundreds of students walked out in protest.

Robert Hubsher was a white, third-year Psychology student at the time of the riot. "I sat through the entire hearing, the more I sat through it, the more I became disturbed."

Hubsher believed the hearing committee was biased and did not represent both view-



Five million dollars worth of equipment was damaged as firemen scrambled during the largest student riot in Canadian history.

points equally. "The point [of the riot] wasn't the discrimination, the point was the fair hearing. To this day, I do not know if this professor was being discriminatory in his practices because [the issue] was completely avoided."

The area around the Hall Building turned white as 30 years' worth of work blanketed the streets. The police responded by surrounding the computer centre.

As students like Hubsher and John walked away from the meeting, they remembered a piece they had read in the Jan. 28 issue of *The Georgian*—the Sir George Williams University student newspaper and one of *The Link's* precursors.

"It so happened that on the previous weekend, [*The Georgian* reported] the administration set up a meeting with the police and chief of security. In that meeting they listed what areas they should protect in the event of a riot. Number one on their list was the computer centre," remembered John.

What followed was a two-week stand off between the administration and nearly 400 students occupying the ninth floor computer lab and seventh floor lounge. On Feb. 9, lawyers negotiating for both sides reached an agreement and all but 100 students left.

The following day, the 100 students left on the two floors discovered that the university's administration was still debating the agreement. Infuriated, the students began to throw furniture down the stairs and esca-

dents to flee. Five million dollars' worth of equipment was damaged as 125 firemen spent the rest of the day dousing the flames.

Hubsher, who was arrested as he fled the computer centre, remembers the day. "People's paranoia took over and it was very frightening as a 20-year-old to think how easy it was for a society to unravel. I still stand by what I did."

John was protesting on the streets around the Hall building as the 97 demonstrators—55 white, 42 black—arrested by the police were led out.

"There were hundreds of students outside, many of whom I knew from class, yelling 'Let the niggers burn.' Had it not been for the line of cops between the mob and us, we probably would have been lynched."

The largest student riot in Canadian history was over.

—with files from Jeff Campbell and Heidi Modro

For more information on the Computer Riots, including interviews with the participants, the aftershocks and a timeline of events, reach for next week's supplement in *The Link*.

The university has not released any statement in accordance with the anniversary of the Computer Riot.

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The Blue line

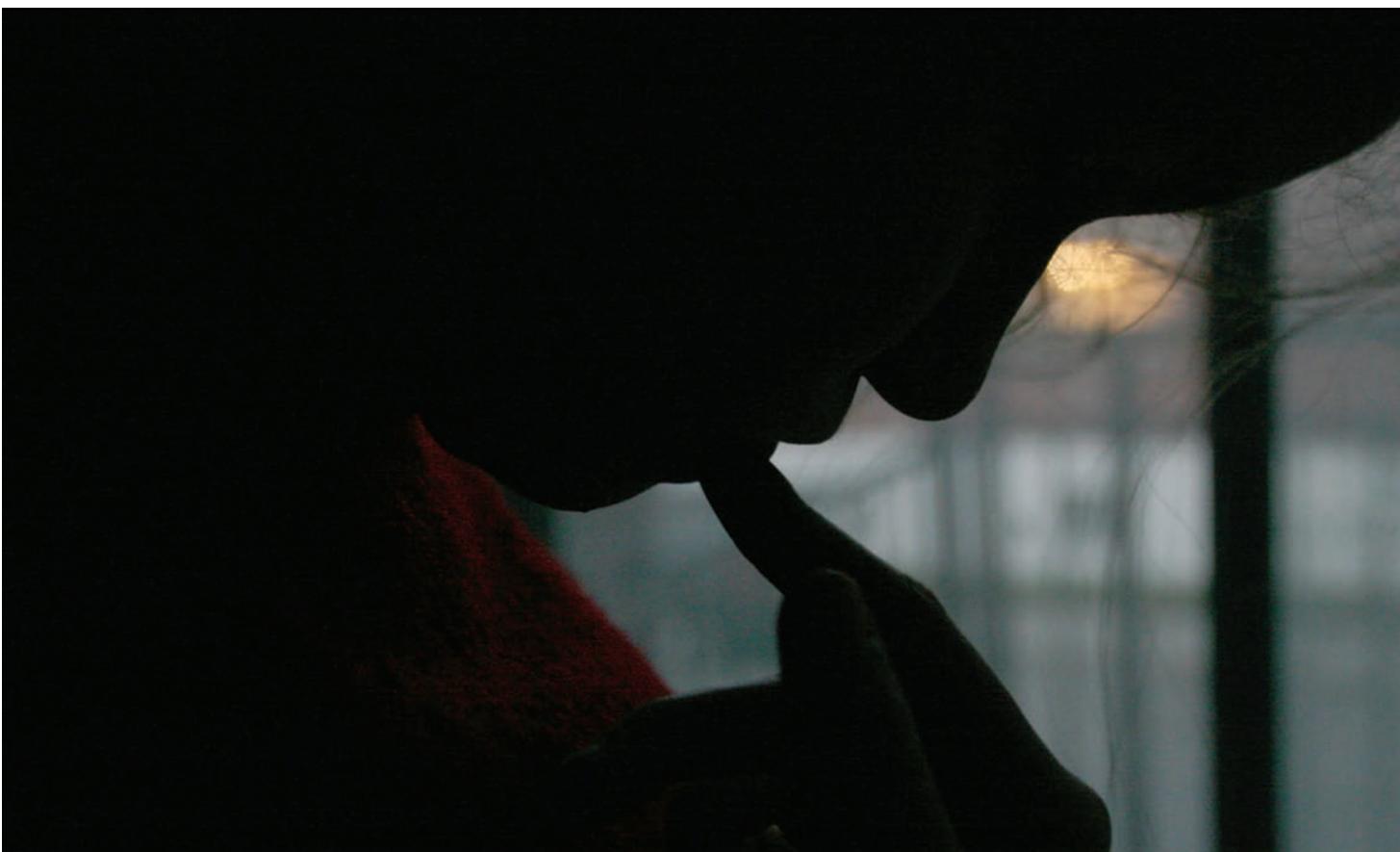


Intrepid photographer Ian Lawrence, plunges himself yet again into the underground maze that is the metro. (Clockwise) 1) Sometimes getting on the metro feels a lot like boarding a spaceship. 2) Art meets life in Jean Talon. 3) The metro can seem like it goes on forever. 4) The long walk to U de M. 5) In the hustle and bustle, it can feel like you're not even there. 6) It's not an Escher drawing, it's the stairs at Snowdon metro.





Seen and heard



A day in the lives of metro singers Denny, Peggy and Lauviah

• IAN LAWRENCE

This trio may have serenaded you in one of our metros or around the city—their sweet voices soundtracking your daily commute home. I decided to find out a little bit more about this family you might see every day.



Photo 1 – Denis checks his email:

Denis Harting checks his email using JAWS screen-reading software. The program vocalizes and translates text into braille, allowing him to listen to his messages while reading them at the same time on the braille interface.

Photo 2 – Lauviah and Peggy listen to their email:

After returning home from school, Lauviah Harting and her mother, Peggy Roux, listen to their vocalized email. In the day, Lauviah attends the Jacques-Ouellette school for the visually impaired and sings at night in Montreal metros with her father, Denis.

Photo 3 – Lauviah sees the light:

Though both her parents were born completely blind, Lauviah was not. When I used my flash to take some shots of her, Lauviah reacted with a smile, telling me that she could see the light.



Photo 4 – Peggy leads her family:

Peggy leads Denis and Lauviah to a bus stop on their way to another night of singing. Though she does not sing herself, Peggy manages both Denis and Lauviah's singing careers. When I asked Peggy if she was married to Denis, she told me she wasn't and said that family is not determined by marriage, but by love.

Photo 5 – Together in the metro:

Together, the family sings in the Lionel-Groulx metro. On an average day, they make between \$200 and \$300. In the past, they've made up to \$615 busking in Old Montreal. When I asked Peggy if she believed that pity influenced their income, she replied, "let's be realistic; when people see a 14-year-old blind girl singing in the metro, they will be curious [...] but when we were starting up, we weren't even making half as much as we do now. Obviously talent has an influence."

Photo 6 – Denis sings Whitney Houston:

Denis sings Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You." On an average day, Denis and Lauviah collectively sing over two dozen songs to hundreds of passersby who stop to listen. Though few people go up to him, he is aware of their presence. "The best way to overcome shyness is to step up to it [...] I don't mean to intimidate people. I mean to touch them."



A mentor to Montreal

Blaise's *Selected Essays* straddles the border between US and Canada

• MADELINE COLEMAN

If I am sure of anything, I am sure of this: I am Canadian and that is different from being American.

I can feel this essential truth in the very marrow of my bones. American friends living in Montreal demand an explanation why and I realize I have none to give.

I have muttered inconsequentially about a patriotism built on an inferiority complex, invoke the lull of CBC radio voices on a Sunday afternoon, to no avail—amorphous cultural contrast is unpersuasive at best. Americans furrow their collective brow, unimpressed and unconvinced. I wonder why I bother. I wonder why I care.

But, finally, validation at last: I have read Clark Blaise's most recent essay collection. A UC Berkeley professor and venerable fiction writer, Blaise has spent his life walking the line between the United States and Canada.

Most of the work gathered in *Selected Essays* focuses on the intersection of multinationalism and fiction writing, two themes with which Blaise is intimately acquainted. The essays included here were written throughout the past couple of decades and become somewhat repetitive without the grace of years between them.

Born in North Dakota to a Manitoban mother and a Quebecois father, he spent his childhood being spirited all over the eastern half of the U.S. and his adult life shifting between various states and provinces. Blaise understands the Canadian mystique. It would be enough for my ego for said mystique to be acknowledged, but Blaise gets it—although I'm sure he would disagree.

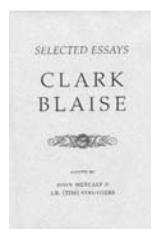
By the end of it, I found myself overly familiarized with the chronology of Blaise's border-crossing life story.

His life has been interesting—he has written extensively on the Franco, Anglo and Americano mélange, which has been the cornerstone of my university experience thus far, so I often found myself nodding in agreement and recognition.

Blaise professes to be fascinated with what it means to be Canadian and investigates how that meaning can change depending on the province and language. I was reminded of my first few weeks living in residence when I first moved here and how eager I and everyone else was to distinguish ourselves geographically—how displaced we all must have felt to want to identify ourselves with coastal affiliation.

Blaise is an eloquent man. His enthusiasm about the oeuvres of Canadian authors has inspired me to read more Canadian literary—an admittedly unfamiliar feeling—and even to take a stab at writing more fiction.

This essay collection is certainly not as compelling in the same way I feel Blaise's novels and short stories must certainly be, but as an earnest young person rife with insecurity about my writing skills and uncertain about my place in the world of letters, I can't help but feel I'd like Blaise for a mentor.



Selected Essays
Clark Blaise
Biblioasis
October 2008
280 pp
\$24.95

Trailblazer

Clark Blaise, the founder of Concordia's Creative Writing program, discusses the art of writing

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

English Literature wasn't my first choice for my undergraduate studies at Concordia. I was crushed when my childhood ambition of becoming an author seemed thrown into question when my application to Concordia's Creative Writing program was rejected.

It seemed like an unambiguous sign of fate's disapproval in ever achieving my dreams. But why should a piece of paper signed by a school administrator keep me from writing my own happy ending?

There was a time when a degree in Creative Writing would have been unusual, but then there were fewer publishing opportunities. Fortunately, we have people like Clarke Blaise to thank for Concordia's Creative Writing program.

I spoke to Blaise, who now lives in San Francisco, about how he founded one of the country's largest Creative Writing programs and what he thinks of the publishing industry today.

"I went to [former Concordia English department Chair] Sidney Lamb, and laid out what I thought would be a really good program, and I was surprised that he was open to it," said Blaise.

"He asked me, 'Do you propose turning out writers like Ford motorcars?' And I said 'Yes.' But being Quebec, it had to go through many levels of bureaucracy first," says Blaise.

One of the reasons they really went for the idea is because "it also meant that McGill would be blocked from ever forming their own Creative Writing department. It would mean that only one English school would be handling creative writing on a degree basis, and that would be Concordia. Because we already had Fine Arts, we were thought of as the artsy place, and McGill as the scholarly place."

But it quickly evolved into the largest program of its kind in Canada, says Blaise.

"I knew we could do it, because I had so many good writers in my class, even before we had a program. I knew that there was an awful lot of talent around, and it would just be a matter of funnelling that into a two-year program."

"I knew we could do it, because I had so many good writers in my class, even before we had a program."

—Clark Blaise,
founder of Concordia's Creative Writing program

Those without degrees, like me, needn't feel sorry for themselves, he says, sparing a thought for my feelings.

"I don't think there's a hard fast rule [that says you need a degree in order to become a writer], like going to medical school to become a doctor," says Blaise.

"But not only does it give you time to write, it develops a kind of internal editorship. You begin to develop a sense of what's right and wrong with your own work. The reader knows when something's not working, but maybe can't put his or her finger on it. A writing teacher's supposed to be able to do that."

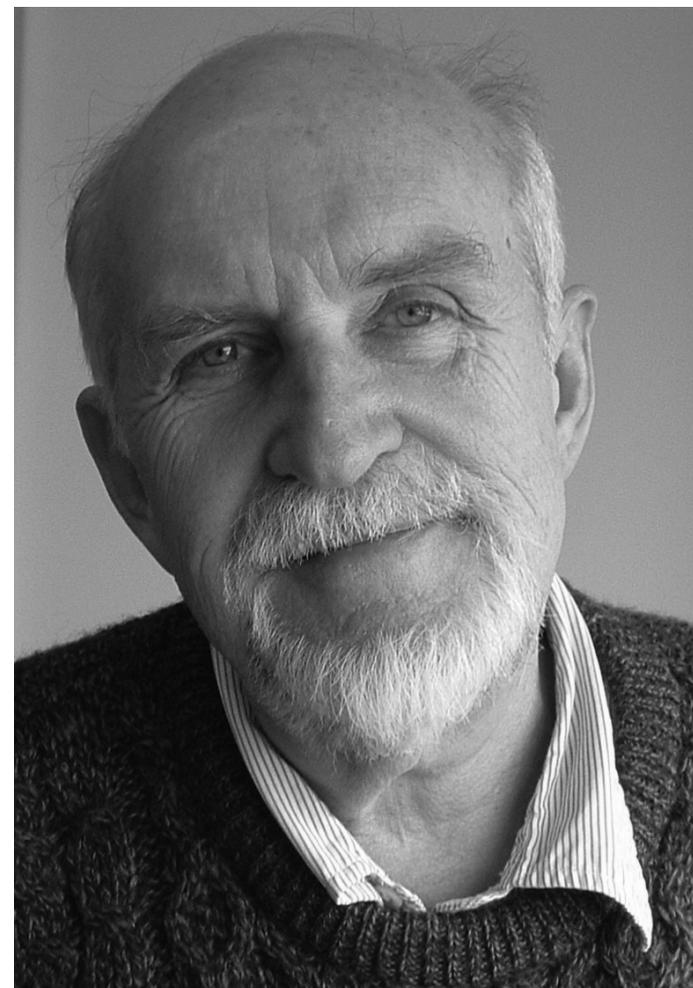
Blaise says that if you want to break out in publishing today, you're better off sticking to your guns, and your own life story, than pursuing outright fiction.

"You hope that somehow or other your fiction, which is where your heart may be, as opposed to your head, will see you through. But it's very risky to believe in that," as evidenced by the recent backlash against autobiographies which play fast and loose with the truth.

"It's funny, because I know a couple of those people," says Blaise.

"James Frey, for example—who was the one who was most excoriated by Oprah Winfrey for his book, *A Million Little Pieces*—we went to the same little school in Ohio and he had the same teachers that I did. But I have the same feeling about it that I would about any other falsity, or writing autobiography; it ought to be true, it ought to hold up."

Blais remembers a prank pulled by The Georgian—the prede-



Clark Blaise spent many years in Canada, where he helped create Concordia's Creative Writing program

cesoor of *The Link*—whose attention grabbing headline claimed that Concordia University's new name would be Université de Pierre LaPorte, "for the one guy that was killed by the FLQ," says Blaise.

"It was an April Fools headline, a deliberate poke in the eye, and that got everyone upset. We thought, 'Oh my God, how are we ever going to defend ourselves in Quebec with a name like that?'"

But there's a big difference between a college prank and rewriting one's own history.

When he's not writing essays and fiction, Blaise is advancing a style of writing he calls post-modern autobiography, a non-chronological style of writing that explores the author's life through associative imagery, and which avoids the problems of false recollection and fabrication.

In Blais' autobiography, *I Had a Father*, "I was talking about my own life," says Blaise, "but I was talking about it through the lens of my father's life. He was a disturbed man, and I tried to understand his disturbances through the life that he had led, and then how that life then impacted the lives of our family."

Blaise says it's been a terrible year for writers, with the passing of David Foster Wallace, and more recently, John Updike, with whom he had infrequent contact and correspondence.

"But the dream of being a writer lives on," says Blaise. "It seems to me it lives on more strongly with them than it does with some of us and that we've become a little cynical about the readership and the publishing world. My students [at Berkeley] are as interested in electronic publishing as they are in—and probably even more than—getting published by a New York publisher. They have a very strong communal sense, very different from what we did."

As long as trailblazers like Clark Blaise can find opportunities, I don't care that I wasn't accepted into Concordia's Creative Writing program—although the March deadline for portfolio submissions is still circled on my calendar.

For the full interview with Clark Blaise, visit thelinknewspaper.com/lit.

Talk dirty to me

Eva Moran's *Porny Stories* will have you begging for more

• JOELLE LEMIEUX

I never thought I'd find a female writer whose subject matter was so successfully loose, and light, but Eva Moran's debut *Porny Stories* is exactly that. A collection of short, rather explicit stories which cover topics like aging, anal sex, and what it is to be a woman.

"Jon inspired the first story," recounts Eva.

"He said, 'Eva. Write a story about ass fucking.'"

I sit speechless.

"Voila! [...] I wrote 'I Tend to the Tail End' and that kicked everything off—I had the idea for the book, *Porny Stories*."

I'm not one for Harlequins (though neither is Moran) and while I don't find the sex in excess, I wonder if some will. "I'm worried people will overlook the writing or the stories for all the naughty parts," Moran admits. "But, I don't really think we are that prudish. [...] I think the explicit bits of my writing are integral to the stories.

"The sex is not gratuitous [...] Not that I am opposed to gratuitous sex."

I was curious what my mother's

reaction would be to a book like Moran's. But even more, I was desperate to know where it had come from.

"I started writing *Porny Stories* while completing my MA at Concordia. I studied gender and sexuality—*Porny Stories* seemed like a twisted extension of my thesis."

Luckily for Moran, everyday life can be inspiring.

"The pieces come together—bits of conversations, things I think are funny, things from my own life, weird daydreams, articles I've read, etc. It's a hodgepodge and then I try to sort it out."

While Moran may have "the mouth of a merchant marine" she comes across as perfectly polite. "I was raised with extreme discipline, with great attention to social order and politeness—I could set the table for Queen of England! [...] Okay, not quite," she jokes.

The book, which leans more towards Woody Allen on "horny-making steroids" than the Queen of England, has raised questions about sexual explicitness as the domain of women. Moran doesn't think it's true.

"Saucy and crude men and women have long been around. I think it would be more interesting to look at why critics think it is solely the domain of women in modern times, which it surely is not."

Moran, who intends to write a play next—called "Friend-Dump: The Musical"—isn't planning on leaving short story writing anytime soon.

"Short story ideas keep popping up," she says, "though I don't think they can be called projects outright."

She also works full-time. "I work and write. I write whenever and wherever I can. [...] Busses, planes, subways—any time. I also do the typical desk at home."

So, what's life like after Concordia?

"[It's] easier but way more mundane. Who cares when your brain is not working anymore?"

But life as a Canadian artist is not so easy, either.

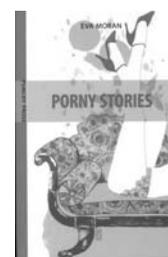
"Some of the best artists I know are still eking there way along, labouring for highly competitive grants, prizes, recognition, reviews, rent, jobs and so on. Who knows?"



Maybe I'm hanging around the wrong kind of artists. But I doubt it.

"I have these dreams of living in the States or Germany and when I get there, there is a ticker tape parade but the ticker tape is actually paper money and it rains down on me as I scream, 'Ich bin ein Berliner!' or 'God I love NFL—I love your whole goddamn country! I love freedom fries and I love freedom dollars!' and the crowds yell

'And we love artists Eva! We love artists! Take our money!'"



Porny Stories
Eva Moran
DC Books
January 2008
192 pp
\$18.95

Malcolm Gladwell's route to success: location, location

Where and when you're born has more to do with succeeding than you think

• DIEGO PELAEZ GAETZ

Why is it that some people become successful, while others flounder? Is there an intrinsic value to the greatest among us that pre-ordains them for a life of heroic stature?

In *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell changed the way we think about social phenomena, and in his newest book, *Outliers: The Story of Success*, Gladwell focuses on a specific social phenomenon: success.

The definition of an outlier is "a statistical observation that is markedly different in value from the others of the sample."

Our society places a premium on the individual in the way we understand how a person becomes an outlier. Successful people are given that distinction as a birthright. The ideology of the underdog making his way to the top through sheer grit and ingenuity is integral to how we understand success.

However, as Gladwell reveals the paths to success of various outliers, it becomes clear that there are some serious flaws in our philosophy on this topic. According to Gladwell, where we're from matters as much as who we are. Genius and innate talent alone are not enough; opportunity and cultural legacy also play a very important role.

Being a native Canadian, the fact that Gladwell uses junior hockey to illustrate

his point shouldn't be surprising. In the upper tiers of Canadian junior hockey, a very strange pattern occurs; the vast majority of players are born between the months of January and March. This doesn't only hold true of junior hockey, but of Canadians playing professionally as well.

The generally accepted amount of practice time to become a master at any task is 10,000 hours.

The explanation? The cut-off date for minor hockey leagues in Canada is Jan. 1. As a result, programs that streamline the most talented kids at an early age are not really picking the best players; they're picking the oldest. Then the oldest players get the best training and the most opportunity for time on the ice, and the cut-off date becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

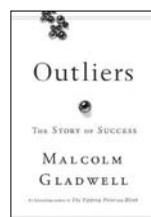
Opportunity doesn't tell the whole story, however. The generally accepted amount of practice time to become a master at any task is 10,000 hours. This perfectly represents the American dream: anyone with the work ethic and desire to achieve can do so, as long as they put in the requisite hours.

This seems on the surface to be a reassuring view of the world. The idea that the great are ordained at birth, while romantic,

seems to dictate that the vast majority of people are doomed from the start. The idea that there is something more to the equation is an intriguing one.

Despite the seemingly egalitarian nature of this theory, it seems that Gladwell's ideology is ultimately cold comfort. Instead of success being attributable to the luck of being born a genius, it is attributable to the luck of having the right combination of cultural background, natural ability and opportunity.

Both concepts seem equally unfair and arbitrary. Without the opportunity to spend 10,000 hours on meaningful work, one cannot become an outlier in a specific field. While I learned considerably more about success from reading this book, and clearly this is Gladwell's primary goal, one still gets the feeling that the game is rigged.



Outliers
Malcolm Gladwell
Little Brown and Company
November 2008
320 pp
\$30.99



Malcolm Gladwell has crazy hair and a brilliant mind.
GRAPHIC GINGER COONS



LiNK

concordia's independent newspaper
rockin' my afro puffs since 1980

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

special issue

Welcome to the Black History Month special issue

• TERRINE FRIDAY

I'm one of only two black students in my Journalism program year.

There's also one who's bi-racial.

Wait a minute, I'm multi-racial.

On second thought, it doesn't really matter. What does matter is that the three of us, to an observer, have darker skin and are therefore likely to be considered black at first sight.

As a minority in a program that leads to a job in a field among the visible majority, I can say that I have a unique perspective on all issues, whether they pertain to marginal groups or not. But what makes this even harder is that I'm only a needle in a haystack; I can't change the world. But I know I can still educate others on what it means to be black in the 21st century and what 'Black Issues' are.

