THE UBYSSEY

Leaving Sketzo in the dark since 1918

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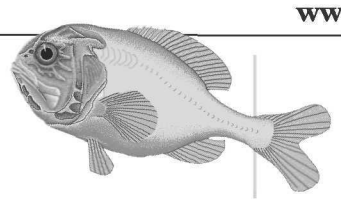
PAID TO PILLAGE THE SEAS
UBC researchers examine the effects subsidies have on high sea fisheries. **Page 3**



FREEDOM! BLOOD! ABS!
Frank Miller's "300" is a kick-ass Spartan epic. **Page 7**

HEARTBREAKER...
T-birds tumble at CIS Women's Basketball Championships. **Page 9**

Mild MS may worsen over time, UBC study says

by Sam Chung
NEWS WRITER

UBC researchers have discovered unsettling evidence that contradicts conventional predictions about the development of multiple sclerosis (MS). Many believe that benign forms of the auto-immune disease are unlikely to progress into more severe forms if they have remained benign for at least ten years. According to this new study, this may not necessarily be the case.

Ana-Luiza Sayao, Virginia Devonshire, and Helen Tremlett found that of the 169 patients evaluated in their study, nearly half who had initially received a benign diagnosis of MS went on to develop more severe forms of the disease after about 20 years. Furthermore, of those patients, approximately 21 per cent eventually succumbed to the disease, requiring the use of a cane.

> *" What our study shows is that there is not an arbitrary cut-off that can be predictive of the progression of the disease."*
>
> Ana-Luiza Sayao, resident of Vancouver General Hospital

On the other hand 52.1 per cent of the patients, who were enrolled in the British Columbia MS clinic database, continued to exhibit only benign symptoms.

How concerned should patients be who were previously diagnosed with benign MS?

The researchers point out that this study was not meant to discourage MS patients. Sayao, a resident of Vancouver General Hospital and former undergraduate of Biopsychology from UBC, said, "There is some reassurance to benign MS patients. The longer the patient has had MS and the lower the disease has remained in severity, the more likely you will remain well."

MS is an auto-immune disease that affects the central nervous system. Symptoms may include difficulty in walking, numbness, pain, fatigue, dizziness, and problems with memory and coordination. Most people with MS are di-

see "MS" page 2.

Aquatic Centre gym future in limbo

UBC Athletics, AMS to decide future of facility in coming weeks

by Jordan Chittley
NEWS WRITER

IN PROTEST: UBC students may not be able to work out here after April 16. **OKER CHEN PHOTO**

Along with her predecessors, Rosanne Wozny has been taking her patients to the gym in the bottom floor of the Aquatic Centre at a discounted rate for over 20 years.

However, a recent proposal could mean that the gym will be closing and Wozny will be looking for a more expensive and less convenient facility in the coming weeks.

"We all were totally upset when we saw that sign and it was just a little, tiny sign," said Wozny. The notice, taped to the gym water fountain, stated the gym would be closing indefinitely on April 15, with no further explanation given.

However, following a vocal student outcry and the intervention of the Alma Mater Society (AMS), the decision to close the gym has been put on hold due to the lack of AMS consultation on the decision, said AMS President Jeff Friedrich.

According to Bob Philip, director of UBC Athletics and Recreation, newly hired Aquatic Centre Manager Lloyd Campbell did not realise the amount of utlisation the gym received when he proposed a small reallocation of space that would shut the gym down.

"I think what happened here was a decision [was made] within the Aquatic Centre that [they] didn't think was a big deal," said Philip. The Aquatic Centre Management Committee, comprised of AMS and Athletics and Recreation representatives who oversee all decisions for the building, was also supposed to be consulted before a decision of this magnitude was made, but Campbell skipped this step.

"I'm not blaming him, he just got here and has some good ideas," said Philip of Campbell. We have some new technology that will be able to keep the outdoor pool open year round and I don't think anyone will complain about that.

Constructed in 1978 with 40 per cent of building costs paid by students, the Aquatic Centre is the only facility with weights where students can work out for free during certain hours of the day.

Until August the AMS, the University, and Athletics and

see "Aquatic" page 2.

Campus community fights for free gym

Students and staff alike protest closure of Aquatic Centre gym

by Boris Korby
NEWS STAFF

Students and UBC community members aren't happy about a recent proposal to close the UBC Aquatic Centre gym, and they're making themselves heard loud and clear.