Although I could easily write a 40-page paper on issues affecting the black community, this special issue is intended to give a glimpse into the lives of ordinary blacks that are effectuating change in their own way. Whether it be through teaching Black history in high schools and universities or addressing contemporary stressors, the contributors have shone a light on the very differences and similarities that cause for celebration in February.

Nomenclature

Speaking of celebration, a common thread in several pieces is allusion, and at times direct reference, to Barack Obama. The Canadian Press' Stylebook dictates that I should tell you who Obama is the first time I reference him, but come on. We all know.

CP style also dictates that, when referring to a person by colour, minuscule letters should be used. Therefore, it's 'black' and 'white.' It also says 'Caucasian,' 'Negroid,' 'Hispanic,' and 'Asian' all take a majuscule letter at the beginning. Problem is, 'Negroid' has long been rejected by blacks and is never used to refer to a black person in common language anymore. Rather, the word 'Black' is supposed to have taken its place.

I ran into this problem when editing this issue. Should I revert all uses of 'Black' to 'black,' especially since use of the term 'Caucasian' is still commonly used instead of plain, old 'white?'

I decided to be a good reporter, leave emotion out of it, and take it up with The Canadian Press later.

Why Black History Matters

I was asked by my peers what the importance of Black History Month was, and why there needed to be any celebration; we're all special and blacks are seen as equals to everyone else.

But, I said, there are entire history books that have completely written blacks out. For example, who was Mathieu de Costa? What about Elijah McCoy? I didn't know until a few years ago.

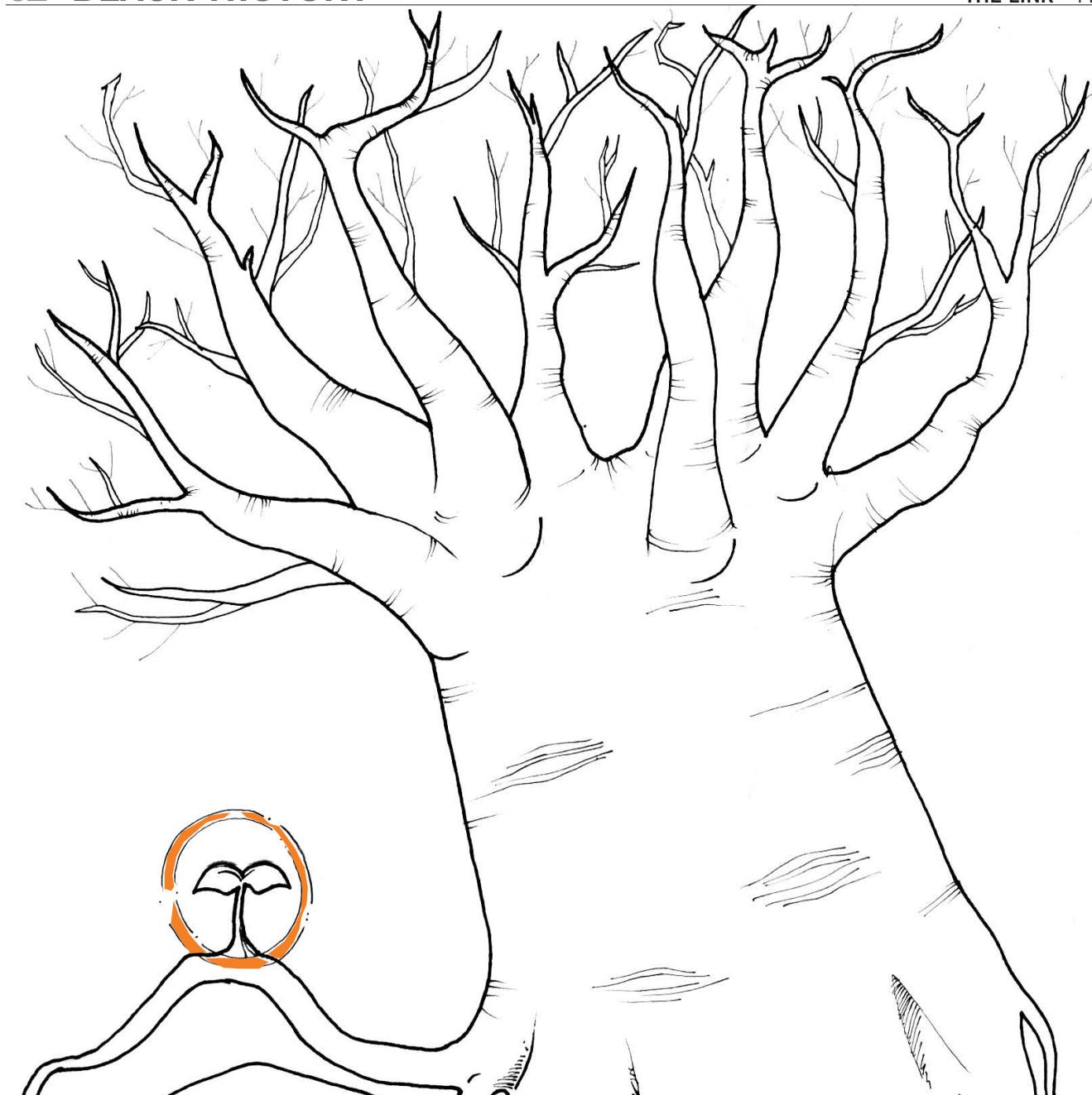
Not to mention the social and political theory, geography, language and perception of self that are based solely on a European philosophy.

Running along the sidebars are the names of various famous blacks in North America and beyond. Several of them are American, mostly because it was the American Civil Rights Movement that jump-started the evolution of what it really means to be black.

I'm not a militant. In fact, I'm very inclusive and open to learning more about all cultures, including my own.

I hope that you'll be able to find a piece of yourself in some of the following recollections and stories.

After all, we're all the same on the inside.



The tree mother of Africa

The political roots of Wangari Maathai

• PRINCE RALPH OSEI

This Kenyan woman of humble beginnings inspires and continues to inspire, people from all over the world. Her story is best told by the award-winning documentary *Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai*, which Cinema Politica screened last week.

It all began several decades ago when she decided to bring women together to save the rainforests of Kenya, protect the water bodies and prevent soil erosion. Their quest was simple: plant trees. This movement to plant trees spread from one part of Kenya to another and led to the formation of the Green Belt Movement. At a time when women in Africa were marginalized, this wave of change led by Maathai was the laughing stock of men, including then president Arap Moi.

Unperturbed, Maathai was thrown into the spotlight when in 1989 she single-handedly stopped the government of Kenya from destroying Nairobi's Uhuru Park, located in the city's downtown core. She prevented the construction of a 60-story business complex in the park by writing to Western governments that were financing the proj-

ect by asking, "If you will not build this in Central Park, in New York and London, why Nairobi?"

This led to her being called very degrading names no African woman is likely to take lightly, especially when it was front-page news in the national newspapers. To add insult to injury, the Parliament of Kenya added their voice to the attacks against her.

Maathai took it upon herself to educate the populace on democracy, civil society and has been at the forefront of multi-party democracy in Kenya. Asked why she continues to fight for what she believes in despite the beatings, humiliations and personal attacks, Maathai had this to say: "You raise your consciousness to a level where you feel you must do the right thing, and the only thing to do is the right thing."

Today, Maathai's initiative has planted 40 million trees in Kenya alone. She is the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 for her work on sustainability, peace and democracy. It

is reported that on her receiving the news that she had won the Nobel Peace Prize, Maathai celebrated by going before Mount Kenya in her hometown to plant a tree.

As we celebrate Black History Month, let us celebrate the works of the Tree Mother of Africa.



America goes incognegro

Frank Wilderson III discusses American apartheid and his love-hate relationship with Canada

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

Frank Wilderson III saw the meteoric rise of Nelson Mandela in South Africa first-hand, and the unprecedented victory of American President Barack Obama in the United States from his current home in California.

The two events offer a strange sense of déjà vu: the same deafening sense of anticlimax and disappointment.

Wilderson, who grew up in Berkeley, California during the height of the Black Power and anti-war movements, and who later served as one of the African National Conference of South Africa's only two black American members, is underwhelmed by last month's historic inauguration. But that's because he's been through it all before.

"No one said that when Benazir Bhutto was elected in Pakistan, that that would be the end of horrible gender politics," said Wilderson, while taking a break from grading papers at the University of California where he now teaches. "People are confusing putting a black face onto an unethical institution as real structural change. It's not. I think if anything it will stymie [grassroots activism and] make people more politically complacent and more politically ignorant."

"I don't really look to an individual [to solve all our problems]," says Wilderson. "And this was the problem with Mandela. People looked to him for an answer and Mandela had the answer because he was part of a large revolutionary movement, which was going to create the answer together collectively. And he didn't want to be a part of that."

Wilderson was recently named the recipient of the 2008 American Book Award for his latest work, *Incognegro: A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid*.

The book goes back and forth between Wilderson's time in South Africa and the U.S., while systemically painting a portrait that is damning of both countries, and which leaves little room for redemption.

"Structurally there's really no difference between apartheid South Africa and the modern 21st century United States," says Wilderson, who was part of a subset of the ANC that opposed Nelson Mandela's moderate reforms, which he blames for stymieing real progress in South Africa.

"People are worse off now economically than they were under South African apartheid," claims Wilderson: "The current catastrophe that we see right now, a lot of it, in terms of runaway AIDS [rates] and higher concentrations of wealth in the hands of the rich, we can lay at the doorsteps of Mandela and his people."

Obama has an even harder chance of undoing not only Bush's disastrous two terms, but 400 years of black oppression.

"It's only because George Bush was so horrible. [...] If he was just destroying Indians and blacks and some Chicanos, we'd go on with business as usual. But he was destroying everybody, and Obama seemed to be a saviour for them," says Wilderson. "I would never say that there's no difference between George Bush and Barack Obama. But I would not



Former Black Panther supporter and American activist Frank Wilderson.

want to confuse the fact of there being some important differences, with saying that Obama is the 'mantle of real social change.' He's not. He's more in service to the bankers than any president has ever been."

But doesn't the fact that Americans are now ready to accept a black head of state mean the country is headed towards the more peaceful, tolerant side of the social spectrum?

"I think that, if anything, I've seen an increase in the kinds of street-level violence because of the election," he says. "What Americans want to do is put the whole history of Native American genocide and black slavery behind them as quickly and as superficially as they can."

Wilderson knows something about getting politically organized. As a 14-year-old, fresh from the provincial townscapes of Minnesota and transplanted into the inner-city streets of Berkeley, California, Wilderson was too young to be a member of the Black Panther movement. But he nevertheless remembers his run-ins with the Panthers.

"I can't really say I was a member," says Wilderson whose parents, whom he describes as 'bourgeois intellectual academics,' didn't approve of the organization. Still, Wilderson would go to the Black Panthers' headquarters after his school day was over.

"Here's how it worked," says Wilderson. "If you were under 16, you were there for political education in the Black Panthers. But once they started teaching you armed struggle, the people under 16 had to leave—unless their parents gave them a note giving them permission to be there. So once it went from political education to revolutionary struggle, I had to leave."

The term that inspired the book's name, *Incognegro*, came from Wilderson's college years where he learnt it was wisest to keep one's political affiliations concealed.

"When I was in college in New Hampshire, it was the first time that I'd heard it," says Wilderson. "We would joke with each other that if we were going to class or to meet the Dean or someone, 'now I'm travelling incognegro.' [...] When you go to work, you travel incognegro. When you go to school, you travel incognegro. When you're amongst your own, that's when you can talk about what you really think of the United States."

Despite his claims that America is as much a hotbed of intolerance and racism as it was the day it was founded, Wilderson now teaches at the UCI where he is free to discuss his ideas openly with his students.

"The university has been very good to me in terms of providing me a place to do my research," he says, while admitting the irony

that he now works for the government he was once arrested for protesting against in the 1970s.

"It's a huge contradiction," says Wilderson. "And one of the things which you might not know, which most people don't like to talk about, is that the UCI makes the atomic bombs for the government. All sorts of components of this university are involved in putting together a weapon of mass destruction that I'm 100 per cent against."

When Wilderson isn't caught between two worlds—the United States and South Africa—he's pining for a trip up north.

"I go to Canada to relieve my tension and anxiety, to get a breath of fresh air from the United States. Because, for the short time I'm going to be there, I'm going to be treated a lot better as a black person than I am here," he says. "However, I don't want that to be mistaken as a statement of support for Canada as a nation. I'm as much against Canada as I am the United States, because it's a colonial empire."

I don't have the same sense of impending doom and the possibility of street violence that I feel walking around the United States, and generally, the white people are a whole lot friendlier [in Canada]."

Wilderson is wary of making generalizations, though. "In fact, I said to a Native American friend of mine how much I love going to Canada, because I feel I can breathe and my hatred and anxiety levels go down. And she snapped at me and talked about First Nation women in British Columbia who were being mysteriously murdered and who had not been caught."

"I'd hate for the Caribbean community in Toronto, who are going through all their struggles, to think that I'm giving Canada a bill of clean health. I'm not."

Nevertheless, Wilderson plans to retire here once he has the chance—if Canada will let him. While crossing into Canada, he was interrogated by police after they discovered his involvements in protests at Berkeley, a part of his past he had "literally forgotten" until then.

But if Canada reminded Wilderson of his days protesting the American war machine in the '70s, the States remind him how much more adept the Parliamentary system is for social change.

"In Canada, people talk about all kinds of problems. But you have a Parliamentary system, which means that there are all sorts of possibilities, like forming coalitions, or taking down a government and having a vote of non-confidence. And the Parliamentary system is such that more people, as well as more than two political parties, can seriously contest political power."

Dr. Frank Wilderson III is a professor of political theory and cultural studies at the University of California Irvine.

Wilderson, a former Black Panther supporter, has been critically acclaimed for his fiction and creative writing and is the recipient of numerous awards including the Judith Stronach Award for Poetry.

Black pioneers

- Harriet Tubman: African-American Abolitionist; helped free over 300 American slaves
- Condoleezza Rice: America's first black female National Security Advisor and later Secretary of State; accomplished pianist
- Colin Powell: America's first black Secretary of State
- Ronald McNair: American physicist and N.A.S.A. astronaut on board during the Challenger disaster
- Martin Luther King, Jr.: leader of Montgomery Bus Boycott, and that sparked the American civil rights movement
- Oprah Winfrey: American media mogul who revolutionized daytime television
- Marcus Garvey: pan-African philosopher who inspired the Nation of Islam and Rastafarian movement
- Ida B. Wells-Barnett: American sociologist and civil rights advocate active in the Women's Suffrage Movement
- Booker T. Washington: American educator and author (Up From Slavery) who ameliorated relations between blacks and whites during the early 20th century
- Mary Bethune: American civil rights leader who founded Bethune-Cookman University; she also advised President Franklin D. Roosevelt and became a member of his Black Cabinet
- Harriet E. Giles and Sophia P. Packard: founders of Spelman College, America's first historically black female institution of higher learning
- Henry Louis Gates, Jr.: American scholar and intellectual who was the first black awarded the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fellowship
- Dr. David J. Peck: America's first black to graduate from a medical school

Continued on next page



'West Indies' is a synonym for The Caribbean. The term West Indies was coined by Christopher Columbus who, upon reaching the Americas, thought he was in Asia.

Mixing it up, or putting black history in Montreal

A perspective of the impact of black presence

• DOROTHY W. WILLIAMS, PH.D

Dr. Dorothy Williams is a historian who specializes in Black Canadian History.

Williams, a graduate of McGill University, has authored several books on black Canadians such as Blacks in Montreal 1628-1986: An Urban Demography.

Williams was made a Quebec Laureate in 2002.

Black history in Montreal is largely unknown. Sure, many people recognize that blacks live in the Montreal region in 2009. And yes, many go to dances, exhibits, concerts, occasional lectures and special events during Black History Month each February. That is a typical Montreal thing to do: we are quite adroit at exposing ourselves to new experiences in Black Montreal.

Still, this does not change anything, as I contend that most Montrealers have little knowledge about black history, and even less knowledge about black history in Montreal.

I will even concede that many know about African-Americans, the great behemoth to the south. They can, if prodded, come up with a list of five, perhaps 10, sig-

nificant African-Americans, be they male or female, with careers as writers, athletes, politicians, actors or even hip-hop stars.

Yet I challenge you to produce a list of similar personages in Canada. You can? Great, now narrow that list to Montreal. Go ahead; ask your friends or family members to help. Ah, forget the list and just answer these quick questions: "What is the significance of August 1, 1834?" or "Why

important to Montreal?" I could only think, "Because Montreal's black history is Montreal history."

Certainly we can acknowledge that the Italians, Irish, or Greeks, the Chinese or Portuguese, and others, brought unique elements to the greatness that is Montreal. Well, take note because the early beginnings of Ville-Marie are thanks to blacks, too—alongside the French who had spiced up the tiny colony.

So when asked, "Why black history is important to Montreal?" I could only think, "Because Montreal's black history is Montreal history."

did the slave-owners in Montreal send Joseph Papineau to Quebec City in 1801?" Here is an easy one: "What was the most likely employment in Montreal for black doctors, lawyers, or labourers up until the 1930s?" Maybe a few will know two of the three, but I suspect that most readers are stumped on all of them. Sadly, I rest my case—nigh 20 years beyond Black History Month and no further ahead.

I am a writer and historian of Montreal. My singular lens is on the impact of the black presence on the island's development. So when asked, "Why black history is

Then with the influx of the British, the Hessians and Jews the mix morphed again, all the while helping to create the "joie" or "flavour" that permeates our Montreal mega-polis.

Historically for blacks, Montreal has been a unique spot on the continent—at once a terminus, a stopover, and even a haven. For others, they called the city home; they shone brightly here when few other cities would let them rise. Sometimes it was just enough to be left alone, at peace to work and raise their family while other blacks had to "make do" as

they pushed up against the low glass ceiling that limited their possibilities.

Fear sometimes dogged blacks, and at other times, despair. Yet the beacon on Montreal seemed always to attract more blacks. Over time, as their presence spanned the urban landscape, some blacks eventually pushed the ceiling higher.

So why is black history important to Montreal? It's a tale of community survival, success and failure in a city whose social, cultural and economic development helped to shape a province and a country. Blacks have always influenced and contributed in all these areas.

Montreal's Golden Mile—built by railway wealth—took full advantage of the city's cheap black labour. Montreal's world-renowned jazz has its roots in the early black speakeasies and clubs where the genius of black musicians generated enormous wealth in the '20s during Montreal's golden age of jazz.

Black history is important because it is an example of courage and determination in this city. It is a narrative of resilience and a multi-lingual and multi-cultural mix that gives Montreal its soul.



GRAPHIC SAGINE CAVÉ & MATHIEU BIARD

White girl in the corner

Trying to understand black issues in today's world

• JOELLE LEMIEUX

I guess it's naïve to say that I don't see racism as an issue any more—maybe even more so to say that I'm not sure why it is.

I wasn't the only white person in the room when the discussion of Black History Month came up. In fact, as is usually the case, I was probably still in the majority.

The topic made me squirm; I was so uncomfortable, I think I was blushing.

I don't know what a black issue is—and even worse, what if I guess at one and end up being insulting? Oh God, that would be even worse than sitting there like a deer in the headlights.

The only thing I could think about was this episode of Meet the Press with David Gregory. Bill Cosby was part of the roundtable, talking about what an amazing feeling it was to vote for American President Barack Obama.

Obviously, I knew how Cosby felt to have one of his own voted into office. When former

astronaut Marc Garneau was elected in the last federal election (and he's white, just like me!) it was "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." The sense of accomplishment for a simple, homegrown astronaut to make it all the way to the Canadian House of Commons... unheard of!

White people, well, they're a dime a dozen. I really couldn't have cared less what Garneau's skin colour was (who am I, Hitler?)

On second thought no, not at all. It happens every day.

That's the truth and we all know it. White people, well, we're a dime a dozen. I really couldn't have cared less what Garneau's skin colour was.

So, this is what I've come up with: I think it

comes down to plain, old sibling rivalry.

Think about this analogy: it's been jealousy all along. Our black brothers and sisters got the ridiculously cool (and equally untamable) hair, "the beat" (if you follow), and that smooth, dark chocolate skin.

Ooh, I'm turning green already—but is it jealousy or illness? I'm suddenly nervous.

This is going to print and I have a sneaking suspicion I'm not allowed to say those things—am I allowed to say those things? About the hair, and the music?

And that's the point. I think we've hit a place where racism is so embedded in our history that we're desperate to be everything but. Admittedly, it's a better place to be than where we were just 200 years ago, but it doesn't mean the work is done.

Like men and women, people of all races are struggling for this idea of equality, where we can look at each other as equals. Not because we're taught to, not because we have to—but because we are.

Shifting perceptions

An American's hope after Obama

• TOZER WARIEN

It's common knowledge that blacks have always held a negative portrayal in the media and pop-culture, a situation that is generally, at times, their fault.

Black men—especially Americans like me—are almost always portrayed as the gangster, the rapper, the bad guy, the soul who always has to use force or negative measures to accomplish

his goal. And the most profound image black girls see of themselves, as spoon fed by the media, is that of the single mother or that of the woman who must use sex to take herself some place or somewhere.

But with the dawn of Obama's presidency it seems that the media will have to take a turn on what it defines as "black."

With a black face in what some might consider the highest politi-

cal office in the West, the general image of what is black will have to be moulded and developed. No longer will black youth be forced to believe that what they see on TV or what they see around them is the highest calling that they can aspire to. I believe that President Obama will raise the standard on more than just perceptions, but on ideologies and definitions and descriptions.

Yes, it may seem like one is

placing a tremendous burden on shoulders that have yet to prove anything significant, but if the sheer fact of his ascension into office is not enough to change non-belief into belief, then one can barely imagine what is. The figure of Obama is a lasting reminder of the potential and capability of not only black youth, but also driven youth, youth with the mind and goal to make a change.

Black pioneers

- Augustine Tolton: America's first black Catholic priest
- Sarah E. Goode: America's first black woman to hold a patent
- Barack Obama: America's first black President
- Michael Steele: America's Republican National Committee's first black Chairman
- Tiger Woods: America's first black to win a Grand Slam event in golf
- Franklin Raines: America's first black CEO of a Fortune 500 company
- Dr. Mae Jemison: America's first black woman Astronaut
- Forest Whitaker: America's first black to win Best Actor Award at the Cannes Film Festival
- Halle Berry: America's first black woman to win Best Actress at the Academy Awards (Oscars)
- Sidney Poitier: America's first black to win Best Actor at the Academy Award (Oscars)
- Beverly Johnson: America's first black female on the cover of ELLE Magazine
- George Dixon, Canadian: first black world boxing champion
- Grant Fuhr, Canadian: elected to NHL Hall of Fame
- Ferguson Jenkins, Canadian: first black and First Canadian elected to Baseball Hall of Fame
- Willie O'Ree, Canadian: first black hockey player in the NHL
- Deborah Cox, Canadian: holds longest-running #1 single in the history of Billboard Magazine's R&B charts
- Oscar Peterson, Canadian: deemed Canada's greatest jazz pianist

Continued on next page

Black pioneers

- Maestro, Canadian: first Canadian rapper with a Top 40 hit

- Jean Augustine, Canadian: first black Cabinet Minister

- Lincoln Alexander, Canadian: first black Member of Parliament and Deputy Speaker in the House of Commons

- Rosemary Brown, Canadian: first black woman to run for leadership of a Canadian political party

- Emery Barnes, Canadian: along with Rosemary Brown, were the first blacks elected to a legislative office in British Columbia

- Delos Davis, Canadian: first black lawyer in Canada

- Michaëlle Jean, Canadian: first black appointed Governor General of Canada

- Daurene Lewis, Canadian: first black female mayor in North America

- Stuart Parker, Canadian: first (and only) black leader of a political party in Canada

- Juanita Westmoreland-Traoré, Canadian: first appointed black judge in Quebec

- Anderson Abbott, Canadian: first black physician in Canada

- Rose Fortune, Canadian: first female and first black female police officer in Canada

- William Hall, Canadian: first black awarded Victoria Cross

- Aaron Mossell, Canadian: first black to graduate from University of Pennsylvania Law School

- Nathan Mossell, Canadian: first black to graduate from University of Pennsylvania Medial School

- Mary Winslow, Canadian: first black to graduate from the University of New Brunswick

Continued on next page

The lonesome educator

Teachings on degrees of 'blackness'

• ESINAM BECKLEY

"What nationality are you?"

"Where are you from?"

Or the dreaded "What are you?"

My answer is usually, "I'm from the nation of Canada, I'm from Canada, and I am mostly human."

What is race? This is a loaded question. Do not expect to leave a conversation that begins on this question easily without feeling frustrated, or without feeling misunderstood, especially if you are "multi-racial" like me.

One can get easily upset when speaking of issues on being multi-racial. Is this because of the word itself? Is it because we created this word less than 500 years ago and are realizing now that it's completely irrelevant? Were we hoping that it could be relevant so that our petty obsessions with certain "racial" irrelevancies could seem relevant?

According to Michael Banton's *Ethnic and Racial Consciousness*, "one of the earliest uses of the word 'race' to designate a set of people is to be seen in the reference to 'the race and stock of Abraham' in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* of 1570. The set of people so designated were Abraham's lineage. The word has continued to be used in this sense down to the present time."

We know that you can be from a culture but not necessarily of that culture's "race." You can also be of a certain race and not be into the culture. How many times

have you thought of white or black or French or Hispanic (yep, language is apparently a culture too, not to mention religion) as having physical characteristics?

Barack Obama identifies as an African-American. This is something expected living in the United States. Perhaps it has a lot to do with the history of the "one-drop rule."

For those who don't know, the one-drop rule is the notion that anyone who has any history of black/African blood or ancestry is considered black. This means even if you're see-through but you have a grandparent who is black, you are black. This idea stems from the many years of slavery.

In the American south during slavery, blacks with lighter skin would live closer to the plantation house. Also many of the darker-skinned blacks worked the fields, while the more pale skin tones were inside the house.

In Brazil, however, it works in the opposite direction. If you have straight hair and dark skin you may be considered white. And during apartheid in South Africa, they assessed "blackness" by administering the "pencil test."

The pencil test involved inserting a pencil into a person's hair. If you were indeed black,

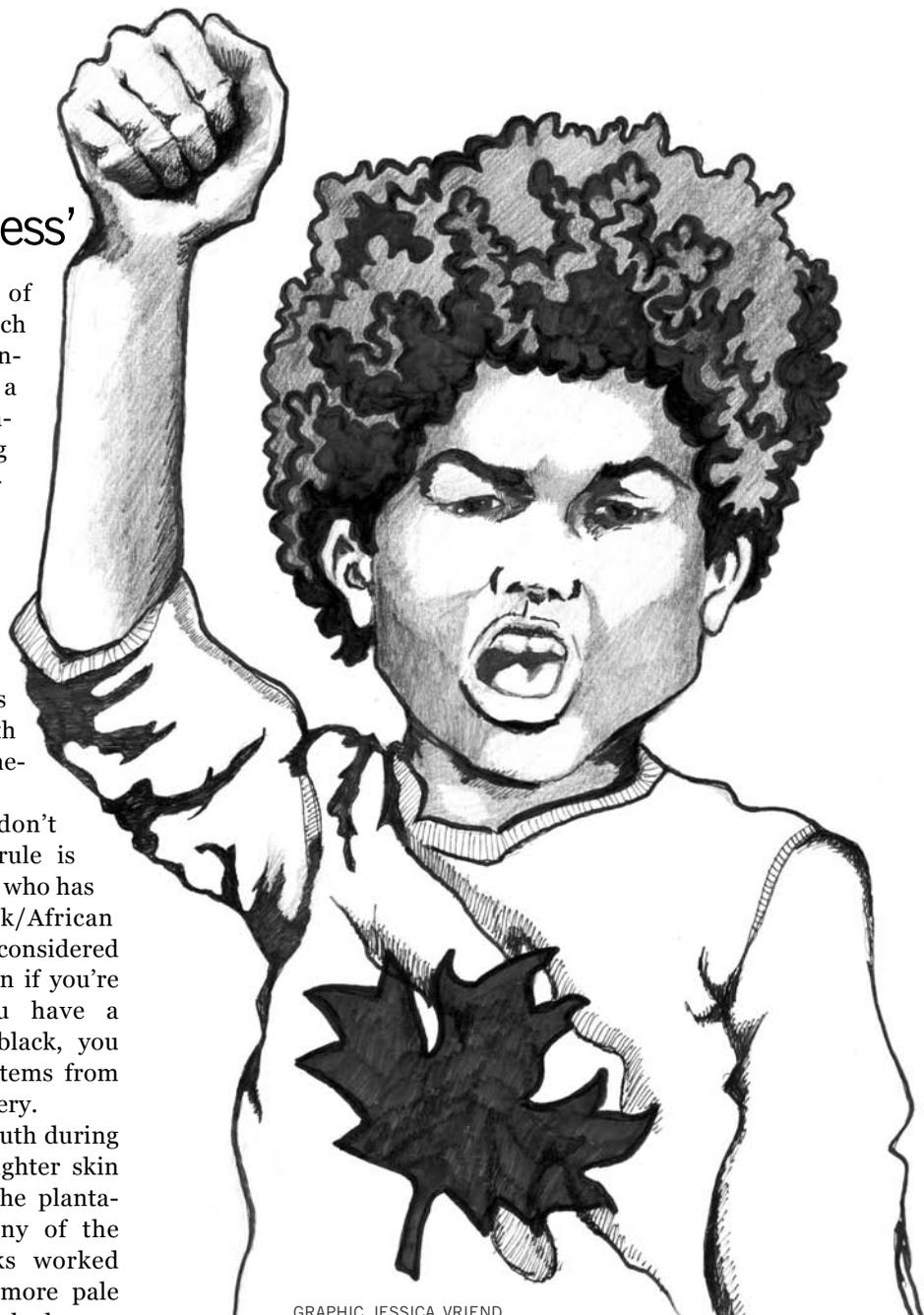
the pencil would hold its place. If you were not, it would fall out of your hair.

I think it is still hard—and will continue to be—for children born into multi-racial families. Hard in the best possible way, that is.

You are a teacher unknowingly, whether you choose to identify with one side of your heritage or the other. You are a teacher

because despite appearances, despite your "lineage," your cultural background or "race" is up to you. You are the culture and background that you choose to be from; you are what you say you are.

Others should not be deciding the factors. They should first and foremost be asking, "With whom or how do you identify in general?"



GRAPHIC JESSICA VRIEND

Coping with minority issues... twice

Not feeling, and not looking, like everybody else

• ERIC OMIKUNLE

I am writing you this note to clear my mind on a few things.

Take a pee break now; this may go on awhile.

Ok.

During the last 25 years of my life I have felt torn in two different ways. The first in being bi-racial; I never knew where I fit in. I felt a strong part of me has always connected more to white people since I was raised in a small town.

I never really saw myself as different from my friends, just that I had more of a tan. It wasn't 'til around the third grade, when I started to grow my hair out, that I very quickly realized the texture was different from that of my

friends'. At first I was confused, not about being bi-racial but about what it was like to be African.

My parents—even when they were together—never lived in the same country. My father remained in Nigeria as my mom and I moved back to Canada. To put things lightly, their marriage wasn't the greatest. Being raised by my mother, who is French, Irish and part Polynesian, I always felt that that was who I was. It wasn't 'til years later that I started to embrace my Nigerian heritage.

To tell you the truth, I really don't think of myself as 'bi-racial.' I prefer the term 'mixed race.' Reason being, I would never want to leave out any part of ancestry that has made me into the man I am today.

The second way in which I have felt torn is regarding my sexual orientation. I am a gay man. When people hear those words, they think of the struggle I went through to come out. The truth is, my coming out story was quite simple: my mother is a shrink. So my life has been filled with expression and thinking outside the box.

My father, on the other hand, doesn't know. I don't really consider him a strong part of my life, so I feel he needs to earn my trust for him to learn that aspect of who I am. I, myself, don't really feel the need to discuss whom I want to share my life with.

For the record, I am not Eric 'The Mixed Race Gay Guy'... To those who love me, I am just Eric.



Yolande "Nikki" Giovanni is an American poet, writer and activist. Giovanni, an English and Poetry professor at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia, delivered a poem during the Virginia Tech Massacre vigil. This is an excerpt: "We know we did nothing to deserve it. But neither does a child in Africa dying of AIDS. Neither do the invisible children walking the night away to avoid being captured by a rogue army. Neither does the baby elephant watching his community being devastated for ivory. Neither does the Mexican child looking for fresh water."

Black pioneers

- Donovan Bailey, Canadian: first Canadian to win a gold medal in the Olympics' 100m dash
- Shonda Rhimes: America's first black to create and executive produce a Top 10 network series
- Michael Jackson: the King of Pop whose sound revolutionized contemporary rock, R&B, rap and pop
- Jimi Hendrix: legendary hard rock pioneer and guitarist
- Lorraine Hansberry: first black woman to have her work produced on Broadway and one of the first openly gay African-Americans
- Jean Baptiste Point du Sable: first settler and founder of Chicago
- Matthew Henson: on first expedition to plant American flag in the North Pole
- W.C. Handy: America's Father of the blues
- W.E.B. DuBois: founder of the NAACP and America's first black to get a PhD from Harvard University
- John Coltrane: American innovator in modern jazz
- Abel Muzorewa: first black Prime Minister of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia
- Wayne Adams, Canadian: Nova Scotia's first black member of the legislative assembly
 - Robert Sutherland, Canadian: first black graduate of a Canadian university (Queen's) and first known black man to study law in North America
- George Washington Carver: American scientist and botanist who invented peanut butter
- Thomas Jennings: America's first black to own a patent

Black People Mentality

• KYM DOMINIQUE-FERGUSON

What's the difference?
It doesn't make any sense
You're just gonna slide back down into the same mentality
The:
Black People Mentality

It's like all the fighting our forefathers
And their forefathers before them
And their forefathers before them
... was useless
Because... we still have the same...
Black People Mentality

Having no pride in the colour of our skin
The texture of our hair
The history of our culture
Because they just think and keep:
Black People Mentality

What is this mentality
I keep referring too...
You know it...
...He knows it
...She knows it... They all know it
It's:
Black People Mentality

The mentality that keeps
Needles in our brothers' arms
Guns in our children's palms
Pants way down below the waist
And that thing which is called Hip-Hop
Is just a hardly heard voice with way too much bass
Black People Mentality

Which keeps children fatherless with their mothers alone
Which keeps the unity from happening in the community
Because gang war and violence threaten our streets
Cuz they ignorant, and they got:
Black People Mentality

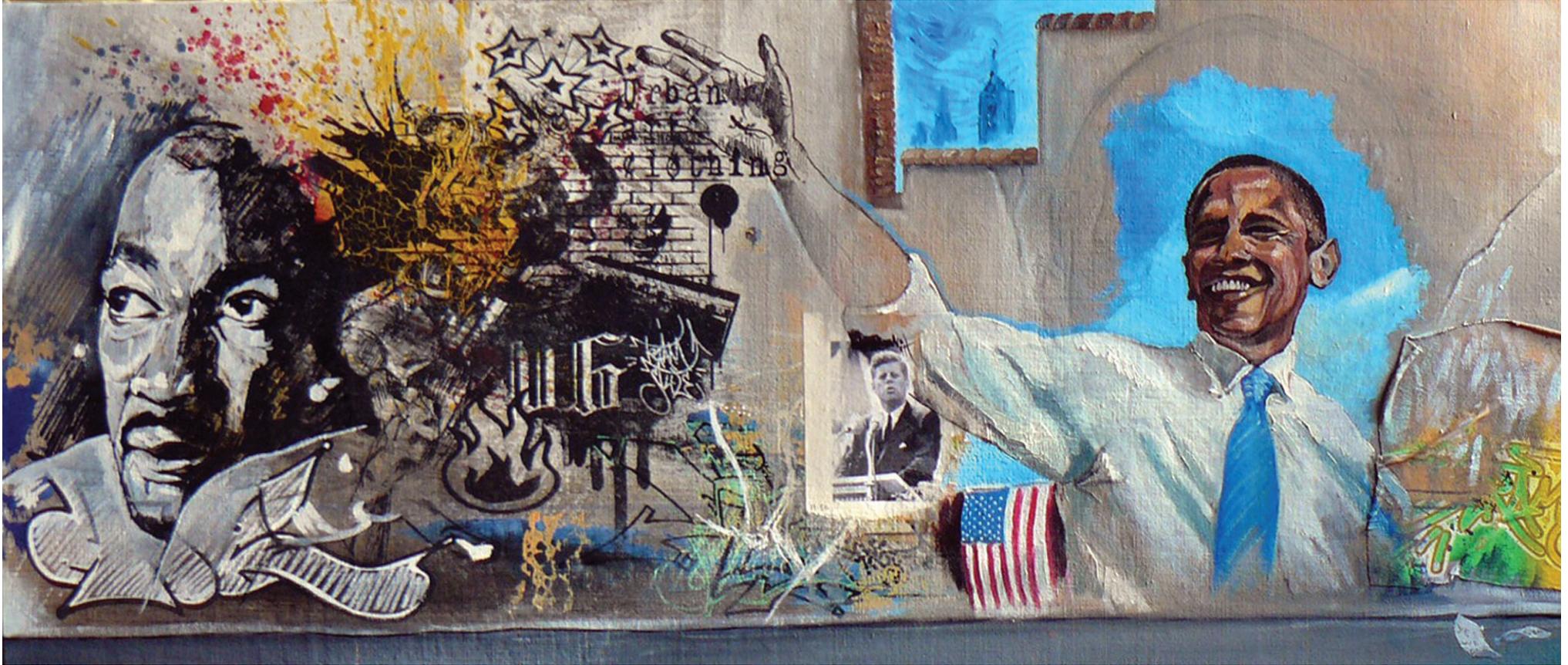
This thing which makes men spend money on clothes
Instead of their children
Women spend money on their perms
Then cry that they don't have next month's rent
Make things people like: Malcolm, Marcus, Martin and Rosa
Fought so hard and long to build up and try to accomplish
Makes things
Go to SH...!
Black People Mentality

So quick to give up, let every minute slip
Go to waste
Spend time chilling and listening to music
Instead of gettin' an education
But I see nowhere
In my future
Where I will be saying, "May I take your order please sir?"
And permanently flipping burgers
But you don't care do you? With you:
Black People Mentality

You see, if we can just get past the materialism of the world
And forget just once how much our hair curls
The trendy-ness of a pair of shoes
The Expensiveness of a pair of boots
Just look inside yourself
Deep into your soul
And see yourself for who you are
And remember that your ancestors came from very far
Fought and lost many battles
But they won the war!!!
The war for YOUR FREEDOM
For you to live as you please
For you to be able to walk the streets
For you to be all you can be
For you to see Obama, and the opening to all the possibilities
Cuz that was the original!
And forever will be!
The Real:
Black People Mentality!

Continued on page 8

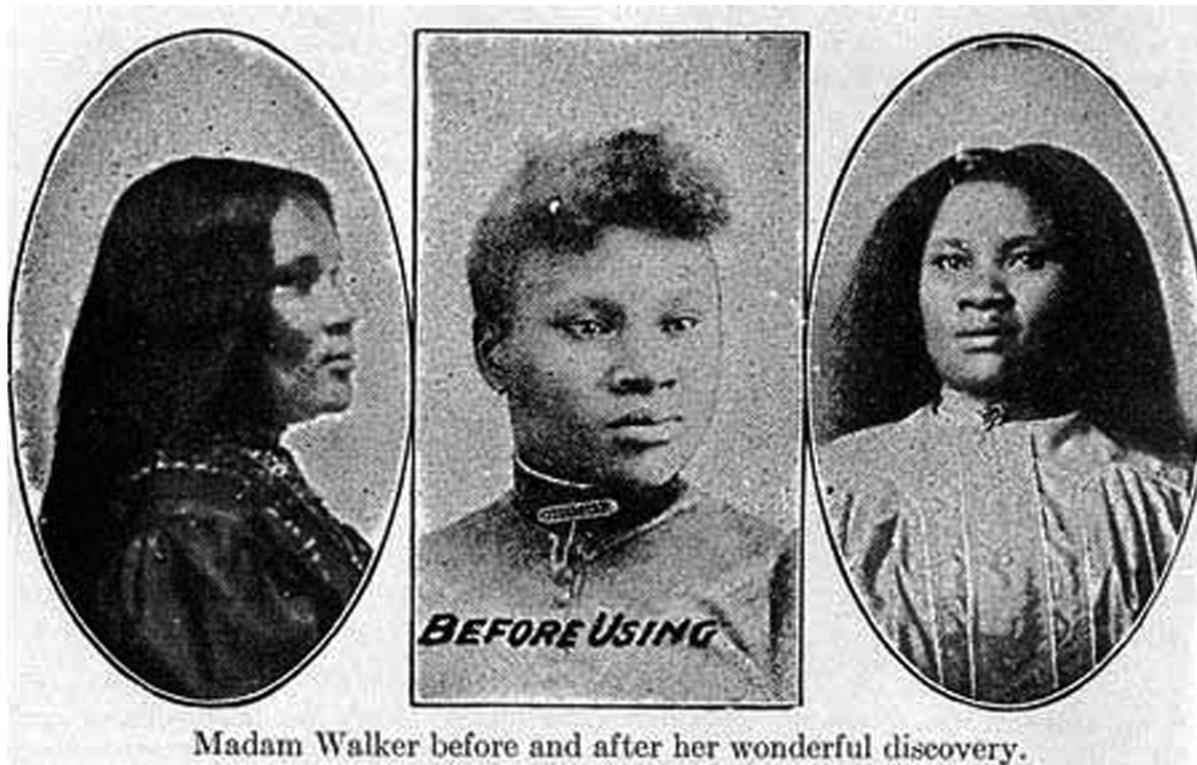
Colour and candour: expression through art form



Black pioneers

- Frederick Jones: invented refrigeration system for long-haul trucks, as well as over 40 patents in refrigeration
- Lewis Latimer: invented the electric lamp and carbon filaments for light bulbs; only African-American member of Thomas Edison's engineering laboratory
- Elijah McCoy, Canadian: invented the lubricating cup for steam engines and automatic sprinkler, as well as about 60 other patents
- Garrett Morgan: invented the gas mask and automated traffic signals
- Sarah "Madam C.J. Walker" Breedlove: invented chemical hair straightener
- Granville Woods: invented the telegraph, which was later bought as a "telephony" by Alexander Graham Bell; owner of several patents
- Roger Young: America's first black female to get a PhD in zoology
- Norbert Rillieux: expert in applied mechanics who invented the evaporating pan
- Percy Julian: invented physostigmine (a drug used in treatment of glaucoma), first to synthesize cortisone (for arthritis treatment), and various other scientific inventions
- Herman Branson: collaborated with Nobel laureate Linus Pauling and Robert Corey for invention of alpha and gamma helical structures of proteins
- Benjamin Banneker: a mathematician, he was the first African-American to have a scientific book published in 1791
- Maya Angelou: African-American poet and composer
- Yolande "Nikki" Giovanni: leading American poet in the Black Arts Movement
- Charles Fuller: African-American playwright

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An unbe-weavable legacy

A black woman's journey through hair 'care'

• PIERRETTE MASIMANGO

"There you go, now you look beautiful."

My hairdresser had just finished knotting the last braid on my head. I remember looking in the mirror and thinking that my new full head of long braids did make me look beautiful. Unfortunately I was six years old and did not realize the significance of this affirmation.

Black women have been changing the appearance of their hair for centuries. Be it through braids—like myself—hair weaves, chemical straighteners or wigs, there is no denying that this practice is deeply rooted in history.

Slaves with more Caucasian features were preferred by the slave masters and were designated to do less demanding domestic chores. Thus for centuries black women have been straightening and lengthening their naturally curly and short locks.

Although I hardly think about the legacy behind my hair extensions, I can say I have tried it all. In the search for convenience and peace of mind, I have settled on braided hair extensions. Here is my journey; consider it a crash course in black hair and the frustrations that often come with it:

Like all black girls, I was born with an afro. My hair was short, coarse and extremely curly (think Lauryn Hill). This meant it knotted itself easily. My hair regiment consisted of a weekly comb-through that was at times painful

followed by an attempt at styling it. My mother would cornrow my hair (think Alicia Keys).

I remember that in day-care and kindergarten, other girls had beautifully designed cornrows. I did not. Where other girls had cornrows that twisted and turned, I had four to six plaits that went straight along my head. Needless

In a procedure called "Torsening," the pilgrims get their heads shaved to rid themselves of their ego.

to say, braiding was not my mother's favourite activity. So she brought me to the hairdresser when I was five years old and I got a perm.

The perm, or relaxer, is a process that chemically straightens curly locks by breaking the bonds of the hair and loosening the curls. Highly popular, the perm does give curly hair the appearance of being naturally straight. I came to realize, however, that the results are only nice for a few days.

Even as a five-year-old, I knew that this practice required a lot of maintenance. Thus my mother brought me to the hairdresser on a weekly basis for a wash and conditioning. When I would leave the salon my hair would blow in the wind. The minute I washed it, I was back to stiff hair. It seemed that the perm was just as much work as the cornrows, but the day my hairdresser burnt my scalp was the straw that broke the

camel's back.

The chemicals used to relax the hair are highly toxic. One day my hairdresser forgot about me and left the perm in my hair for too long. I knew something was not right as I felt a slight tingling sensation. Quickly, the omnipresent sensation became an intolerable burning.

The damage had been done. I had no hair on the entire back of my head. Needless to say, we never went back to that hairdresser. My mother levelled-off my hair and for a good couple of months I looked like a six-year-old boy.

When a sufficient amount of hair grew back on my head, my mother brought me to another hairdresser. After eight long hours of sitting on a pillow, I was done. The dresser had styled micro-braids for me (think Brandy). Little did I know that I had found my hair match.

Almost 20 years later, I still have braids and it seems that they have become a part of me. Even when I have attempted other hairstyles, I have always seemed to come back to my braids. The bottom line is that they are convenient. Braids offer a peace of mind that no weave can do on a good day.

It seems like every black

Wordology:

Braids: hairstyle through interweaving the hair—commonly used in conjunction with synthetic hair that allows the braids to hang freely.

Micro-braids: extremely thin braids.

Afro: hairstyle originating with black persons, where the hair is allowed to grow naturally and acquire a bushy appearance.

Cornrow: hairstyle consisting of parallel braids plaited tightly against the head from front to back.

Perm: a chemical straightener applied to the hair (Note: a perm will usually disallow growing an afro).

Weave: hairpieces that are either sewn or glued into the hair to make it appear longer than it really is (Note: Hollywood stars of all origins commonly use weaves).

Wig: hairpiece that covers the entire scalp.

woman and their momma have a weave. Sadly among them there is always one who has the steel wool mishap that I like to call the "chapeau." A weave on a bad hair day is simply unfortunate.

All jokes aside, the hair industry is a multi-billion dollar industry. Although black women make a rather big share of this market, they are not the only ones. With the popularity of hair extensions among celebrities like Paris Hilton and the Pussycat Dolls, hair extensions have become mainstream.

Talk show hosts Oprah Winfrey and Tyra Banks give women—black, white, Hispanic, and Asian—hair extensions regularly during makeover shows. We often do not stop to think where this hair comes from.

On the other side of the world, millions of pilgrims make their way to the Tirumala temple in India to donate their hair. In a procedure called "Torsening," the pilgrims get their heads shaved to rid themselves of their ego. Ironically, this hair, considered high quality, is cleansed and processed to manufacture hair extensions.

As North American women, we have an ingrained complex when it comes to hair. We should perhaps learn a thing or two from these pilgrims. Although hair is a signifier of beauty in many cultures it is not the end all be all. A shaved head is more convenient than an afro, a perm, or a weave on any day.



GRAPHIC VIVIEN LEUNG

'GBM' vs. 'BGM'

Deciding whether being black comes before being gay

• LARRY DUPLCHAN

Larry Duplechan is an American author and musician.

Duplechan, a resident of Los Angeles, California, has written five acclaimed gay-themed novels, including Blackbird and Got 'til it's Gone.

It's February: Black History Month.