"I haven't seen something like this in my time here," said Alma Mater Society (AMS) President Jeff Friedrich, referring to the flood of emails, letters, and phone calls received from gym users concerned about a recent announcement by UBC Athletics that the gym will be closing indefinitely. The announcement has been subsequently retracted.

The Aquatic Centre gym is utilised by students, staff, professors, senior citizens, hospital patients, and others who frequent UBC's Point Grey campus, all of whom have come together to express their displeasure not only with the announcement, but also with the lack of information and consultation gym patrons have received regarding the decision.

Brian Condon, a UBC student and weight trainer at the Aquatic Centre, said he is frustrated and angry at the suddenness of the announcement, and questions the University's motives for trying to close the facility.

"My reaction was just frustration and anger that I was not told. I just thought that was really unprofessional...and I would have thought that I would have been told prior to the sign being put up," said Condon. "I think it's really not a wise move on account of the Athletics Department to take away a physical exercise opportunity for students, and I really think it's about monopolising the Bird Coop which is jam-packed already and has huge prices already."

Retired professor Kal Holsti, who has been using the Aquatic Centre gym since it opened in 1978, said the decision came as quite a shock to him.

"I was in on the committee that designed this building. Students are here for three or four years and then they've left. But some of us are here forever in a way, and we've come to rely on it, and somebody has to say something about it when the decision is made with no consultation and just came out of the blue and we don't understand the reasons why.

"I think that because it's a decision that has such a large and permanent impact on so many people, the committee really ought to consult with the users," added Holsti. "The intent of the founders (including John Buchanan, who the gym is named after) and the people who were in on the building of this building was to have a gym facility in the building directly connected to the Aquatic Centre, so if they close it that in a sense undermines what we were trying to do."

Alex Burkholder and Nira Salant are both gym users and UBC students who have let the University know closing the gym is something students won't take lying down.

"The Aquatic Centre [gym] is a less competitive environment, and less crowded, and I'm a tall skinny guy. I was curling 15 pound weights when I first started. But there are 70 year olds that use

see "Gym" page 2.

Between the sheets: GSS pres, summer jobs and basketball bonanza

Bird Coop too expensive, says UBC Hospital worker

"Aquatic" continued from page 1.

Recreation jointly ran the building with Athletics and Recreation footing most of the bill and the AMS controlling the decision-making. However this past August the AMS negotiated that it would become a University facility and the University said that Athletics and Recreation should run it.

AMS President Jeff Friedrich said the change of management occured because the University wanted the AMS to assume an additional percentage of the liability insurance on the facility, a cost the AMS was unwilling to put on students.

"The endpoint of this is that there's a new agreement that gave full management of the facility over to Athletics and that's where we are today, but part of the agreement was that the Management Committee would still be there and functioning, and that we'd have a certain amount of representation on that," said Friedrich.

Presently, Athletics and Recreation pays almost $1 million a year in operational costs for the Aquatic Centre, with a significant portion already coming from student athletic fees collected by the AMS.

Without any explanation as to why UBC Athletics and Recreation was closing the facility, patrons initially believed liability and financial reasons were being used to justify the closure.

However Philip said that there are ways around the liability such as signs indicating that it is unsupervised, and since there are no plans to purchase new equipment, the gym is a cost neutral part of the Aquatic Centre.

Philip added that the fees for Bird Coop, the pay-to-use gym in the Student Recreation Centre, are coming down, and he never thought the closing would be for financial gain.

As of now, the Aquatic Centre will temporarily close for annual scheduled maintenance on April 15. Many in the UBC community remain concerned it may never reopen. The enormous outcry is forcing the Aquatic Centre Management Committee to meet next week, where AMS representatives will express the views of a vocal student opposition and lobby to keep the facility open to the public.

As for Wozny, she has begun to look into alternatives, but the convenience of having a gym that is so close with a yoga area, weight and cardio equipment and a hot tub make the gym at the Aquatic Centre the best choice.

"It's curious that they don't know how many people use it," said Wozny. "We've been going once a week with our patients, because it's good for their well-being, recovery and rehabilitation. I do a half hour stretch and strength in the yoga area and then we do a half hour using the weights and the cardio equipment."