And notwithstanding the Great Moment in Black History that took place last month, for me this Black History Month bears many of the earmarks of every Black History Month in recent years: I am in the midst of my Black History Month DVD Film Festival (last weekend, a Lena Horne double feature of *Cabin in the Sky* followed by *Stormy Weather*; this weekend, a Sidney Poitier double-header: *A Raisin in the Sun* and *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*).

My iPod listening, which usually leans heavily towards classic rock—Beatles, Steve Miller, Fleetwood Mac, a good deal of Joni Mitchell—has for the past week or so been dominated by Billie Holiday, Aretha Franklin, and the *Cadillac Records* soundtrack album. And, right on schedule, just yesterday a (straight, white, female) work colleague interrupted my lunch (a cold chicken sandwich in my hand, and Muddy Waters' "Hoochie-Coochie Man" on the iPod) to ask me what she prefaced as a "very personal question":

"What's more important to you?" she asked. "Your identity as a black man, or your identity as a gay man?" I told her, without hesitation, that I consider myself a gay black man.

Now, I have heard and read gay men of colour go on about how their blackness and gayness are equally important, completely integral to the them in them, how their gayness is the warp and blackness to woof of the fabric of their being, and yadda yadda yadda, and good for them. As for me, if we must divide an already miniscule subset of the population into Black Gay Men and Gay

Black Men, then let my team jersey bear the logo "GBM".

As a Caucasian buddy of mine said to me many years ago as I was making some pronouncement or other about being a Black Man in America, "Oh, Larry, you're not black—you're gay."

In my observation, a minority person or group's sense of minority is directly proportional to the extent to which that person or group has been made to feel downtrodden. Most of the frustrating, infuriating societal crapola I've had to endure in my life has been dealt me because of my gayness.

As a child, I was mocked, called names, beat up, and otherwise treated like dirt, not because I was black (to this day, I have yet to be called the "N-word" by anyone but another "N"), but because I was a sissy.

As a child, I was mocked, called names, beat up, and otherwise treated like dirt, not because I was black (to this day, I have yet to be called the "N-word" by anyone but another "N"), but because I was a sissy. To paraphrase black—and recently out lesbian—comedienne Wanda Sykes, it's not like I had to come out to my parents as black. But I did come out to my parents as gay. My father wept, my mother called me a pervert; and at the age of 19, I was disinherited.

Oh, it didn't stick: relations between my parents and myself have warmed considerably over the ensuing three decades. But when your mother says (as mine continues to say), "I love you," followed by "but I can't accept your lifestyle because of what the Bible says," you truly know what it is to be a minority in your own family.

As an adult, the fact that I have chosen to share my life, my bed and my bank accounts with a man has coloured just about every major life decision I've made. I live in California, at least in part because it is one of very few states offering any legal recognition of same-sex couples, in the form of domestic partner-

ship registration.

I am an executive secretary rather than an executive. The money's not as good, but when you're a male secretary, it's pretty much understood that you're gay: no muss, no fuss, no pesky glass ceiling to bruise your head upon.

When my husband and I plan vacations, recreation, dinner dates, just about anything, question number one (about the country, the state, the hotel, the restaurant) is, 'are they gay-friendly?' When we two middle-aged men arrive, intending to share one king-size bed, will we be welcomed? Will we be given a cold

shoulder by the check-in clerk? Or will we be lynched?

I've never been refused service at a Denny's for being black; but my husband, our two best friends and I were kept waiting for nearly an hour for a table at Monty's steak house in Woodland Hills, California. In the 21st century! It was my husband's birthday, and we had made a reservation.

But we were four well-groomed men with no women in our party and management made it clear that we were not welcome. We finally walked out, making a certain amount of noise in the process—when I invited the snarky maitre d' to kiss my ass, he simply smiled and said, "Thank you and good night, sir"—and drove as fast as the law would allow to Café d'Etoile, our favourite gay restaurant in West Hollywood, reserving a table on the way by cell phone.

I even vote gay. My parents, like many black folk of their generation, look to their church pastor for guidance before heading to the polls. I know for a fact that many in their church campaigned vigorously in favour of California Proposition 8 (the initiative

70

per cent of California's African-American voters opted in favour of Prop 8

which, unless overturned by the California Supreme Court, will rescind the right of same-sex couples to marry, which right was granted by that same Court nine months ago). I, on the other hand, usually check a candidate's record on gay rights issues, "don't-ask-don't-tell", same-sex marriage, etc.; or I simply check the recommendations of the Stonewall Democrats (the self-proclaimed "National Voice of LGBT Democrats"), secure in my belief that this organization shares my values as a politically liberal gay man.

One more thing about Prop 8: 94 per cent of California's African-American voters chose Barack Obama—no big surprise there—while 70 per cent of California's African-American voters opted in favour of Prop 8, saying a heart-felt "Oh Lordy, no!" to same sex marriage. Doesn't exactly make a gay black man feel like part of the "black community." Not this one, anyway.

The records show that for previous generations of queer black folk (from blues belter Bessie Smith and poet Langston Hughes, through civil rights pioneer Bayard Rustin and novelist James Baldwin), race issues took precedence over issues of sexuality. More than understandable when black men and women were standing at the end of the line, sitting at the back of the bus, and hanging by their necks from Southern trees.

But it's a brand new day for black people, straight ones anyway. There's a black man in the White House, and for just about any American of colour you ask, that makes it a whole new world.

And yet, I still can't marry the love of my life; fags are the last group of people (well, except for blondes) that it's okay to tell slimy jokes about; and you can still pretty much get away with murdering a gay man if you claim he came onto you. So as of this Black History Month, I can say that I've been black and I've been gay and gay is tougher.

But that's just me.

Black pioneers

- Zora Hurston: African-American novelist and playwright whose works include *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

- Alice Walker: African-American novelist whose works include *The Color Purple*

- Richard Wright: African-American author whose works focused around the civil rights movement

- Ignatius Sancho: first Colombian writer and composer of African descent

- Marlene Jennings: first black female Member of Parliament elected from Quebec

- Dr. Benjamin Carson: American neurosurgeon who made medical history with separation of Siamese twins; he later did a cameo in *Stuck on You*

- George Crum: African/Native-American who invented the potato chip — Bill T. Jones: world-renown African-American choreographer and dancer

- Toni Morrison: African-American Nobel laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner for her literary works

- Rosa Parks: American whose actions sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the major part of the civil rights movement

- James Cleveland "Jesse" Owens: American athlete who was the first to win four gold medals at a single Olympics

- Elijah Muhammad: leader of the Nation of Islam from 1934-1975; also early mentor to Malcolm X

- Malcolm X: civil rights activist; also early mentor to Louis Farrakhan

- Louis Farrakhan: head of the Nation of Islam

- Archibald Alexander: designed the Whitehurst Freeway in Washington, D.C.

Continued on next page

Black pioneers

- Jesse Jackson: American civil rights activist; first black Democratic presidential candidate
- Al Sharpton: American civil rights and equal rights advocate
- Duke Ellington: influential American jazz artist
- George Clarke, Canadian: poet, playwright and historian on Blacks in Canada
- Mathieu de Costa: multilingual navigator of Samuel de Champlain and other European exploring parties; first black person in Canada
- Olivier Le Jeune: first known black person to live in Canada, originally from Madagascar
- Chimamanda Adichie: award-winning Nigerian novelist
- Chuck Berry: considered "the real" King of Rock 'n' Roll who was an inspiration to Elvis Presley
- Portia White, Canadian: Nova Scotian musician who headlined at the 1964 Charlottetown Confederation for the Arts
- John Ware, Canadian: cowboy who helped found the Bar U Ranch in the Northwest Territories
- Mary Ann Shadd, Canadian: first woman publisher in North America; first woman to enrol in Howard University Law School
- Nathaniel Dett, Canadian: famous composer and musician whose music is still performed, especially by the Nathaniel Dett Chorale
- Josiah Henson, Canadian: most notable for his portrayal of Harriet Beecher in Uncle Tom's Cabin
- Addie Aylestock, Canadian: first ordained black woman minister in Canada

Continued on next page



Rosa Parks, an American civil rights activist, was no one special; just a black woman who refused to move to the back of the bus because she was tired. When Parks was arrested, the Montgomery Bus Boycott soon followed in Montgomery, Alabama. A supreme court ruling the following year deemed segregated buses as unconstitutional, which sparked the civil rights movement.

A quiet hero

Not all heroes are made of pomp and circumstance

• MARLENE JENNINGS

Marlene Jennings is a Member of Parliament for the Notre-Dame-de-Grace-Lachine riding, home to Concordia University's Loyola campus.

Jennings was born and raised in the Montreal area and briefly attended Concordia University. She later earned her law degree from the Université du Québec à Montréal.

Jennings has been an MP for over 10 years and is currently Deputy House Leader in the House of Commons.

Recently, much has been written and spoken about the election and subsequent inauguration of Barack Obama as the first African-American president of the United States of America. Many Canadians participated in the worldwide euphoria of witnessing this historic event and have wondered as to its significance to Canada in general and to visible minority Canadians, especially black Canadians in particular.

As the first black Quebecer to be elected to Canadian Parliament in the history of our Confederation, many media-types have contacted me for my own reaction and I've spouted much of the same thoughts, as have so many other commentators.

I must admit though, that with the onset of our annual celebration of Black History Month, I began wondering why we've attached so much significance and so much time to Obama and have not given more attention to our own heroes. While we

Because while we Canadians—much like Americans—tend to define “heroes” as those among us who’ve achieved “celebrity” status, I have started to believe that we should instead define our true heroes as those who live their lives in obscurity.

Canadians—much like Americans—tend to define ‘heroes’ as those among us who’ve achieved ‘celebrity’ status, I have started to believe that we should instead define our true heroes as those who live their lives in obscurity.

Who are these heroes? May I give you readers a brief account of just one? Her name is Elaine.

Elaine is an 80-something black Canadian woman of West Indian origins. I came to know her shortly after I won the Liberal nomination in 1997 for the federal riding of Notre-Dame-de-Grace-Lachine. One week to the day later, the writ was dropped for the general federal election and without catching my breath, I had to immediately begin cam-

paigning once more with all that entails.

Elaine turned up at my election office, introduced herself, offered her services as a volunteer and began telephone canvassing. She used public transit and put in long hours, looking up telephone

numbers of electors, calling them, stuffing envelopes; you name it, she did it.

About halfway through this election campaign, Elaine arrived with a little boy of about two years old in a baby carriage. Elaine explained that she babysat her grandbaby while his mother worked and asked if it was okay to have him with her while she did her volunteer work.

My team of volunteers were quite impressed that this woman, then in her 70s, was caring for a young child and everyone agreed it would be great to have him with us. This paved the way for other volunteers to feel comfortable in bringing their children with them when they were unable to arrange alternate care.

Well, I won that election and have won four more since. Each time, Elaine has actively participated as a volunteer and when she had difficulties with transportation, we've arranged to have a volunteer drive her to and from her home. And we've had the privilege of watching her grandbaby boy thrive, grow and begin school. She's always attended my Town Hall meetings, my open door receptions, the annual meetings of my riding association, and throughout it all, she's led a quiet, honest and giving life. She's supported her children, grandchildren and many others, asking nothing in return.

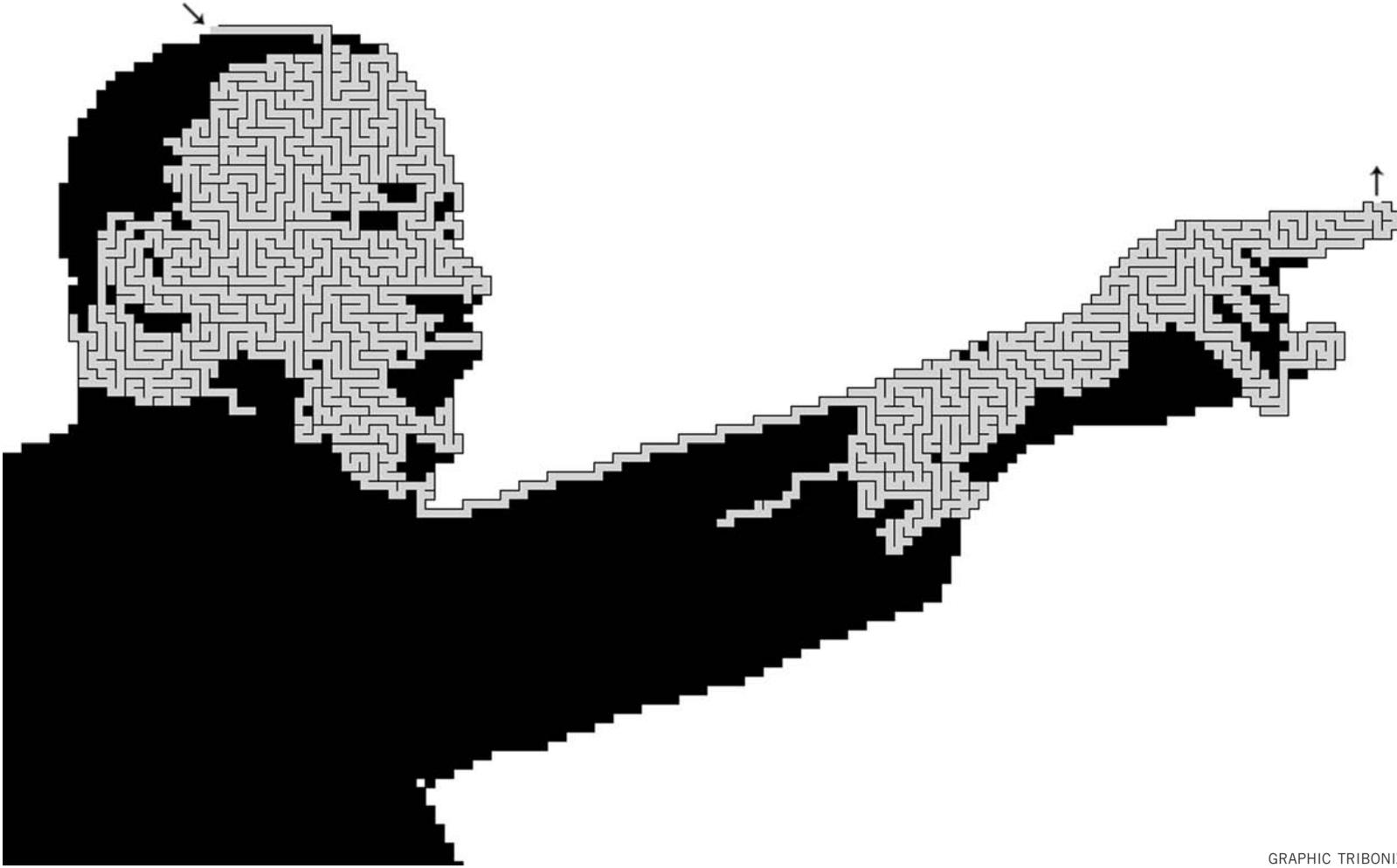
Elaine, by the very act of getting involved in our political system, has contributed to preserving our Canadian parliamentary democracy and yet, she probably has never stopped helping others long enough to realize just how much she's done for us all.

Recently, Elaine's health has deteriorated and she's been—and still is—hospitalized. I hope she improves but she probably won't.

Elaine is a true, quiet Canadian hero whose acts of heroism have been to live her life with dignity, respecting others, working hard to provide for her family and giving of herself to the preservation of our democratic system. Elaine, thank you for your own acts of heroism.

I can make history, too

Former 'Next Great Prime Minister' contestant speaks out



GRAPHIC TRIBONIX

• AKIL ALLEYNE

Akil Alleyne is a former contestant for Canada's 'The Next Great Prime Minister' and is currently a debate coach at Ms. Edgar & Ms. Cramp high school.

A graduate of Princeton University, Alleyne now works for CBC radio in Montreal.

When I was asked to comment on the role my African-Canadian identity played in my participation in Magna International's 'The Next Great Prime Minister' competition in 2006, I first remembered a passage from Norman Snider's 1985 book *The Changing of the Guard*. In one passage, then-Liberal Party leadership candidate Jean Chrétien was accosted by two rank-and-file Toronto Liberals—one of Portuguese roots, the other Jamaican—protesting the dismissal of their ethnic communities' concerns by the party's head honchos: "[Can you] sit down and assure us," demanded the Portuguese gentleman, "that we are going to get a piece, a small piece of Canada for everybody?"

According to Mr. Snider, the problem was not the political parties' prejudice. Leading Liberals in particular would have been delighted to welcome a Greek, Haitian or Vietnamese rising star into the highest echelons of political power. Unfortunately, the pool of ethnic volunteers for such top-tier positions was painfully small and hence largely untapped.

The cultural and social cohesion of ethnic groups in Canada makes even their most qualified members reluctant to enter the political arena, lest they lose touch with their origins.

"By and large," wrote Snider, "multiculturalism meant that Canada's ethnic communities [...] huddled in on themselves. To date,

their bright young men and women had not taken the path out of the neighbourhoods and into the corridors of power. [...] After all, such a path successfully negotiated would take a man far from his roots, and few seemed willing to attempt it." This, it seems, is as true today as it was in 1984.

In August 2005, when I first heard of "The Next Great Prime Minister" from a friend of my mother's, I jumped at the chance to submit and defend my own proposals for political reform in the marketplace of ideas. I advocated striking down trade barriers between the provinces and reforming our system of government to elect the Prime Minister separately from Parliament. Good ideas, or so I thought at the time; but they had nothing to do with the peculiar concerns of the Black community.

Why?

Years of avid reading had taught me how rarely Canada's political establishment tackles issues of specific concern to ethnic communities. Earlier in *The Changing of the Guard*, Mr. Snider noted the paternalistic stance the Liberal Party in particular took towards minority groups—"helping them with immigration matters, giving them grants to maintain their distinctive cultures" and so on. Yet beyond this old time religion, little real political clout accrued to ethnic Canadians from their Liberal loyalties. On those rare occasions when political heavy hitters do address minority concerns, they usually do so superficially and clumsily at best.

In one of The "Next Great Prime Minister's" preliminary rounds, I was asked what needed to be done to stop the wave of killings plaguing Toronto's black neighborhoods. As a young black man, surely I would instinctively grasp what drives this fratricidal mayhem, no? Well, actually, no. At the time,

anyone's guess was as good as mine.

It bears notice that beyond Toronto's murder rate, ethnic issues played no role in the debates around which the competition revolved once I advanced to the final round in January 2006. We focused, rather, on matters such as the health care system, the war in Afghanistan, and Iran's nuclear program.

In truth, that was just the way I liked it. I'm not sure that politicians should be focusing their attention on dealing with specific ethnic grievances. In my view, their energies—and our tax dollars—are generally better spent addressing issues that concern all Canadians, regardless of cultural origin.

Since participating in "The Next Great Prime Minister", my congratulators have often gushed that I could be the first black Prime Minister of Canada. I don't doubt this possibility, and I refuse to rule it out. Yet I believe that the various branches of the African diaspora have placed too much emphasis on politics as a means of achieving social equality.

Historically, the minority groups that made the fastest rise from poverty and persecution to prosperity and power were those who embraced education and built up their own business and professional classes, as well as those who maintained strong, stable families.

Those who prefer to dispatch swarms of politicians to the citadels of government in order to dole out fiscal goodies to their communities, while ignoring aberrant rates of school dropouts and absentee fatherhood and a dearth of entrepreneurial ambition, are doomed to be left behind. Without tackling those problems, even electing a million Marlene Jenningses or Yolande Jameses—or Barack Obamas, for that matter—will never bring us to Dr. King's proverbial Promised Land.

Black pioneers

- George Bonga, Canadian: famous voyageur
- Harry Jerome, Canadian: former world record holder for the 100-metre sprint
- Sir Bill Morris: former general secretary for Britain's Transport and General Workers' Union; first black leader of a British trade union
- Herb Carnegie: first black offered a contract to play in the NHL
- Ken Chenault: Chairman and CEO of American Express; he's the third African-American to run a Fortune 500 company.
- Kofi Annan: former Secretary General of the United Nations
- Mary Ann Chambers: former Ontario Member of Parliament and former cabinet minister
- Pelé: considered the best soccer player of all time
- Richard Parsons: Chairman of Citigroup; former Chairman and CEO of Time Warner
- Ulrick Chérubin, Canadian: former mayor of Amos Quebec
- Yolande James, Canadian: first black woman, and youngest Member of the National Assembly
- Clarence Thomas: Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; he's the second African-American to hold that post
- Thurgood Marshall: first African-American to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States
- Anne Cools, Canadian: first black appointed to the Senate
- Alvin Curling: first black Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
- Diane Abbott: first black woman elected to the British House of Commons

Black events

Feb 10

Dorothy Williams

Noted historian Dr. Dorothy W. Williams will be speaking about Black Canadian History at Concordia University.

It will take place at Concordia University's Hall Building on the seventh floor at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 11

"Black Jeopardy" / Trivia Night

The African Students' Association of Concordia, the Concordia Caribbean Student Union and the Ralliement Étudiant Haiti-Canada will be hosting a Jeopardy-themed game night to educate students about Black History. Three teams will be formed and the person with the most points will win VIP seats to see Spike Lee, part of the Concordia Student Union Speaker Series.

It will take place at Concordia University's Hall Building on the seventh floor at 8:30 p.m.

Feb. 13

Youth Poetry Night, Black History Month Activity, West Island Black

Community Association

Poetry by the young and old. Refreshments will be served. Free admission.

Riverdale High School, Sources Blvd. Pierrefonds at 6:30 p.m.

Feb.16

Discussion Panel

A panel discussion on Black Canadian History and current events.

Food and refreshments will be available. It will take place at Concordia University's Hall Building on the seventh floor at 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 17

Spike Lee Movie Marathon

It will take place at Concordia University's Hall Building on the seventh floor as well as The Hive.

Time: 4:30 p.m. *Do the Right Thing*, 6:00 p.m. *School Daze*, 8:00 p.m. *Malcolm X*

Feb.18

Spike Lee Lecture

It will take place at Concordia University's Hall Building in room H-110 at 4:30 p.m.

Feb. 19

African Music Night

African-influenced artists will kick off Thirsty Thursdays with guest singers and an array of other musicians.

It will take place at Reggie's campus bar at 5:00 p.m.

Feb. 19

Continued on next page



Chuck Berry is one of the pioneers of rock 'n' roll music.

An aural history

From Motown to Coolio and beyond

• R. BRIAN HASTIE

When I was a child our family cars only had the AM band.

During long summer days I would accompany my father on his weekly grocery run, and sometimes he let me stay in the car and listen to the radio when I refused to trudge into the local IGA and help him pick out the fruits I wanted for the week.

Our home had a few radios, sure, but listening to the radio was definitely preferential in a car setting; this line of thinking made perfect sense in my elementary school-aged mind. The only station on the AM band that interested me was Oldies 990, where the sounds of Motown and the British invasion came to life.

The first song I ever fell in love with was The Drifters' "Under The Boardwalk." As early as the age of six I would run up to the radio and flip the dial to 990 AM at every conceivable chance. The music written by Holland-Dozier-Holland (performed by Martha and the Vandellas, The Four Tops, The Supremes and Marvin Gaye, to mention a few) captured my heart and created an unshak-

able love for all things musical that continues to this day.

Colour was never called into question, but rather it was a descriptor of the performer partaking in the music.

The question of race never came into question; at the age of six all I cared about was melody and perhaps harmony. Only later did I learn all about African-American musicians in the '50s and '60s, about Motown founder Berry Gordy's venerable anger, all about Marvin Gaye's ill-fated marriage to Anna Gordy. None of this drama, though, changed how I felt about the music.

It took me until age 10 to actually get into popular modern music. Before that my cut-off point for most music (barring late '80s Beach Boys) was around 1970.

I remember the first time I had actually made a concerted effort to listen to the FM band (Mix 96, to be exact). Hearing Oasis' "Champagne Supernova" was a

watershed moment.

But the song that truly caught my attention was Coolio's "Gangsta's Paradise." The rhythmic patterns, the line delivery, the toughness of the song itself was miles away from the lighter pop fare offered up at the time. Once again, race was never called into question; only when I saw the ad for the movie's soundtrack did I realize that Coolio was black.

That realization never changed a thing for me, though. Colour was never called into question, but rather it was a descriptor of the performer partaking in the music. I never actively sought out music based upon the foundation of race; I sought it out based on how it hit my ear, how it sounded and how enjoyable I thought it to be.

The question of race within the music industry never came up for me, either because I was naïve to the idea of racism itself or perhaps I felt it didn't matter.

I was fortunate enough to go to an elementary school with a huge diversity of students whose ancestry stretched the four corners of the world. Racism was

really a foreign thought to me considering I had all of this firsthand experience with all types of people and realized that all people were the same, regardless of the colour of their skin or the accent with which they speak.

Perhaps the history behind the music would help better contextualize the songs, for sure, but I never felt it to be of paramount, singular importance. Black music has shaped my listening habits (I still visit the Motown catalogue regularly while doing homework or other activities around the house) in truly fundamental ways.

I doubt I'd be listening to the music I do without Marvin Gaye's venerable cover of "I Heard It Through The Grapevine" or without Coolio's introduction of the concept of rhyming to a beat. These two pieces in particular hold a special place in my heart; no matter how much rap music I listen to and no matter how much soul/neo-soul I partake in, I still gravitate back to these early sounds that have marked me. Falsetto vocals and street stories somehow make me happy no matter the time or place.

Star light, Star bright...

Giving back through the Black Star project



• CHARLÈNE LUSIKILA

In the depths of Rosedale-Queen Mary United Church, black stars are in the making.

In a small suite located in the church's basement, a new generation of black citizens is being formed by the Black Star Big Brothers Big Sisters of Montreal.

The office is plastered with maps contouring the African continent and autographed black film production posters and a woman bustles about filing forms.

Her name is Rosalind Hampton. She's the Black Star program's coordinator and case-worker.

After 10 years working as child-care worker for Batshaw, a youth and family community centre, and a stint teaching art at seniors' residences, Hampton joined Black Star in Feb. 2007.

Founded in May of 1994, Black Star Big Brothers Big Sisters of Montreal is a non-profit mentoring organization affiliated with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada. Black Star's mandate is to help black youth reach their full potential through one-to-one relationships with black mentors. These mentors act as positive role models for the children they're paired up with.

"Growing up in Montreal, they may not have had black teachers

and people in their lives that they can look up to," says Hampton of the children she deals with on a daily basis.

Initially, the Black Star project was a mentoring program offered by the CLSC Notre-Dame-de-Grace/Montreal West in answer to a strong mentoring demand for black boys coming from single-parent families headed by women.

In 1995, Black Star began its affiliation with Big Brothers of Canada. In 2007, the organization extended its services to girls and became Black Star Big Brothers Big Sisters of Montreal.

Now, Black Star offers more than just one-on-one relationships. In the past year, the program has taken various forms to cater to the different needs of its beneficiaries. It launched an Educational Support Program, which includes group and individual tutoring sessions and translation service for English-speaking parents with children in French schools.

Over the past year, Hampton has interviewed, screened and prepared many potential big brothers and big sisters. Though the work may be draining and sometimes overwhelming, Hampton is thankful she's not alone.

"I have awesome volunteers. The level of dedication from the

volunteers, parents, and children is humbling, even overwhelming," says a bright-eyed Hampton with a smile from ear to ear.

Dexter Peart, a big brother, would never miss a rendezvous with Joshua, his 13-year-old little brother. Peart, a designer for the high-end WANT Les essentiels de la vie luggage line, says he'll always leave a window open for his little brother of the past three years. "I found a way to make this part of my life seamless to my lifestyle."

Peart, a graduate of the University of Western Ontario, says his tight-knit family paved his way to success. "I was on the receiving hand of a lot of support," Peart said.

Being Joshua's big brother has allowed him to give back to his community by sharing some his fortune.

"I get more from this relationship than he does," says Peart. "One day I was flying in the daytime, and I came here at six and found myself on a bicycle in Verdun."

Most of all, Peart wants to help Joshua attain his full potential. Peart finds that a lot of young black boys associate success with making it to the NBA or becoming a rapper.

As a result, Peart likes mixing up the activities he plans with

Joshua. One day they may go to the arcades and the next, contemporary paintings at a museum.

"If I can open doors for him, real or virtual, and he sees his potential, then I think that the motivation for being involved in this program has been achieved," he said.

Joshua's mother, Michelle, has noticed the positive changes Peart has brought into her son's life.

"He plays an important role in Joshua's life. He's always there to motivate him," she explains.

Michelle left her native Guyana for Quebec five years ago. Upon landing in Montreal, her four sons had trouble adjusting to their French schools. They were mocked for the colour of their skin and started clamming up, she said.

"I had to find somewhere where they could have a role model," she explained.

Black Star helped boost her children's self-esteem. Now, she wishes for them to find their way and remain on a straight path.

"They have to come out somewhere good. Once it's not ammunition and drugs; it's all okay," she adds.

Joshua doesn't know if he'll become a big brother, but he wants to. "I have to realize my dreams so I can help them even more," he proudly answered.

Black events

Closing Party: Brown Sugar

It will take place at Les Saints at 10:00 p.m.

Feb. 19

Trends 2006

Black beauty hair and fashion show. Participants include various hair and makeup salons and boutiques such as Jazzy Salon and Nevik, Montreal Ebony Models, plus

live R'n'B and gospel music performances, at the Holiday Inn Midtown (420 Sherbrooke Street W.) Tickets \$20 (plus service charges) or \$25 at the door. Info: 276-0364.

Feb. 24

Black Youth Forum: The Challenge of Integration and Identity French

language forum

Montreal's Round Table on Black History Month at Salles du Gesù (1200 Bleury), at 3 p.m. Info: 282-3443. Free.

Feb. 25

A Journey of Faith Gospel Concert

Union's Gospel Choir at Montreal's historic black church, Union United (3007 Delisle), at 7 p.m. Tickets \$10-\$15. Info: 932-8731.

Feb. 26

Sounds of Colour

The Montreal School of Performing Arts' annual celebration of black history, with musical and theatrical tributes to inventors Lewis Latimer and Elijah J. McCoy, comedian Richard Pryor and civil rights activist Rosa Parks, at MSOPA (3480

Decarie, 2nd floor, above the Korean Gospel Church), Feb. 26 at 8 p.m. Admission of \$5 includes coffee and cake. Info: 482-5526, ext. 3.

Feb. 27

Seniors' Play and Youth Cultures in Action Show; Black History Month

Activity, West Island Black Community Association

Admission: \$5 youth, \$10 adults
Riverdale High School, Sources Blvd. Pierrefonds, 9 a.m. to noon

Feb. 28

So You Think You Can Dance; Black History Month Activity, West Island

Black Community Association
Le Manoir, 5319 NDG Ave. corner Decarie, doors open 7 p.m., show at 8 p.m.

Tickets \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door

Having the audacity to dream

Role models in a world where no one looks like you

• BRIAN DALY

Brian Daly, a graduate of Ryerson University, is a news editor at CTV Montreal.

Daly worked at The Canadian Press for seven years in Fredericton and Montreal before moving on to CTV.

Daly also hosts a bi-weekly technology segment Wednesdays on CTV News at Noon.

When I was about eight years old, my mother called me into the family room and said "I want you to watch this news show." Anchoring one of the local newscasts that day was Omega Medina, a beautiful, regal black woman who, in retrospect, bore a resemblance to Governor General Michaëlle Jean.

My mother realized the importance of black role models on television. She wanted to make sure my brother and I saw people who looked like us, so that we would realize that we belonged in this country and could aspire to any position we so desired.

My mom passed away just a few years later, but her message has endured to this day, and it explains why journalism is my life's calling.

I never worried about racism getting in the way of my dreams. Sure, racism still exists, but I was too busy working my butt off to think much about it. When I was in journalism school, there

Sure, racism still exists, but I was too busy working my butt off to think much about it.

weren't enough hours in the day for me; I worked for student papers, community radio and also put in time as a gopher at the CBC—all with the aim of getting noticed and getting a job.

There were some lean years in which Kraft Macaroni & Cheese was the meal of choice, though I've managed to remain gainfully employed in the media business for all but four months in the last 12 years.

But one thing is for sure: black colleagues have been few and far

between. I've worked in Montreal, Toronto and the Maritimes, and in all that time I've only sat next to two fellow blacks on a full-time basis.

Are blacks being shut out of media jobs or are they shutting themselves out? That's been the subject of much debate over the years and my opinion on the issue has definitely evolved.

There was once a time when I might have pointed fingers towards the media industry for the lack of representation, but in fact the black community needs to ask itself if it has done enough to push our best and brightest towards this all-important industry.

The fact of the matter is we have not.

Many West Indian and African families—and many immigrants for that matter—steer their children towards science, education and

business. It's understandable; those careers are seen as sure things, and they've worked for us in the past, so why change?

The arts are viewed with suspicion in many immigrant homes. At the time that I received my journalism degree from Ryerson in 1996, I was the only person in my family to hold an arts degree. But things are changing among immigrant families, and that can only benefit the black community.

Law, medicine, education and business are very worthy careers, but the media is just as crucial. Just think about how the constant barrage of television images has shaped our perceptions of the world and its people over the years. It's vitally important for members of all groups, including blacks, to have a seat at the desk when critical news decisions are being made. Breaking into the media business is certainly a challenge, especially since the industry is getting smaller. There are fewer jobs available and competition is fierce. But the rewards for perseverance cannot be ignored.

Journalists are the eyes and ears of the nation; few people other than us have time to watch over the courts or city or Parliament, to hold people accountable and tell important stories. And as I have suggested, the media has the power to all but decide whether the world views certain communities, and individuals, in a positive or negative light.

In 2009, with the numbers of blacks and other ethnic groups growing by leaps and bounds in Canada, diversity in the media has never been more critical.

I can think of no better way to bring about change in an industry than to do it from within.

Criticism and complaints can only take one so far.

And let's not forget that black faces and voices in the media can serve as role models for our youth. It gives them something to which they can aspire, as was the case for that wide-eyed, eight-year-old boy who was entranced by a lovely black face on the evening news just a few years ago.

Join the discussion
Come to *The Link's* brainstorming session for our annual Women's Issue Friday in H-649 at 4 p.m.

Hosted by Women's Issue Coordinator Christopher Olson



Putting Carrot Top to shame

Through Line Productions launch sketch comedy show, *Forbidden Love*, post-Valentine's Day

• NICOLA JANE YOUNG

When I entered the maze that is Dawson College this past Saturday in search of a sense of humour, I was lucky to have Joe Garque, co-creator of *Forbidden Love*, as my guide (I know I couldn't have found the 3A wing without him.)

I was there for the inside scoop on Through Line Productions' latest sketch comedy show, *Forbidden Love*. Instead, I got a wedgie.

Actually, I had hoped to seamlessly blend into the walls at this weekend's rehearsal but much to my disdain, my carton of chocolate milk and I were escorted to a soundproof room next-door to the practice premises, to bathe in the insights of but two of the show's co-conspirators, Garque and Francis J. Martins.

Through Line is the brainchild of four Montreal boys who love nothing more than to entertain. Garque and Martins joined forces with Timothy Diamond and David Kelly in 2006, with the joint vision of putting Carrot Top to shame.

For *Forbidden Love*, a sketch comedy show dealing with matters of the heart, the Through Liners and honorary member, Helen Prendekas, recruited fellow theatre rats Sara King and Tristan D. Lalla to make something that "everyone is going to think is funny." It's been two months in the making, and everyone seems totally stoked.

According to Martins, the group aims to

be "above all, [...] witty and original. If something isn't clever, if it's been done before, then we're going somewhere else."

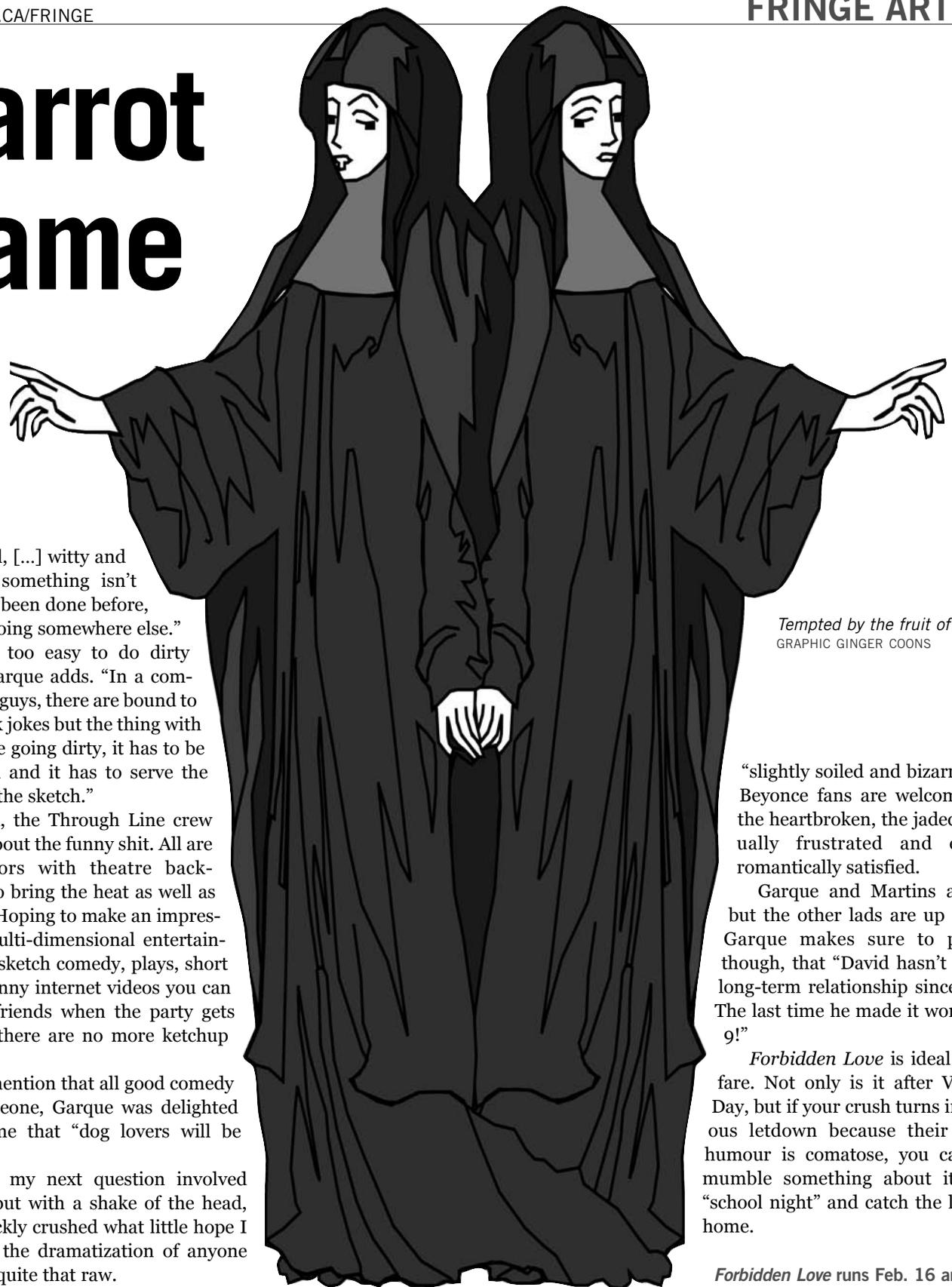
"It's way too easy to do dirty humour," Garque adds. "In a company of four guys, there are bound to be some dick jokes but the thing with us is: if we're going dirty, it has to be for a reason and it has to serve the direction of the sketch."

That said, the Through Line crew are not all about the funny shit. All are trained actors with theatre backgrounds who bring the heat as well as the giggles. Hoping to make an impression as a multi-dimensional entertainment force; sketch comedy, plays, short films and funny internet videos you can show your friends when the party gets boring and there are no more ketchup chips.

When I mention that all good comedy offends someone, Garque was delighted to inform me that "dog lovers will be offended."

Naturally my next question involved beastiality, but with a shake of the head, Martins quickly crushed what little hope I had left for the dramatization of anyone who likes it quite that raw.

"We may be crass but we're not sexist or racist," says Garque. While I caught the drift, I never really considered beastiality fans as apt to be eulogized as a race.



Tempted by the fruit of another.
GRAPHIC GINGER COONS

"slightly soiled and bizarre." Single Beyonce fans are welcome, as are the heartbroken, the jaded, the sexually frustrated and even the romantically satisfied.

Garque and Martins are taken, but the other lads are up for grabs. Garque makes sure to point out though, that "David hasn't been in a long-term relationship since the 80s. The last time he made it work, he was 9!"

Forbidden Love is ideal first date fare. Not only is it after Valentine's Day, but if your crush turns into a serious letdown because their sense of humour is comatose, you can always mumble something about it being a "school night" and catch the last metro home.

Forbidden Love runs Feb. 16 and 17 at 8 p.m. at Theatre Ste. Catherine, 264 Ste. Catherine E. Tickets are \$12, available in advance by calling (514) 953-3825 or e-mailing throughline@hotmail.com

The general consensus is that everyone who's anyone should go see *Forbidden Love*, for a "left-field Valentine's Day" that is

Student space? Try studio space

VAV Gallery's exhibit *Space and Displacement* gives Art Education students some room

• BIANCA DAVID

Space and Displacement, a new exhibit at the VAV Gallery, is a collection of works from Art Education students that explores the notion of space—something Art Education students have been missing.

The exhibit itself; the openness, white walls, and straight dividers give the impression of space in all its simplistic glory. The room is divided up allowing every artist, from all levels of study to have their own space, highlighting the importance of having a room of one's own.

The theme also ties into an issue that has been affecting the Art Education graduate students since the program's inception: a lack of adequate studio space.

Laurel Hart and Jess Aylsworth, two of

the program's graduate students, discussed why the issue has been of particular significance over the last couple of years:

Hart, a grad student of two years, says the reason the program is so attractive is because of the large studio component (50 per cent), with many students choosing to do studio thesis work.

While the lack of studio space has always been an issue it has recently come to light largely because of the program's move from the VA building two years ago and the program's subsequent growth.

Now relocated to the EV building, the challenge has been to find a studio for the Art Education graduate students to call their own.

After a long process of negotiations, the chair of the Arts Education faculty, Dr.

Cathy Mullen, has finally secured a studio in the EV building for the grad students.

While Aylsworth and Hart acknowledge it's a step in the right direction, the studio is small, has no sink, and has poor ventilation—still not the ideal space to accommodate all of the artists that need to use it.

"The department has been really supportive, they've been doing all they can," says Hart.

Aside from the small studio, certain individuals also have access to the open studios (available to all Fine Arts students) and as well as the possibility of another small studio in the basement of the VA building.

The Art Education Graduate Students association, of which Hart has been involved with from the beginning, has been established to represent the students

in the faculty.

"We want validation and to be treated like the other artists; we want people to know we exist as a program," says Aylsworth.

The association puts a huge emphasis on community and collaboration with artists across the faculty of Fine Arts. Their work is based mostly on distinguishing the Art Education graduate students and on continuing to have a visual presence by organizing events and exhibits, and of informing students of other events happening in the community.

Space and Displacement is currently at the VAV Gallery until Feb. 13th. You can check it out for yourself from Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Drug-free high

Canadian documentary remembers '50s Dream Machine

• DEANNE BEATTIE, *THE PEAK*
(SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY)

VANCOUVER (CUP) – Can you imagine a world without television? If Dream Machine inventor Brion Gysin had his way, we wouldn't have to imagine.

Nik Sheehan's documentary film, *Flicker*, follows the story of the Dream Machine, a Beat-era contraption that flickers light and triggers the brain so that it produces shapes, colours, images, and for some, full-blown hallucinations.

The Dream Machine is a rotating cylinder with slats to reveal a bright light inside, spun so as to achieve a pulse of light that matches the frequency of alpha waves in the brain—the same brain waves associated with dreaming and creativity.

The Dream Machine, invented to replace radio and television in the homes of millions, was to bring about an end to art, and a genesis of the individual artist. The idea was that, instead of consuming culture, people would begin to create their own spiritual movies by achieving the machine's drug-free high.

"It's one of the great untold stories of the '50s and '60s counter-culture," asserts Sheehan.

Gysin, a forgotten Beat artist and contemporary of the famed William S. Burroughs, is the creator of the cut-up technique where text is cut-up and rearranged into a nonsensical or artful order.

Like his literary cut-up, Gysin's Dream Machine was to be similarly provocative and exploratory, but was never mass-manufactured, as he had hoped it would be.

Sheehan offers an appropriately counter-culture explanation for the machine's failure to launch, maintaining that a device that encouraged people to paint

outside of the lines was threatening the status quo.

"Anything to do with altered consciousness, or exploration of the mind, I mean, that's dangerous to the control systems," said Sheehan. "If you're off exploring with your mind instead of punching into a time clock and making your widgets, that's disruptive to society."

Granted, "we need both in our lives," said Sheehan. "But if one overwhelms the other, we're in trouble. The film is really about a Dionysian streak in art, and how that gets tamed."

The film offers insight into the raw desires of artists, junkies, and mystics who want to explore themselves and the universe through experiences of altered-state.

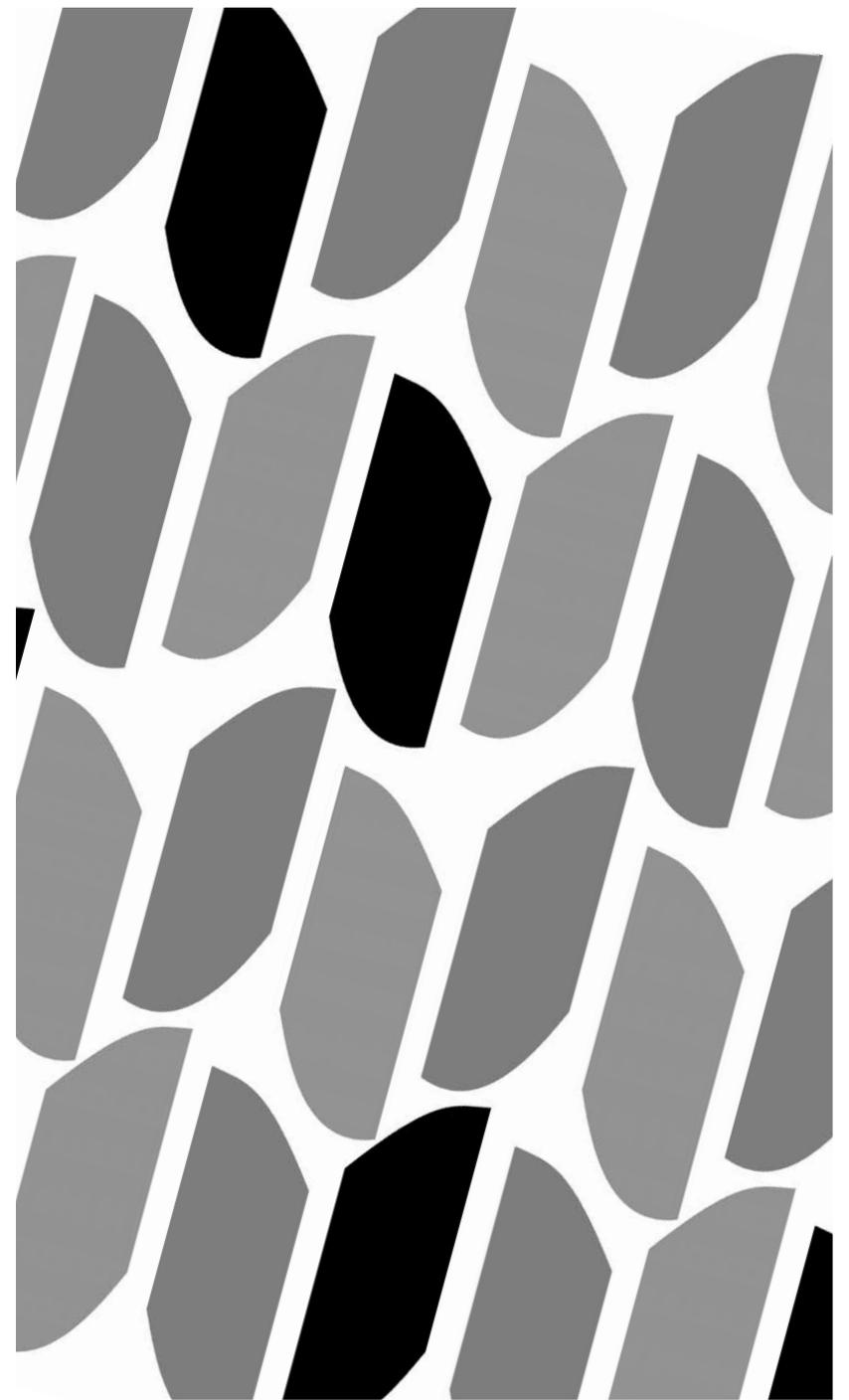
Sheehan interviews singer Marianne Faithfull, Iggy Pop, Sonic Youth guitarist Lee Ranaldo, and singer/artist Genesis P-Orridge, who talk about their experience with the Dream Machine and the influence Gysin had on their own art. They talk about their dreams for freedom and exploration in a surprisingly inarticulate way.