Wozny said that working out has similar benefits for her patients as it would for non-patients, such as increased self-esteem and energy, but "because they have a medical condition, [working out] helps them get back to work or school and on with their life."@

—with files from Boris Korby

Not a wise move, says weight trainer

"Gym" continued from page 1.

the the gym, so you don't ever feel intimidated, it's not really a scary place, it's just an easy place to go and work out and just feel [part] of a little community," said Burkholder, who began calling and emailing University and Athletics administrators when he heard of the proposed closure.

Salant, who has organised a petition that will be presented to UBC Athletics, said when she read the announcement, that it added to an already existing disappointment with UBC's attitude towards fitness. Like Burkholder, she is doing what she can to keep the facility open, and encourages others to do the same, including writing letters to the AMS, who will present the complaints at a meeting to decide the gym's future March 22 or 23.

"I definitely think the feedback is being listened to," said Friedrich, "And I definitely think that because there is a process in place and because [the AMS is] coming with such a wave of consultation, it's not going to just be a couple voices per usual saying students care about this. There's some real force behind this and I'm really glad that people have taken the steps they have to do that." @

—with files from Colleen Tang

"MS" continued from page 1.

agnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, with two to three times as many women than men having the disease.

MS patients are subject to a certain scoring system to get an interpretation of the severity of the disease. The EDSS (Expanded Disability Status Scale) is the system of concern to those with MS.

When asked about what led to conventional wisdom that benign MS that will not progress into severe forms if symptoms remain moderate for ten years or more, Sayao replied, "Previous studies suggested a cut-off of low disease severity in the future with an EDSS value of less than three. Looking at the scale, it would make logical sense to diagnose benign or mild MS.

"However, the problem with those studies is that they are smaller, observational studies. Also, the patients subject to those studies were lost to subsequent follow-ups regarding their progress. This results in the study not being representative."

Sayao noted that a value of three in itself may be indicative of significant disability. She shed light on the fact that the level of suffering tied to certain disabilities may prove much more significant to some people.

"What may be something as little as fatigue may seriously impair a person's ability [to] function in daily activities."

"What our study shows is that there is not an arbitrary cut-off that can be predictive of the progression of the disease," Sayao said.

"You have to remember that individuals are unique and variable. That means that it is really important for patients to be followed longitudinally over time, to continually follow-up their progress." @

NEWS FEEDS

The president has arrived

After numerous elections committee meetings, the Graduate Student Society (GSS) presidenital candidancy race is finally at a close, and Matt Filipiak will be the new leader.

After GSS interim President and presidential candidate Patrick Bruskiewich made his claims questioning whether fellow candidate Ed Durgan had an advantage in the race, Durgan made his own claim that he had been libelled by a fellow candidate.

According to Chief Elections Officer David Noshad, the elections committee, after careful consideration, decided to not disqualify any of the candidates in the recent election because of the serious ramifications—such as losing a GSS councilor seat—that are involved. "[The] proof wasn't enough, there was some ambiguity, " he said adding that there wasn't any strong proof in either case.

Overall, Noshad was happy with the bielection and predicts a higher voter turnout than the last election.

As for Durgan he is "just relieved that [the election] is over."

Matt Filipiak, presidential candidate, said, "it was kind of disturbing to see grown-up grad students fighting like that."

"We're students here and we should be working together and unifying."

Although Filipiak would celebrate with whoever wins, he said "I just hope I win." And win he did. Noshad released an unofficial and unratifed result last night. @

'tweens

Ancient Lives
March 14, 1:00pm
Room 1109, ANSO Building (6303 NW Marine Drive)
The UBC Department of Anthropology invites you to the Ancient Lives Seminar Series 2006-2007, featuring Jennifer Ramsay's (SFU Archaeology) "Petra, city of the Nabataeans."

UBC Jazz Ensemble II
Recital Hall
March 15, 1:00pm
The UBC School of Music presents the UBC Jazz Ensemble. Free Jazz!

Classifieds

Announcements

UBC TAX ASSISTANCE CLINIC
For Students. Tax returns? We're here to help! From March 2 to April 6, UBC TACS will offer professional tax return services and answer any related questions at NO COST. Tuesdays to Fridays, 10:00AM to 4:30PM, at International House. Please Register online. Spaces limited. For more information or to register, visit www.ubc@gmail.com

UBC GOLDEN KEY
Academic committee proudly supports: The UBC INFORMS (Institute for Operations Research and Management Sciences) Student Chapter's Management and Operations in Health Care Mini-Symposium. Time: 1-5PM, Friday, March 16, 2007, in Room 102, Michael Smith Laboratories. Cost:FREE! Stamp points: 40. Please RSVP by March 14 to informs.ubc@gmail.com.