Sheehan never casts a critical eye on his subjects—which is good or bad, depending on how you look at it. On one hand, he doesn't betray his kooky cast of counter-culture hooligans, leaving his audience with a rare, unfussy exploration of the exclusive culture.

Then again, it could be argued that the film achieves little more than an overly simplistic stab at achieving a cult following. But Sheehan defends his subjects.

Stating his film is about "people trying to explore what's in their heads and just becoming a little more conscious that we are individuals."

"We're so keen to glob on to social units, friends, to be part of something. It's a scary place, to kind of be aware of your own individualism."



You can make your own Dream Machine at home, check out: www.flickerflicker.com. GRAPHIC GINGER COONS

Life outside of the womb

Resurgence of the cassette

• CODY HICKS

Cassettes have always been a misunderstood medium. Despite the romanticism of the mix tape, the clunky and reliable plastic vessels have never been as collectible as vinyl. But the format is tough, customizable and sexy.

You can really get physical with tapes. When was the last time you painted your name on your favourite record or carved your name into a mix CD?

I remember in the '90s when I would pack all my Prince, Weird Al and NWA tapes into a briefcase and haul them around the house with my boom box on my shoulder, wasting hundreds of D-cell batteries a week.

A step up from 8-tracks, these beautiful hunks of plastic have seen a bit of resurgence in the theoretical post-digital age. Although cassettes have long been the underdog of media formats, they

have always had their place in the more aurally fucked up regions of underground music.

In May 2008 local analogue obsessive Brett Wagg unleashed his cassette-label Campaign for Infinity records. Inspired by Brooklyn's Hospital Productions and Vancouver's Isolated Now Waves label, Wagg and his partner Cole Turner have forged this project as a way of documenting Montreal's revitalized noisy D.I.Y. scene; specializing in weird punk, heavy psych and anything that sounds good coated in tape hiss.

"I just started to put all my friends' bands, starting with Special Noise," says Wagg. "They didn't have anything to take on tour with them, so I re-dubbed an EP so they could sell something."

Since then, they've released Grand Trine's debut cassette and those familiar to the column will recognize Red Mass, Dead Wife and Les Enfants Sauvages, who

have all made plans to put out releases on the label.

Although he plans to release vinyl in the future, Brett waxes passionately about the importance of cassette culture. "Tapes are a very important part of noise and black metal," says Wagg.

"It's an important form of communication for those scenes. It's an abandoned format, but there's always been a fetish market. It's fringe culture and the people who are gonna buy that kind of shit will buy it on any kind of format they can."

One of the major attractions to vinyl is design. Seeing blown up cover art and unfolding a gatefold gives record collectors a real hard-on that CDs just can't compete with. Wagg's partner Turner is the art director and he wants to push cassette design to uncharted territory.

"I never had an outlet to do the art I wanted to," says Cole, who

has always been in love with album design. "It was a good opportunity to have an infinite canvas."

"The artwork is very sexual and evil," says Wagg. "Not in a way that's creepy, in a way that's sexy."

Next up for the label is a split between Wagg and Turner's own brain-melting psych group Ultrathin and Vancouver's Twin Crystals. The first 69 of the 200 copies will be yellow and the rest will be green.

But is there any money in tapes?

"We've sunk about \$1,000 conservatively, including the 800 cassettes in my room that we're waiting to dub, and campaignforinfinity.com," the record label's website.

But Wagg's not in it for the money. "I felt as long as I've lived here the music scene has sucked," he says. "There was nothing I was passionate about locally, but now

the city is crawling out of a musical rut and I'm really excited to be involved in it."

If you've ever dubbed a tape you'd think this labour of love may be physically taxing. Even at double speed, it's slow going. Luckily, Wagg and Turner happened upon a bit of cutting edge analogue technology: the mythical cassette duplicator.

"I bought it from a church off of eBay. They used it to make dubs of their gospel recordings to take home and learn the songs," says Wagg with a sly smile as Turner chimes in: "Now it's being used for a much more twisted kind of gospel." Time to dig out your Walkman and pray.

To keep up to date with the myriad of upcoming releases, zap yourself over to campaignforinfinity.com to get tangled in the dense web of the Campaign for Infinity family of artists.

The DOWN-LOW

Events listing
Feb. 10-Feb. 16

ART

Cash and Carry
An exhibition by the Photography Student Association
Monday until Feb. 20
VAV Gallery, 1395 Rene Levesque O.

MUSIC

Love & Hate
Valentine's Day battle between Montreal and Toronto. From Montreal: 1-Speed Bike, Julie D, Karn, Ferine, Anna Lev, Gambletron, DJ Dalbra, DJ Youth Contemporary. From Toronto: Otherpeoplesmusic, Radiate, Nwodtlem, DJ Erol, DJ Blndr, Luke Peril, Iron Will, First Seed. Special guest Dreamcatcher.
Friday, 9:00 p.m.
Eastern Bloc, 7240 Clark Street
Tickets \$8

Willow Rutherford
With David Simard and open mic.
Friday, 8:30 p.m.
Yellow Door, 3625 Aylmer Street
Tickets \$8, \$5 for students
*Non-perishable food items greatly appreciated.

Rhonda Stakich
Saturday, 8:30 p.m.
Yellow Door, 3625 Aylmer Street
Tickets \$8, \$5 for students
*Non-perishable food items greatly appreciated.

Hollerado
With Barnburner and Milles Monarques.
Saturday, 8:00 p.m.
Barfly, 4062a St-Laurent Blvd.

THEATRE

Skin
Written by Dennis Foon and directed by Tamara Brown.
Three young people examine their differences as they navigate their way through a world that judges them by the colour of their skin.
Until Feb. 28, Friday 8:00 p.m. with matinee Saturday, 2 p.m.
Black Theatre Workshop, 3680 Jeanne-Mance Street
Tickets \$5

FOR THOSE WHO DON'T

Anti-Valentine's Day Party
Concordia's Co-op Bookstore's 6th Annual Anti-Valentine's Day Party featuring readings from saucy local writers, sexy short film screenings, smutty visual arts, and salacious surprises.
Friday, 7:00 p.m.
Concordia Co-op Bookstore, 2150 Bishop Street
Suggested donation \$5
*This event is 18+

—compiled by Joelle Lemieux

More than procreation

The Link explores the Salon de l'amour et de la seduction

• STEPHANIE LALEGGIA

What more can you expect from a girls-only birthday than inappropriate dirty talk, food, cocktails, and a potent punch? According to our Clymatik Pleasures Consultant, who had just finished setting up shop, there was a serious lack of dildos.

From her creatively-named board games to her popular Kama Sutra line of deliciously-scented (and edible) products, I had to admit that curiosity got the better of me—Sasha St. Denis was ready to show us her wares.

As the string of black balls was being passed around, I came to realize that you would have to be pretty courageous to use anal beads the size of a jawbreaker.

"There are some who are shy, but overall people are very welcoming," says St. Denis.

I was surprised to see how natural and open everyone was to pretty much anything they were shown. "Run by women for women" describes the whole business and experience perfectly.

"Women's Night In' is what we call it," says Sasha. Adding that she's even had divorce parties "for women who've become single again and want to try new things."

...at the '0'

It's evident that the subject of sex is neither awkward nor is it frowned upon at the Salon de l'amour et de la seduction which took place at the Olympic Stadium the weekend before Valentine's Day.

While a bit shocking for a first timer such as myself, it was oddly admirable to see so many people comfortable enough to wear barely-there leather outfits—even the ones who may not have the physique for it.

Though there were products that did not seem to have any purpose at a sex convention (hair straighteners?) there was also the stan-

dard fare: the expected kinky toys, and particularly naughty outfits.

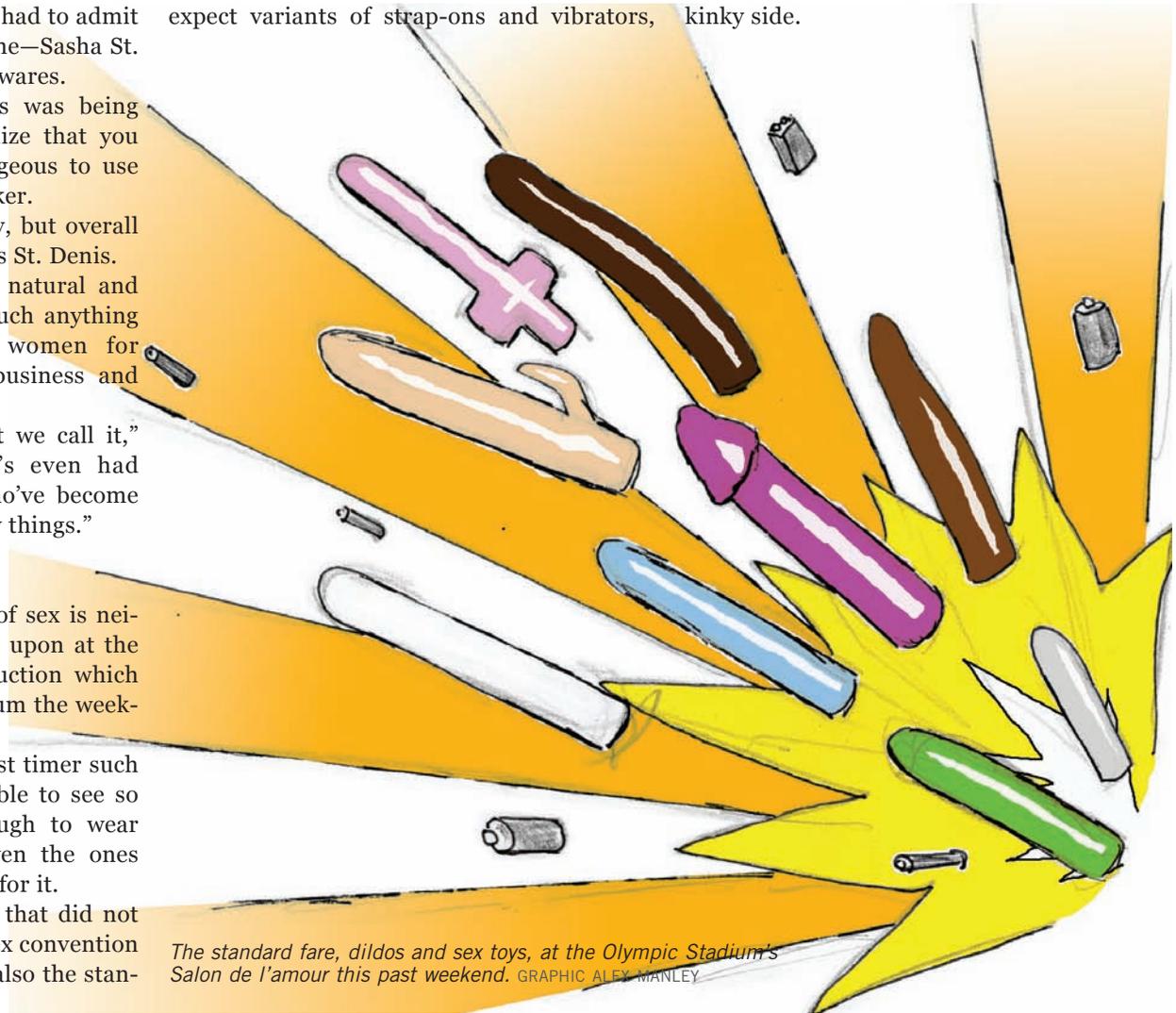
I wasn't caught completely off guard by what I saw, yet I do have to admit that the glass and wooden dildos managed to catch my eye; the colourful designs and hour-shaped curves gave the impression of a modern-looking mantelpiece.

The booths varied between sexy and sometimes just plain out scary; it's one thing to expect variants of strap-ons and vibrators,

it's another to be told and shown how to use Medieval torture devices, like shackles, during sex.

These were found in the "dungeon," which not only contained dominatrix-themed sex toys, but an actual gimp whipping the hell out of the floor as well.

From birthdays to couples parties, to the Salon de l'amour, it seems that more and more people (of all ages) are embracing their kinky side.



The standard fare, dildos and sex toys, at the Olympic Stadium's Salon de l'amour this past weekend. GRAPHIC ALEX MANLEY

spins

Tindersticks
The Hungry Saw
Beggars Banquet



The Tindersticks' new long-awaited album, *The Hungry Saw*, is depressing. It's more than that, but it's mostly depressing. Album opener, the aptly-named "Intro," features lonely piano, no vocals—I really feel it. "Yesterday Tomorrows" is romantic and nostalgic, but I'm still not feeling it. The album picks up on the third track, "The Flicker Of A Little Girl"—it's lighter, insightful and suddenly lead vocalist Stuart Staples has my attention. The strings on "Feel The Sun" are reminiscent of anything but beach days; "Why don't you come out and exact your revenge [...] come feel the sun." The next track and easily the worst, "E Type" is more like a bad Doors cover than anything I'd expect from this album—and just when I was just starting to like it.

The title track is like this idea of toned-down indie rock, with subdued bells and whistles. "Mother Dear" really strips the sound down, and "All The Love" is a good note to end

on—if they had ended there.

So if snore-core is your thing then check out Tindersticks. But if you're happy and you know it, play something else.

2.5/5

—Joelle Lemieux

Hollerado
Record in a Bag
Independent



Sometimes, it's the little things. Montreal-based Hollerado's first full-length album, *Record in a Bag* opens with "Hollerado Land (by Sam)" an acoustic song that sets the perfect indie tone. The second track, "Do the Doot da Doot Doo" isn't acoustic by any means and really picks it up. "Juliette" is the dime-a-dozen kind of song about a girl that doesn't really exist—or she does, and even I want to buy her a drink.

There's a pervasive sense of D.I.Y. on the album, and of the band itself—I checked out their website, it's hand-written, printed neatly by a boy who I'm sure agrees it's all in the details.

But if I was questioning the band's integrity,

"Fake Drugs," convinces me at once. It's toned-down and catchy—I'm not intimidated, just let me love you. The 10-second "Reno Chunk" is the perfect interlude into the next song "Americanarama."

"Hard Love" is anything but, and what started out as an album I didn't want to listen to, slowly became one I wanted on all the time. Check out the whole album—free at hollerado.com.

4/5

—Joelle Lemieux

N.A.S.A.
The Spirit Of Apollo
Anti-



North America/South America's debut album is kinda like visiting the best house party ever: a bevy of amazing guest stars hang out with each other on the album's 17 tracks, partying it up to the nth degree and actually sounding like they're having fun on every cut. The duo behind N.A.S.A. have created the music and let the guest stars do all of

the talking.

The album's mainly a rhyme-orientated affair, as the songs' instrumentation is light on big bass and bombast and instead focuses on colourful, sonically spacious beats that breathe a light, summery, good-time feel. Where else can you hear ex-Talking Heads head David Byrne sing a hook while Chuck D drops knowledge? Other pair-ups include Tom Waits and Kool Keith kicking it on the masterful "Spacious Thoughts," Kanye West joining together with Santogold and Lykke Li on "Gifted," the Yeah Yeah Yeahs' Karen O. sings the chorus to a track that features both Fatlip and an Ol' Dirty Bastard verse. Although it may seem like big-name overload, no one artist appears more than twice during the record, and no one overshadows the entire production, striking just the right balance between theatricality and musicality. This album is the perfect summer antidote to current winter blues. N.A.S.A. members DJ Zegon and Squeak E. Clean clearly have a winner on their hands.

4.75/5

—R. Brian Hastie

In the same boat

Community filmmaking in Cinema Politica double-header

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

In 1981, at the age of 24, Zacharias Kunuk got his first camera in exchange for some soapstone. Twenty years later, he won the Golden Camera Award at Cannes for his first feature film, *The Fast Runner*.

"I didn't know how much trouble it was to make a film or the work that went into it behind the camera—or if there was even a camera at all," says Kunuk from his offices at Isuma TV, the world's first and only Inuit film company.

"In our culture, we've never had paper and pen,"

— Zacharias Kunuk,
director of *Kiviatq versus Canada*

For an Inuit whose first exposure to film was typical Hollywood escapism, Kunuk has turned the camera in the other direction, using it to document Inuit struggles and way of life in his small community of Igloolik, situated in northern Quebec. His film *Kiviatq versus Canada*, about the first Inuit lawyer, is screening as part of Cinema Politica next week.

"When the Europeans came here, they took photographs of us and imposed their point of view on us," says Kunuk. "[But now we've] finally started talking back through the camera."

Rather than destroying the Inuit way of life, the introduction of digital filmmaking into Quebec's remote regions has strengthened Inuit culture and tradition, he argues.

"In our culture, we've never had paper and pen," says Kunuk. "All our stories were told to us verbally, and passed down from generation to generation. So with film, you just talk into the camera."

While working for the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation in the early 1980s, Kunuk felt there wasn't enough in-depth reporting into the Inuit way of life.

The IBC said there was no room for drama, so we had to break off," says Kunuk. "In the end we were considered disgruntled ex-employees. But that didn't stop us. We knew what we wanted. We wanted elders talking to the camera."

I was made for lovin' you— I mean, her

Con U grad Adam Kelly debuts play *Alan's Search for the Best Girl in Montreal*

• BIANCA BOURGEOIS

With Valentine's Day around the corner, happy couples will exchange roses and bad poetry, while the single set will question their relationship history and wonder where it all went wrong.

Alan's Search for the Best Girl in Montreal, a new play by Concordia Theatre grad Adam Kelly, will do the latter—at least, he hopes.

"What I'm trying to offer is a male version of *Sex and the City*, but instead of having four characters, I'm trying to compound it all into one," explained Kelly.

In the play, Alan Norton searches Montreal for his perfect woman. Spanning the course of 20 years, the play offers an open and honest

portrayal of the trials and tribulations associated with finding that special someone.

Kelly is the writer, director and lead actor of what he calls "an honest portrayal from the guy's point of view." Insisting it is autobiographical in nature, citing 90 per cent of the material stems from past relationships.

Which would make sense considering Kelly is the only male in a cast of five, which also features Hilary Keithlin, Rosaruby Glaberman, Patricia Manessy and Leanna Glance—a Concordia Creative Writing major.

The Anorak, Kelly's previous play about the Polytechnique Massacre, was performed in schools, which he explained added to its authenticity. Bringing the

"Isuma Productions is one of the most exciting film companies I've seen out there today," says Martha Stiegman, whose film, *In Defense of Our Treaties* began as part of her doctoral research at Concordia University, and which will be screened before *Kiviatq versus Canada* next Monday.

Stiegman's research into aboriginal rights took her to the Bay of Fundy, where the Mi'kmaq tribe are entangled in a legal battle over fishing permits.

"There's this concept of 'participatory video,' which has a strong tradition in Canada," says Stiegman. "It's not enough for documentary filmmakers to make films about their subjects. Instead they can help animate the discussion."

Stiegman screened the film several times to residents of the Bay of Fundy, each time creating a shopping list of proposed changes from viewer feedback.

"The community was very much involved in the making of the movie and the direction that it took," she says.

While his filmmaking has taken him all over the world, from Australia to Cannes, Kunuk says he's tired of travelling.

"That's why we're getting onto the internet. Because in this day and age, if I have high speed, I can hook up my laptop to my camera. Just last week, I was broadcasting to Berlin where they're having a film festival, because I couldn't be there in person."

His next project will tackle the heated topic of global warming.

"All these scientists are coming up to the arctic, taking samples and making claims about climate change," says Kunuk. "But they never ask what the people who live up here have seen. Whereas the elders have noticed where the sun used to rise, now it's different."

"They're telling me it's not coming from the sky anymore, it's coming from the sea. I've never heard anything like that, so it's going to be interesting."

In Defense of Our Treaties and *Kiviatq versus Canada* will be screened on Monday, Feb. 16 at 7:30 p.m., Room H-110, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd., and will feature speakers from Isuma TV. For a full list of screenings, check out cinemapolitica.org/concordia.

idea to a new level this show will be performed within his living space, invoking a feeling of intimacy.

Well, why not? In the play, Kelly explores past relationships, women and even uses his own bed as a prop. "I've portrayed everyone honestly," Kelly emphasized, hinting he wouldn't mind if a few exes had missed the flyers.

His future performance plans include another play called *The Succubus*, which marks Kelly's return to tragedies.

Alan's Search for the Best Girl in Montreal plays at Theatre 314, 10 Ave. des Pins O. (corner St. Laurent Blvd.), Suite 314. Shows are Feb. 12-14, and 19-21 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$12 in advance, \$17 at the door.



Shawn Baichoo plays *Inspector Hound*.

Whodunnit, does it again

Murder mystery *The Real Inspector Hound* keeps February-blahs at bay

• OWAIN HARRIS

If there is any time of year that I need a healthy dose of escapism, it's during the month of February. If a break from the blahs is what you need right now Mainline Theatre's production of *The Real Inspector Hound* does not disappoint.

One of famed Czech writer Tom Stoppard's early theatre works, *The Real Inspector Hound* is a parody of Agatha Christie-style murder mysteries. Stoppard also experiments with the play-within-a-play format as two theatre critics named Moon and Birdboot, played by Paul Van Dyck and Brian Wrench respectively, create a separate show from within the confines of the audience.

These two self-absorbed characters are a complete mockery of critics and eventually they unwittingly become a part of the play they are sent to review. In this show the lines distinguishing stage and audience become blurred with highly amusing results.

The production features a strong cast, with Wrench's particularly effective, if not womanizing theatre critic Birdboot. He demonstrates great comedic strength from the moment he enters the room.

Shawn Baichoo also gives a hilarious performance as *Inspector Hound*. His use of physical comedy was a highlight of the show that had the audience fol-

lowing his every step. While some performers truly stood out, all delivered well on the absurd world of their characters.

The murder mystery takes place within the drawing room of Lady Muldoon's country home. The stage, on floor level and surrounded on all sides by audience seating, uses a very simple design. A card table, chandelier, phone and a few chairs compose most of the set. The lighting is also simple and unobtrusive. These factors all keep to a minimum the distinction between stage and audience areas.

In fact, one of my favourite things about this production was the actors' use of the entire space. Characters move throughout the audience, keeping the energy high and on edge. With 360 degrees of seating, effective blocking allows the performers to play reasonably to all sides. This was well executed and proves effective as Moon and Birdboot become integrated in the play unfolding before them.

I have very few complaints about the show, which succeeds in delivering an amusing joke filled performance from start to finish. I can't think of one audience member who wasn't laughing out loud at the antics going on around them—and it only got better.

For \$20 a ticket, or \$12 with Mainline's "Four Play Card", this is a reasonably priced ticket for a truly enjoyable experience. *The Real Inspector Hound* plays at the Mainline Theatre, 3997 St. Laurent until Feb. 14.

Con U buries 1st place UQTR

Nicolas D'Aoust nets two as men's hockey squad win second straight

• ALEXANDER ROCK
ST. LAURENT

**Concordia 4
UQTR 1**

The only thing louder than the booming Mullet Metal at the Ed Meagher Arena Wednesday night was the Concordia Stingers goal horn, howling the men's hockey team toward a 4-1 victory over the Université de Québec à Trois Rivières Patriotes.

Coming off a bad collective case of the flu, the Stingers looked to spark a streak with their recent 5-4 shutout win over the Ottawa Gee-Gees. As for the visitor's bench, the Patriotes hoped to tighten their grip on first-place in the conference, as well as edge their way up from third in the national circuit.

Though much of the first period of play seemed muddled in the neutral zone, an early interference penalty for UQTR centre Alexandre Demers allowed for the Stingers powerplay unit to fire 11 shots on net, setting the tone for both the remainder of the period and the game.

"The big difference tonight was we won the shot clock," beamed Kevin Figsby, head coach of the Stingers. "Once we did that we gained a lot of confidence." Nicolas D'Aoust netted his first of two at 16:58 in the first period.

Figsby's men continued their strong effort in the second, cutting the outlets and forcing the Patriotes' defencemen to come out on the backhand for some easy turnovers, resulting in an early second goal for D'Aoust.

The defining moment of the



Stingers forward Nicolas D'Aoust streaks down left side. PHOTO CHRIS GATES

game was in the hands of the special teams as the Stingers were assessed two minor penalties at 9:24 of the second, sending the visitors on an ensuing 5-on-3 powerplay. Despite the two-man advantage, the Patriotes managed only a single shot as Con U shut them down with quick shot blocking and resilient goaltending, further hoarding the momentum.

At 16:12, Stingers' Marc-Andre Rizk bumped the lead to three; his

team's physical style and perseverance led to the goal.

An increasingly tense UQTR bench began to show their frustrations as the period ticked away, but came up with nothing more than big hits and lazy penalties. One such penalty was defenceman's André Joanisse's elbowing call at 17:00, ultimately costing the visitors a powerplay goal by Stinger Nicolas Lafontaine.

The Stingers maintained their

control of the game through to the third, testing the Patriotes fast skating team and blocking up the lanes. If the opposition did make it past the blue line, they were stopped by Sheldon Baerg's near-perfect netminding, who made not only the big saves, but the easy ones as well, controlling the puck and moving it out of the zone.

The Patriotes' goal, with 11 seconds left in the game, changed

nothing but spoil Baerg's shutout.

"Our game defensively tonight was close to perfect," exclaimed Figsby, as he listened to his boys celebrating on the opposite side of the wall. "The communication and the commitment from one guy to the next is a tremendous part of our success this year.

"You go to war with one guy in there and there's 29 others behind him ready to jump in. I think that's our advantage."

Men's hockey team can't keep the momentum going

Con U falls to lesser opponent after toppling top team in Quebec conference

• DAVID KAUFMANN

**Concordia 1
Carleton 4**

The Concordia Stingers' minds were somewhere else last Friday as they fell 4-1 to the lowly Carleton Ravens at the Ed Meagher arena. The loss came on the heels of a total domination over the Université de Québec à Trois Rivières Patriotes two nights earlier, a team they've struggled to beat all season.

Coming into the game, the Stingers were hoping to get their third straight win. However, it was not to be as things got off to a slow start for both teams.

While no one would register a point until the end of the period, Stingers goalie Sheldon Baerg found himself facing 11 shots as opposed to Carleton's four. Finally,

Carleton forward Andrew Gibbons capitalized on the sleepiness of the home team when he got one past Baerg to put them up by one.

In the second period, the Stingers managed to get more shots on net, but found themselves missing bounces, and hitting posts. Meanwhile, the Ravens took Concordia's errors and used them as opportunities. It started midway through the period when Carleton centre Brandon McLean netted his eleventh goal of the season past Baerg to put his team up by two.

Then in the dying minutes of the period, Stingers left winger Alex Scianguola, almost put his team on the board. However, he missed the pass which led to Ravens' defender Christian Bourdeau-Miffen picking up the loose puck to get another one past Baerg, putting the

Stingers down three goals.

In between periods Stingers' head coach Kevin Figsby informed Baerg that although he had played well for the past couple of games, if he were to allow another goal, he'd make the goaltending change to get Maxime Joyal ready for Sunday's game against McGill. Sure enough, midway through the third, Bourdeau-Miffen added his second of the night to take a commanding 4-0 lead.

The goaltending switch was made, the two teams played the rest of the game, and Stingers left winger Marc-Andre Rizk snatched Ravens goalie Alexander Archivald's shutout away to cut their deficit to three goals.

The outcome is one the Stingers would like to forget as they prepare for a rematch against UQTR this coming Friday at the Ed Meagher arena. Baerg, who stopped 25 of 29

shots, thinks the outcome was due to the flatness of their play. "I think we came out a little flat. They obviously wanted it a bit more; they're battling for the playoffs," said Baerg.

"We weren't there for three periods," said Rizk, who scored the Stingers' lone goal. "We missed a few chances that could have changed the game, but we certainly didn't play like we did on Wednesday night so we just have to bounce back."

Meanwhile, the head coach thinks the loss is due to the fact that his team's mind was on their big win last Wednesday. "If you beat Trois Rivières 4-1 Wednesday night, and you hit that high point, and then you come in here and play a team you know you should beat, you just don't rise to that same level of anticipation," Figsby said when asked about the contribution to the loss.

Buckley reaches milestone

Stingers star point guard surpasses 1000 career points in important victory

• JOHNNY NORTH

**Concordia 75
Laval 66**

Not even the flu could prevent all-star guard Damian Buckley from recording his 1,000 career point this past Saturday afternoon in a 75-66 victory over the defending provincial champion Laval Rouge et Or.

Buckley is the first Stinger to reach 1,000 since former Stinger all-star Patrick Perrotte reached the milestone in 2006. Perrotte got 1,000 in 62 games, Buckley reached the goal in only 56. Buckley's first three-pointer in the second half was the moment where he reached and surpassed the milestone.

"I wasn't really thinking about it," said Buckley. "I wasn't feeling well at all. I was more looking towards getting my teammates involved."

Buckley also led his team in scoring on the night with 19 points. Buckley came through in crucial moments when Con U had trouble sinking their opportunities. "I got a few open shots early," he said, which helped create a large early lead for the Stingers.

Concordia never trailed in the game—getting off to a 6-0 run to start the first quarter. Every rebound was aggressively fought for and despite Laval's slight height advantage, Con U's speed and athleticism was too much for

Laval to handle.

"They're the best in our league," admits Jacques Paiement, head coach of Laval, who finds his team was "playing on their heels" most of the night.

By the end of the first quarter, Con U went on a 10-0 run, putting them up 22-10. This pleased the 300-plus fans in attendance at Concordia's Loyola Gym, who were mainly behind the Stingers.

Laval's J-F. Beaulieu-Maheux did his best to keep his team in the game—he sunk 50 per cent of his field goals, many of them from a quick transition that caught the Stingers off guard. Beaulieu-Maheux ended the night leading all players with 21 points.

Despite Beaulieu-Maheux's best efforts, the second quarter belonged to the Stingers. Veteran Con U centre Jamal Gallier and Damian's brother Dwayne were both dominant inside and out of the key. The Stingers led 46-23 at halftime.

"We carried the same energy we had from the last game," said Gallier. "That's why we were up 23 at the half. We had outstanding defence."

In the second half, Gallier admits he along with his teammates let up on their defensive assignments, which was clearly apparent when Laval forwards were left unguarded right in front of the Con U net.

With only five minutes remain-



Damian Buckley is the first Stinger to reach 1,000 points in three years. PHOTO CAT TARRANTS

ing in the fourth quarter, the Stingers' lead disappeared as Laval took advantage of three straight questionable foul calls to post an 11-0 run and tie the game at 64. Fortunately, Con U came back to life—shutting down Laval defensively and dazzling the crowd with an emotional alley-oop when Buckley set up rookie

Evens Laroche.

For close to 30 seconds the crowd gave the Stingers loud applause for the timely play and taking the momentum back for the rest of the game.

"We just couldn't score in the last three minutes," said Paiement. "We ran out of juice at the end."

"We've got more veterans than

them," said Gallier. "Everyone understands how to pull out games like this. They have really good shooters, but we've got superior speed and talent."

Concordia continues their season with a weekend series against the Bishop's Gaiters. Game time is 6 p.m. at Concordia's Loyola Gym this Friday.

Rouge et Or play heartbreakers

Concordia coach says 'we got screwed' in final seconds of women's basketball game

• DIEGO PELAEZ GAETZ

**Concordia 72
Laval 73**

Despite their most valiant efforts, the Concordia Stingers women's basketball team fell just short of a shocking weekend sweep of the top-ranked Laval Rouge et Or with a heartbreaking 73-72 defeat Saturday night at Concordia's Loyola Gym.

The game came on the heels of a stunning victory by the Stingers on Friday night in Quebec City. "We came back from 21 points down heading into the fourth quarter," said Keith Pruden, Con U's head coach. "That's ridiculous."

Con U started slowly again on Saturday night, as the Rouge et Or opened with a 13-4 run to start the game.

"They wanted to beat us by 30 because we had the temerity to beat them in their own building," said Pruden.

The Stingers managed to claw their way back into the game in a hurry, as guards Krystle Douglas and Melissa Campbell aggressively attacked the basket. Campbell converted three of four free throws to cut the deficit to 13-11.

The game was a see-saw affair the rest

of the way. Laval made several runs, including a 10-0 run at the end of the first and beginning of the second quarter, but Concordia never let the game get out of reach. Douglas, the leading scorer for the Stingers, scored two consecutive layups before finding sharpshooter Kendra Carrie for a long-range bomb to bring the Stingers within two points.

The Rouge et Or seemed to take control of the game in third frame. Guard, Elyse Jobin drained a deep three-pointer, and towering centre Marie-Michelle Genoi terrorized the Stingers on the boards—she grabbed many offensive rebounds over the outstretched arms of shorter Stingers defenders. Genoi finished the night with 14 points and 10 rebounds, and the Rouge et Or held a 63-50 lead heading into the final quarter.

The Stingers refused to back down. "We had nothing to lose," said Con U centre Kristin Portwine.

There were downsides to the intensity displayed. Con U captain Douglas let her emotions get the better of her; after she felt she was fouled with no call coming from the officials, she lashed out and earned herself a technical foul for berating

the referee.

However, the foul seemed to light a spark under the Stingers. Trailing by nine with just over five minutes remaining in the game, Con U began their charge. The Stingers' aggressive, pressing defence flummoxed the Laval attack, and Portwine and Anne-Marie Prophete each converted several free throw attempts to bring the Stingers to within two points with under a minute to play.

"Our coach is always saying that someone needs to step up and be a leader. My voice carries."

—Melissa Campbell,
Stingers guard

With 13 seconds remaining, the Stingers had the ball and a chance to tie. Prophete again fought her way to the basket, and had two free throw attempts to tie the game. She connected on both, putting the pressure on the Rouge-et-Or.

With only five seconds remaining, Laval point-guard Marjorie Ferland went to the rim for a layup attempt, and it seemed that

she fouled a Concordia defender on her way up. However, the foul was called against the Stingers, and Ferland converted one of two free throws to ice the victory.

"The girls aren't discouraged, and I'm not discouraged," said coach Pruden. "We had a shot to win it, and we got screwed."

Despite the loss, the Stingers showed a mental toughness that will serve them well down the stretch. They also found a player who stepped into a leadership role over the weekend; guard Melissa Campbell, who finished with nine points and five assists.

"Our coach is always saying that someone needs to step up and be a leader," said Campbell. "My voice carries."

When asked to explain his team's turnaround from a tumultuous start to the season, Pruden replied, "maybe someday 10 years from now, I'll be smart enough to write a book like Phil Jackson about how I influenced the season, which would all be bullshit. The truth is that either these things happen in a season or they don't."

Concordia continues their battle for a playoff spot as they face the Bishop's Gaiters this Friday at 8 p.m. at Concordia's Loyola Gym.

McGill takes the Cup

Con U can't keep win streak alive, comeback attempt fails

• PAOLO MINGARELLI

Concordia 3 McGill 4

The Concordia Stingers men's hockey team finished an exhausting week with a difficult loss in the Corey Cup by a score of 4-3 to the visiting McGill Redmen.

In the first period, the Redmen made the most of their opportunities by capitalizing in the first seven minutes during a powerplay, as a low wristshot beat keeper Maxime Joyal.

The second goal came four minutes later as McGill directed a pass to the slot, which was quickly sent to the back of the net.

The period ended on a high note as Joyal closed the Redmen's continuous offensive barrage and enabled Concordia to escape from a 2-on-1 break with less than a minute to go.

Apart from Joyal's steady play, the first period featured an incident involving Concordia's Eric Begin. The defenceman was given a 10-minute misconduct resulting from a visor violation, his second one this season.

The Redmen had control of the puck during the larger part of the first five minutes of the second period, but ultimately their lack of discipline saw two of their players head to the penalty box. The Stingers were unable to capitalize on the two-man advantage.

"There was no Begin [still serving his misconduct], no shooters, I mean when your top two powerplay guys are not there, you do with what you have," commented coach Figsby afterwards.

The Stingers finally managed to get on the board late in the period. A Redmen turnover was picked up by Con U rookie forward Cory McGillis cutting across the middle before fooling the Redmen goalie with a precise wrist shot to the top blocker side.

The period was marked by two odd occurrences—with two minutes remaining in the period, McGill was intent on making a goalie switch. Unfortunately, the McGill goalie, rather than waiting for the proper signal, thought a powerplay was ensuing, and headed for the bench. Martin Raymond, head coach of McGill, noted that though the move "was not intentional, the referee reminded us that if our goalie crosses the blue line thinking we were on the powerplay, he must go to the bench till the next whistle." McGill played without a goalie until the whistle, but Con U could not convert.

The second incident saw a Redmen goal nullified when the referee challenged and then confirmed that the puck was intentionally put in by the player's body.

The third period began short-handed for the Stingers and it proved costly. Con U gave up a goal immediately after the end of the penalty. A pass through the slot reached McGill's Marko Kovacevic, who managed to skillfully tip it in for his second goal of the night. Less than a minute later, he would complete the hat trick, taking a pass in the slot from behind the goal line and popping it in to give McGill a 4-1 lead.

The Stingers didn't give up, as a scramble in McGill's slot ended with Con U winger Des Alliers setting up the perfect opportunity for Marc-Andre Rizk to cut the lead to two.

As the Stingers kept up constant pressure against the Redmen, a clearing attempt by McGill was intercepted by Stingers defenceman Andrew Palombaro, who released a deadly and accurate wrist shot through a crowd of players that found the top corner on the blocker side.



Stingers centre Evan Ellbogen surveys the action. PHOTO CHRIS GATES

"The team showed a lot of character in the comeback, but we did not execute our game plan, which was to play the same way we did against Trois Rivières."

—Kevin Figsby,
Men's Hockey head coach

The last five minutes of the game exhibited heavy play by both squads. The last minute of play was controlled by McGill, pressing Con U in their zone and preventing the Stingers' comeback.

"This game was very important for us," said Raymond. "We wanted to clinch second place and it is also good to take home the Corey Cup, but what really matters today is the two-points."

For Stingers coach Kevin

Figsby, the mood was more bittersweet. "We did not play hard enough to win today [...] all four lines played today but our D got beat in our zone," said Figsby. "The team showed a lot of character in the comeback, but we did not execute our game plan, which was to play the same way we did against Trois Rivières."

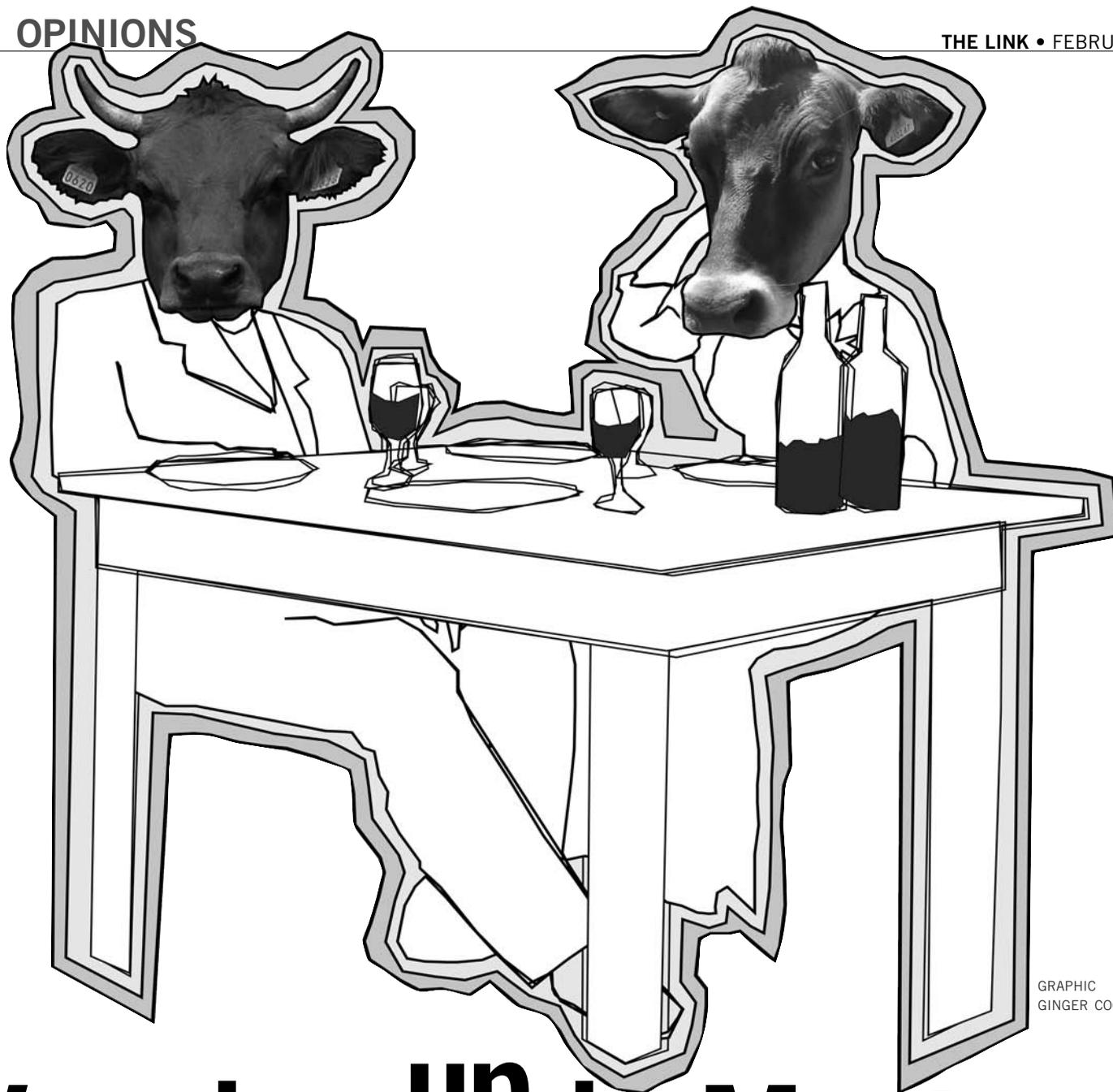
Concordia's men's hockey team finishes their season next Friday against the top-ranked UQTR Patriotes. The game starts at 7:30 at Ed Meagher Arena.

scoreboard

	Home	Away	Record
Men's Basketball	Laval 58	Concordia 77	8-4-0
	Concordia 75	Laval 66	
Men's Hockey	Concordia 4	UQTR 1	14-13-0
	Concordia 1	Carleton 4	
	Concordia 3	McGill 2	
Women's Basketball	Laval 70	Concordia 76	3-9-0
	Concordia 72	Laval 73	
Women's Hockey	Concordia 0	McGill 7	3-11-0

schedule

	Who	When
Men's hockey	vs. UQTR	Friday, 7:30 p.m.
Women's Basketball	vs Bishop's @ Bishop's	Friday, 8 p.m. Saturday, 6 p.m.
Men's Basketball	vs Bishop's @ Bishop's	Friday, 6 p.m. Saturday, 8 p.m.
Women's Hockey	vs Carleton vs Ottawa	Saturday, 2:30 p.m. Sunday, 3 p.m.



Vegging up in Montreal

The joys of veg restaurants: more than lentils and tofu

• PHILIPPA DUCHASTEL DE MONTROUGE

In a city where fur-trimmed hoods and down-filled coats are the “in” items of the season, some may wonder if true animal lovers and vegetarians still exist.

Where then, in this hunter society, do the gatherers go to eat?

Without leaving our home territory—downtown Concordia—there is the People’s Potato, our own vegan soup kitchen. Some may call it “free food” but it is actually a food by-donation organization. Ideally, four dollars is supposed to cover the cost of food—in reality, most students don’t leave that much. The Potato serves cafeteria-style lunches, with only a few choices, but it is vegan, healthy and affordable.

For those of you who are part of the “just-at-Concordia-because-I-didn’t-get-into-McGill” crowd and enjoy roaming around their prestigious campus pretending you’re actually a student, there is a sweet little vegetarian café called Lola Rosa, a block from McGill’s Milton gates—the iron gates on University Street.

Although not too pricey, a meal and a dessert will set you back around \$20. While the quality of food isn’t amazing, everything is vegetarian. No nitpicking necessary, no need to question the waiter about precise ingredients, one can, as a

vegetarian, feel comfortable ordering anything on the menu. Unfortunately, the three-cheese lasagna is more of a spinach mush.

Vegans, stricter than even the most orthodox of vegetarians in their beliefs, eat food that has never and will never affect an animal. It is far from easy dining in this city as a vegetarian, it is even more complicated as a vegan. And while there are vegan dishes on most vegetarian menus, some vegans aren’t happy with the fact that the food might share the same frying pan.

ChuChai, on St. Denis near Pine Ave., is known throughout Montreal for putting together a good vegetarian meal. Considered by *The Mirror* as, “the Best Vegetarian Thai Restaurant in Town,” ChuChai’s innovative and imaginative Thai menu is a vegetarian’s dream. The meals are so fancy and flavourful that one easily forgets that it’s not meat; it’s that good. It is however expensive at \$15 a dish, but the meals are not something you can make at home and the flavours are sure to tempt you back.

Le Commensal features a buffet-style selection where you pay for what you get. No more stuffing yourself silly so as to not waste food; you make your own portions and are then charged by the serving weight. By choosing a spoonful of this and one of

that, you can sample all sorts of dishes and there are close to a hundred to try. Vegan dishes are indicated with a large “V,” making it easier to choose.

A bonus is that Le Commensal specializes in take-out, so one can pick up meals for another time. However, like most buffets, the freshness of the food can be lacking. While the restaurant ambiance isn’t great, Le Commensal is convenient as there are a few locations around the city.

Unfortunately, vegetarians don’t always stick together. If you are a couple, your other half may not want to crunch on cucumbers for lunch. Make sure to reassure them that a vegetarian restaurant does not mean a veggie-only menu; it’s far from rabbit food.

But if you can’t persuade them, then check out restaurant reviews and look for those that are rated vegetarian friendly. Better to dazzle them with a stunning display. Most vegetarian restaurants also have a couple of dishes on the menu that are fine for a somewhat lapsed clientele. Vegans however are usually out of luck.

Another place where vegetarians and vegans can dine in peace is The Spirite Lounge, on Ontario East. Many people consider this to be the best vegetarian restaurant in Montreal. Its concept is unique: to encourage people to not waste food, left-

Vegan and vegetarian eats around Montreal

Aux Vivre (V)

4631 St. Laurent
•Try the sandwiches and herbal tea, fresh food at a reasonable price.

Bonny’s

1748 Notre Dame O.
•Rich international menu that has it all. Can be pricey.

Cafe Lotus

5568 Monkland
•In the heart of the Monkland Village. Small friendly restaurant with great burgers.

ChuChai (V)

4088 St. Denis
•Popular and friendly joint with lots of mock meat.

Le Commensal (V)

1204 McGill College & 1720 St. Denis
•Over 100 dishes of pay-as-you-go buffet food, in two convenient locations.

La Bouche de Pain (V)

910 Duluth
•Does offer non-vegetarian food, but mostly a good selection of vegan baked goods.

L’Escalier (V)

552 Ste-Catherine E.
•Inexpensive place to eat, sit, work, or just talk. Great energy and great food.

Les Cuisines du Tibet Libre (V)

57 Beaubien E.
•A vegetarian pizzeria with good vegan options. The “create your own pizza” option is great.

Pushap

5195 Pare
•Quite the treat. Sits 15 in a small friendly bakery setting, the good is cheap and fast.

Spirite Lounge (V)

1205 Ontario E.
•The menu changes daily, rude service with great food. Don’t leave anything uneaten.

—compiled by Justin Giovannetti

(V) = vegan

overs are charged extra. The restaurant serves one set menu every day and reservations are required. The service is rated rude, but the food makes you forget about it. This is a place to go for a different dining experience.

Italian, Indian, Mexican, French, Chinese and Thai all make up Montreal’s wide range of restaurants, serving dishes from all over the world. Yet, Montreal is rated sixth on the Vegetarian Friendly Canadian City List, which considering the city’s dining culture is quite low. The fun is to go out and discover what place you like, fitting your budget and taste.

Happy hunting.

Concordia threatens Gaza protestors

University no longer a sanctuary for critical thought or dissent

• STEFAN CHRISTOFF

Protest on university campuses is a tradition dating back centuries, rooted in the origins of academic institutions as sanctuaries for learning, critical thinking and the voices of dissent in society.

In recent weeks students around the world, from Johannesburg to Jerusalem, have been central in coordinating protests opposing the Israeli attack on Gaza.

Political currents at universities often indicate shifts in broader society, as students are often among the first to take collective action against injustice. Growing opposition on campuses throughout North America to Israel's unrelenting attacks on Palestine, signals the beginnings of a serious social movement against Israeli apartheid.

Universities can provide the invaluable space necessary to question prevailing modes of political conduct. Students should be allowed to mobilize, and break political taboos in solidarity with the most marginalized of peoples.

From the civil rights movement in the United States, to the international campaign to end apartheid in South Africa, to the original sparks for environmental justice and sustainability, students were there.

The hub

At a grassroots level, Concordia University has been a key hub for organizing the unprecedented Palestinian solidarity demonstrations in Montreal. Tens of thousands took to the streets to protest Israel's bombardment of Gaza, the largest demonstrations in support of Palestine in Canadian history.

As thousands of students joined the historic protests, Concordia's administration has been attempt-

ing to suppress student participation in the growing Palestinian solidarity movement.

In late December, the Israeli military bombed the Islamic University in Gaza City in six separate air strikes, destroying the Science and Engineering buildings and damaged several others at a campus that serves over 20,000 students.

The gathering

In response to the Israeli air strikes on one of the major post-secondary institutions in Gaza, students and community activists called for a solidarity gathering at Concordia for the next morning in an effort to broaden awareness to the increasingly devastating situation in Gaza.

Students and community members gathered at Concordia's downtown campus and distributed information to students on the crisis in Gaza. They also called on the Concordia administration to issue a statement against the bombing of the Islamic University in Gaza and express solidarity with Palestinian students.

The letter

The Concordia administration's response has come in the form of legal letters, sent to key Palestinian solidarity advocates in the city, threatening legal action for the gathering.

Citing "security reasons," the legal letter signed by Concordia's Office of the General Counsel claims, "demonstrations are not permitted to take place within Concordia's buildings." A reading of Concordia's code of rights and responsibilities will clearly illustrate that the claim that protests or gatherings at the university "are not permitted" is weak and the administration's attempts to ban public protest on campus is not fixed in writing.

Beyond specific regulations, the attempts

from the administration to stifle protest on campus must be denounced and opposed. Concordia has been a centre for progressive movements for decades, a campus that has historically nurtured and honoured voices of dissent.

Concordia's legal intimidation of students and community activists is a disturbing encroachment on free speech and a stunning attempt to undermine the important role that students occupy in the struggle for social justice.

As popular sentiment in Canada, and internationally, continues to grow in support of Palestinian liberation, on campuses and beyond, institutions of political and economic power will be the last to shift on the issue, forced to take distance from Israel due to a groundswell of popular sentiment in solidarity with Palestine.

The lone vote

Canada's minority Conservative government was the only country to vote against a recent resolution at the U.N. Human Rights Council, outlining that, "the massive ongoing Israeli military operation in the [...] occupied Gaza Strip, caused grave violations of the human rights of the Palestinian civilians [...] and undermined international efforts towards achieving a just and lasting peace in the region." Despite Canada's lone vote against the resolution, it passed, signalling a growing willingness within the U.N. to oppose Israeli human rights violations.

Only last month the president of the United Nations General Assembly, Miguel D'Escoto Brockman, endorsed the growing international campaign to boycott the Israeli government, stating; "more than twenty years ago we in the United Nations took the lead from civil society

when we agreed that sanctions were required to provide a non-violent means of pressuring South Africa to end its violations. Today, perhaps we in the United Nations should consider following the lead of a new generation of civil society, who are calling for a similar non-violent campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions to pressure Israel to end its violations."

The price

In the past month Israeli military forces killed over 1,300 Palestinians, injuring approximately 4,300 others. 1.5 million Palestinians, the majority refugees expelled by Israel in 1948, are denied adequate access to basic necessities like fuel, medicine, clean water and food, as the majority of the population relies on U.N. relief.

Desmond Tutu, the South African Nobel laureate, has repeatedly called for an end to the "abominable" Israeli blockade of Gaza, while U.N. officials have described Gaza as an "open air prison."

As the situation continues to deteriorate in Palestine, the movement in solidarity with the Palestinians continues to grow. Concordia will continue to be an important campus within the broader student movement around the world that is supporting the international campaign to boycott the Israeli government.

Attempts by the Concordia administration to suppress Palestinian solidarity organizing on campus will only strengthen the long-term resolve of students and community members to crack Israeli apartheid, in the tradition of the important role that students have played historically in combating injustice.

Stefan Christoff is a community organizer and journalist based in Montreal. He is a member of Tadamon! a collective of social justice activists in Montreal.



Green space

Corporate pollution: a look inside the world's dirtiest companies

• MADELYN LIPSYC

Despite the Earth's sprawling forests and pristine glaciers, we live in a dirty world.

Cleaning up the mess created by civilization is an essential part of the current effort to reduce greenhouse gases, reverse ozone depletion and undo global warming. While it is important to correct individual behaviour and instil green politics into our communal discourse, corporate polluters must be held accountable.

The companies that fuel global commerce have the ability to create more pollution, on a larger scale than any person ever could. The impact of corporate pollution has become clear in the movement of manufacturing to the developing world, where companies have increased profits by neglecting environmental standards.

The developing world has been left with a nasty ecological legacy that will require generations to repair. The Western world has also imported more than the product of those dirty industries. Pollutants and toxins have found their way into the soil and bodies of the West. Here are some examples:

Shell has been drilling in the Niger Delta since 1958, extracting billions of dollars annually. The indigenous people of the area, the Ogoni, have seen little of that money, but much of the environmental devastation. According to notable journalist and author Naomi Klein, "not only have the Ogoni people been deprived of the profits from their rich natural resource, many still live without running water or electricity, and their land and water have been poisoned by open pipelines, oil spills and gas fires."

Thousands of Ogoni have died in the last two decades when protesting Shell's presence.

Named "America's worst private polluter" by the Environmental Protection Agency, American Ira Rennert owns the Doe Run smelter in La Oroya, Peru. Considered one of the dirtiest places in the world, nearly 99 per cent of La Oroya's children suffer from lead poisoning, and the cancer rate is 2,000 times higher than normal.

As two million pounds of toxins spew out of La Oroya's smelters daily, Rennert has built a house in the Hamptons worth over \$100 million. It must be hard for the American businessman to think of La Oroya, blanketed in ash, as he walks between his 39 bathrooms.

Coal, a cheap energy source that is dirty to extract and dirty to burn, remains a major problem for many countries. Linfen, the centre of China's profitable coal industry, has the worst air-quality on Earth according to a Blacksmith Institute's report.

The ends—heat, electricity and food—do not justify the means—pollution—when clean alternatives exist. The Earth should not be sacrificed so quickly for a generation of meaningless goods and culinary excess.

Factories that mine ore, extract coal and refine oil need to face the full extent of their pollution. It is important to urge our leaders and society to take actions necessary to revoke the corporate world's addiction to pollution.

Whether by boycott or pressure tactic, the people in charge must look at the *raison d'être* of these companies and ask themselves if they really need to exist. The world may depend on it.

✉ Letters@thelink.concordia.ca

Politics know Audrey, Audrey knows politics

I am writing this letter to express support for the candidacy of Audrey Depault to be the next ASFA VP Finance. This year, as the president of the Political Science Student Association, Audrey has gone beyond the call of duty and made student service a priority.

She has organized numerous events including a debate between federal candidates discussing issues affecting student life, has helped host the Political Science Speaker Series and aided in countless other political initiatives around campus. In addition, she has organized an internship information session for political science students, which has proven to be useful and successful for her soon to be graduating peers.

What is unique and distinguishes Audrey from other members of the student government is that she takes her job seriously, makes time for her peers and provides encouragement and support throughout her personal and academic challenges. Audrey is more than qualified to be the next VP Finance of ASFA. I hold no doubt that she will bring the same level of financial transparency, dedication, and enthusiasm she has to the PSSA. She has raised the bar and set a new standard of professionalism this year.

On Feb. 17, 18 and 19 I urge you to vote and help ASFA aim for a higher success by voting for Audrey Depault.

—Mimi S. Abitbol,
Political Science

Vote for Leah!

So, ASFA elections are once again in full swing, and if you aren't aware of it, you may likely find yourself wondering who the hell the candidates are and why they're vying to best represent you—that is, the average Arts and Science student.

Many faces are already plastered on posters all throughout the university, and usually at this time of year you ask yourself: "who the hell are they?"

But this year, not so much.

Running for the position of ASFA President is well known former ASFA VP Social, Leah Del Vecchio. As a former ASFA executive member myself (2005-2006 VP Administration, 2006-2007 VP External) and as an executive member who had the chance to work alongside Leah throughout the 2006-2007 academic year, I can confidently say that Leah is more than prepared to lead a dedicated executive team to successfully tackling the challenges that lie ahead for ASFA in the coming year.

These challenges are many, the most important of which is standing up to the CSU's bullying tactics, reaffirming ASFA's autonomy to the CSU and finally ending the collusion that the CSU has been forced upon ASFA this past year. Leah's experience in student politics over the past couple of years positions her perfectly to guarantee these types of necessities for ASFA.

On the other hand, her opponent, who

has yet to complete a full year at Concordia and who's brother is none other than Colin Goldfinch, current CSU VP External, is clearly unfit and too inexperienced to fill the position of ASFA President.

The choice will be simple. I will be voting for Leah Del Vecchio for ASFA President.

—Daniel McSharry,
Specialization in Environmental Science

Psych students make their pick

In any thriving democratic system there is an opportunity for periodic elections to legitimize the system of governance that has been adopted.

The Arts and Science Federation Association's election is around the corner and this letter is to entreat students in the faculty to stop the candidates, know their platforms and engage them to know what they intend to do in the next academic year.

The Concordia Psychology Association will like to endorse the candidature of Stephanie Siriwardhana, running for Independent Councillor, Adrien Severyns for VP External and Amir Sheth for VP Social.

Siriwardhana currently sits on ASFA's executive and her work for student's initiatives and her dedication to the member associations, of which Psychology is one, is unparalleled. Severyns and Sheth were frosh leaders for first year students and their dedication and commitment to making sure that students have a positive exposure to our university has been enormous.

In view of these and other qualities these individuals possess, we are asking students to go out in their numbers to vote come Feb. 17-19.

—Prince Ralph Osei,
on behalf of the Concordia Undergraduate
Psychology Association

Del Vecchio's got game

I would like to encourage all Arts and Science students to vote for Leah Del Vecchio in the upcoming ASFA election. Having worked extensively with Leah over the past three years, I am extremely confident in her ability to work effectively in order to meet the needs of students.

As VP Student Life at the CSU, Leah worked with university officials, student leaders and community members in order to improve student life on campus. Thousands of students have had a better university experience because of her efforts. Her commitment to sustainability, honesty and transparency is both strong and sincere. As a friend and colleague, I can proudly attest to her organizational skills, determination and dedication.

Leah's proven track record makes her the ideal candidate to serve as ASFA President in the upcoming year. She has never let me down and I know that she will not let Arts & Science students down. Vote for Leah!

—Mark Small,
Political Science



Lame Party

...continued from last week



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.

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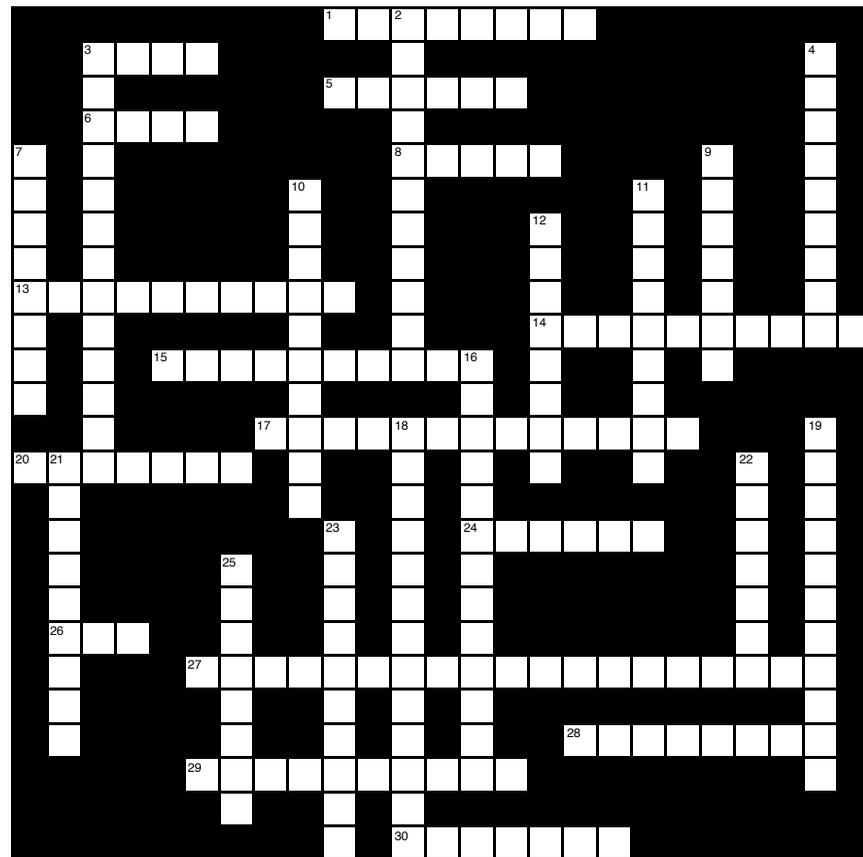
BAD DATES • R. BRIAN HASTIE & "LOVERBOY" DE ROSA

ACROSS

1. Area including a lawn, a fence and your neighbour's back porch
3. Well, the bad part is that grandma's dead, the upside is that your date knows what to wear: black
5. It's all fun and games until she beats you in Tekken. It's not fair because shes button mashing
6. Dumpster-diving on an epic scale. Your date does not look amused, but at least you scored a sweet couch and a weird picture frame
8. Usually reserved for people to drunkenly pass out in, this place has less-than-ideal lighting and may or may not contain a drug dealer
13. No matter what your avatars are doing, it does not count as spending time together. Have some quality time in meatspace instead
14. Nobody wants to wake up at three in the morning and ride shotgun on your 12-speed while you fling out today's edition to porches
15. Hagglng to get a free air freshener with this purchase does not leave a good first impression
17. Ten years too late, two slammers too early. Your sweet slam frizz techniques may win you more milk caps
20. Considered a redneck's biodome, this place of commerce is terrible, especially when "associates" roll back the prices at 6 a.m.
24. Better than a hole, but pray that it doesn't flood. Why are you treating your date like a groundhog?
26. One level above backyard wrestling, this federation is not to be confused with the Quebec terrorist organization (initials)
27. The *Under Siege* star's guitar powers suffer in a live setting and his ponytail gets in the way
28. Although you met Alex Ross, your date went home with the guy at the hotel bar. Perhaps your signed Superman poster will stifle the tears
29. I guess your date had to find out about your breaking-and-entering charge sometime, why not get it out of the way now by taking them here with you
30. Upside: None of the rides have lines in front of them. Downside: All of the rides look scarier when covered in snow and not lit

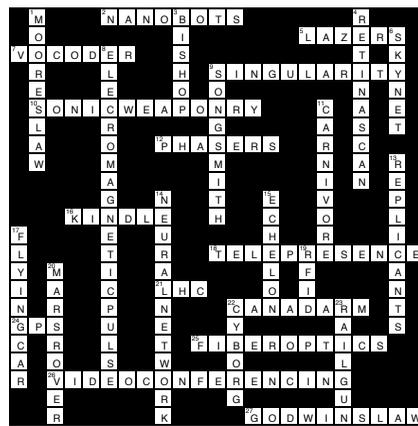
DOWN

2. This bar with its Monday night 'arts and crafts' theme and proximity to a dollar store is the stankest pick-up pit in the world
3. Surprise! It's time to get married so I can stay in the country and work! The pastor is dressed like Elvis
4. Grab your pickaxe and helmet, we're on the hunt for underground gold...and I don't mean leprechaun-style gold, I mean nugget-gold



7. Traded my watch for enough money to take you for hot dogs. Maybe I'll buy it back later next month
9. Milking cows is no one's idea of a good time. Not even a farmer likes to spend time in this roofless area
10. If you fall into the machines you might end up being used to hold books and other objects to pack
11. Alcoholism's no joke, but inviting your date to this place is the textbook definition of not putting your best foot forward
12. Telling your date that you have to show up here and get your stitches redone because you're bleeding all over the front seat is surely considered a buzzkill
16. This Montreal landmark features dirty snow, empty shipping cans and the chance to see an overpass crumble before your eyes
18. Sneaking in to see your grade 10 math class is not a good night out
19. Master says that you have to abide by the 10 rules of membership if you wish to remain in this place. Brainwashing is a must
21. Watching two, or more, consenting adults engage in various sexual acts on-screen is cool, but shows a lack of tact for a traditional first date

**issue 21
solutionz**



22. The bomb blasts and random bullets whizzing by may get the ol' adrenaline going, but it definitely is not conducive to getting past first base.
23. This Montreal orange line metro station is a terrible black hole of boring—pro tip: nearby points of interests are a bunch of random schools and the Ministre des transports
25. Not even the owners of these floating devices want to attend this

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

FEBRUARY 3, 1989

"Free trade and you"

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

One month after the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement came into force, Canadian universities were already worried about the possible impact of direct competition with American schools.

"If we don't expand our universities, who are we going to have in all the professional and managerial jobs in this country? Americans," said a report released by the Nova Scotia Confederation of University Faculty Associations.

According to the report, 10.6 per cent of Nova Scotia's population had a university degree in 1986, equal to West Virginia and Arkansas, the bottom rung of American states. The proportion of the U.S. population with a university degree, 19.4 per cent, was nearly twice the Canadian average.

The Canadian report feared that the U.S. would respond to the minimal competition from Canada

with a Marshall Plan for education; a comparison to the large economic effort that the United States undertook to rebuild Europe after World War II.

The stated goal of the U.S. reinvestment in education would see nearly 35 per cent of the population with a university degree in 2000.

In reality, the fears expressed in the report were unfounded. There was no reinvestment into American higher education, in fact costs have risen nearly three times faster than income since 1989. The only real additional money into the American system has come through student debt, which is at an all time high.

In 2000, only 26 per cent of the American population had a university degree, a third of what had been predicted a decade earlier.

The proportion of the Canadian population with a university degree has nearly doubled, to 20.2 per cent; a marked improvement from the 12.4 per cent in 1989. The news has not all been good; the number

Free trade and you

ALFAX (CUP) — Canadian studies must resist the pull of a more competitive system, says a report released last week. The NSCUFA study indicates that Americans already have the edge in post-secondary education. A 1986 survey shows that the proportion of university graduates in Nova Scotia is 10.6 per cent, below the Canadian average of 12.4 per cent and almost half the American average of 19.4 per cent. Nova Scotia's low proportion of university graduates puts the province in league with West Virginia, Arkansas and Kentucky, at the very bottom of the range for the American states. In addition, an advisory body to the U.S. government has proposed a "Marshall Plan" of educational rejuvenation, a huge injection of money into the public university system. Its goal is to achieve a proportion of university graduates in the adult population of 35 per cent by the year 2000, in order to preserve their "society, economy, democratic values and institutional leadership." The guiding principle of U.S. policy is that post-secondary education is a public good that should be provided for all-time students by the Nova Scotia and U.S. governments much more on post-secondary education. While each student at St. Mary's University in Halifax receives an operating grant of \$3400, a student at Alabama State University will receive almost twice that amount. A student at Acadia University in Wolfville will receive \$4446, while a student at the University of Pennsylvania gets a bit over \$1,000 more. A student at the Technical University of Nova Scotia receives a grant of \$11,586, while one attending the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology will receive \$13,580. Meanwhile, the Nova Scotia government's record on post-secondary education expenditures is worsening. Fifteen years ago, university operating grants made up 8.63 per cent of total expenditures by the provincial government. Today, only 5.5 per cent of the provincial budget will go to support universities.

of jobs and salary of those with degrees has declined nearly constantly since then.

Although free trade may have had an impact on university education, the influence has not been nearly as bad as was feared.

editorial

Expensive administrators hurt students and our university

Our university's financial priorities are completely out of whack. The cost of tuition is increasing annually and student debt is rising across Canada as a result—a record \$13 billion is now owed to the federal student loan program. As this has happened, record sums of money have been given to so-called university leaders who are walking away from unfinished jobs.

Last Friday, McGill University vice-principal Ann Dowsett Johnston left her position and received a severance package of \$321,471. In the second of a five-year term, Dowsett had only been paid \$449,788 by McGill for all her work up to that time. The university has hidden behind excuses of confidentiality to avoid answering questions about the severance and Dowsett's departure.

Meanwhile, the McGill University Non-Academic Certified Association, which represents over 1,800 administrative and support staff, is still at odds with the university over a 14-month salary dispute.

This is not the first time a university executive has picked up a big cheque on the way out.

In 2007, Claude Lajeunesse stepped down as president of Concordia University only two years into his five-year term. Lajeunesse walked away with a \$1.3 million severance package—that's 10 per cent of the university's deficit in the 2007-08 fiscal year. Once again, university officials said confidentially rules prohibited them from discussing the reason behind Lajeunesse's departure.

Legislation is needed to make universities more accountable. There needs to be an end to ridiculous amount of money wasted on individuals who don't deserve it. Forced accountability will save universities from a potential financial crisis. Perhaps the U.S. has the right idea—putting a salary cap on top executives who are being "rewarded for failure."

Universities are drowning in debt—Concordia is expected to end the year with a \$14 million dollar deficit. Paying the top brass should be the university's last priority. Keeping good teachers at work and the shuttle buses gassed should be our first and only priority.

If not, perhaps quitters do win.

— Johnny North, Managing editor

Concordia's green veneer is peeling

Concordia has a habit of being overly loud about environmental achievement.

We've outlawed plastic bags in the bookstore, printing in the library is double sided by default and reusable mugs are given away. There's a greenhouse on the roof of the Hall Building where food scraps go to be reborn as compost. We have a student run organic food store, a vegan soup kitchen and other initiatives that make us look that much greener.

When the new John Molson School of Business building opens, we'll have another thing to brag about. The building is Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certified. For the uninitiated, that means it complies with a set of standards dictating energy consumption, materials, construction practices and indoor environmental quality, among other things.

A LEED certified building is a visible addition to our sustainability, and in theory, having a LEED building is something to be proud of. In practise, it's not that great.

The LEED certification framework has four levels: certified, silver, gold and platinum. Concordia, with our loud environmentalism and self-congratulatory attitude, should be expected to aim for the best. We should be doing our utmost to save the world in every way we can. We should be going for platinum certification. No such luck.

The new JMSB building is LEED certified. That's it. We're doing the least we can to earn our certification. Our one true LEED contribution is seven metres of solar panels on the west side of the building. These solar panels will serve to light and heat the building.

There are 15 LEED certified buildings at Canadian universities. The one platinum among those buildings is at the University of Calgary.

Why aren't we aiming as high as the University of Calgary? We are, at base, braggarts. We're more bluster than substance. We look that much greener, that much more sensitive, that much better. And we get to look good without spending the money or making the commitment necessary to reach platinum certification.

—Ginger Coons, Graphics editor