GOLDEN KEY HONOUR SOCIETY society: 2007's 2nd Annual Golden AIKEY Bzzr Garden teams up with the Caribbean African Club to bring you a ST. Patty's RHOM Garden!! WHEN? Friday, March 16, 8pm-midnight at SUB Room 205 WHO? US, THEM, and all of our friends! $2 cover and cheap alcohol, lets party!

UBC GOLDEN KEY PRESENTS:
Evening with VP Sullivan! We are inviting members to a special evening with UBC Vice President Sullivan to speak their minds on student issues with the student-affair leader. March 21st, 6-7pm at the Penthouse. Refreshments served! Must RSVP by March 19 to corresponding@ubcgoldenkey.org or gkey@interchange.ubc.ca and include a short statement on an issue of your concern.

WITH EVERY PURCHASE WE impact people and ecosystems. Think about changes to consumption choices during UBC Responsible Consumption Week, March 19-23 & Vote With Your Dollar Fair, March 22-23! More info about keynote speakers, workshops, panel night at www.ubc-rcw.org or in the SUB.

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"What the Tang, Colleen! Can you open up a bottle of Champagne Choquer and Nadia Bell it?" asked Jordan Chittley, who was Oker Chening at the Levi Barnett when Andrew MacRae got Wilson Wonged in the back of the head. "Who in the name of David Harakal did that?" "Not I, the great Isabel Ferreras." "Oh shove it up your Kaan Eraslan," said Xiaoyang Luo. "Joanna Chiu!" "Bless youm Eva Lillquist. You must have a Boris Korby in your Sam Chung. You're right Stephanie Taylor, we need a Jane Lee, in order to Matthew Jewkes the Momoko Price." Suddenly, Paul Bucci and Brandon Adams appeared out of Eric Szeto with a Jesse Ferreras in their hands. I guess Eric Atack's gonna have to Alison Bailey her way out of Drew Gilmour and Kellan Higgins

EDITORIAL GRAPHIC
Michael Bround

Canadian University Press

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Subsidies threaten high seas fisheries

Subsidised fisheries economically and environmentally infeasible

by Brandon Adams
NEWS EDITOR

It's hard to imagine governments supporting an industry that is neither economically nor environmentally viable, yet according to a report by University of British Columbia researchers, governments are pouring millions of dollars into high seas fishing, despite losses and overfishing.

The report, titled "Catching More Bait," examines the subsidies provided by many governments to their fishing industries subsidies, which are estimated to total around US $30-34 billion per year worldwide. One specific area of focus for this study was how the fishing industry and its subsidies affect the fisheries in the high seas.

Rashid Sumaila, director of the UBC Fisheries Centre's Fisheries Economic Research Unit, said that the fish found within the high seas are unique and more sensitive to fishing than coastal fisheries.

"They are very special in that they normally live very long [lives], they grow very slowly, and combining those kind of features with economics is usually a dangerous combination," he said.

And yet despite their sensitivity, high seas fisheries are the target of large subsidies from many countries including Russia, Japan, South Korea, Spain, and Australia. Worldwide subsidies for high seas fishing, explained Sumaila, total more than US $150 million per year.

"Without subsidies many of these fleets would not be able to go fishing, economically," said Sumaila, "But now with the subsidies we just open the floodgates, they're still able to go out [and fish]."

Interest rates also play a large role in how regions are fished, explained Sumaila. "If you are going to get a higher interest rate in the bank compared to the growth rate of a fish type, then you are better off emptying the ocean and turning all the fish into money in the bank because it will grow faster."

FOOLISH FISHERY: A UBC study has drawn connections between subsidies for high seas fishing and over harvesting. **PHOTO COURTESY OF PHILLIP CAPPER**

"Even for normal fish—by that I mean fish that grow very fast—[it] is a challenge to beat the market interest rate. If you look at deep sea stocks, they grow so slowly it's almost impossible [to beat the interest rate]. You really have to fish them very carefully if you want them to be sustainibly fished, not emptied."

> ***"With the subsidies we just open the floodgates, they're still able to go out [and fish]."***
>
> Rashid Sumaila
> Director
> Fisheries Economic Research Unit

With the pressure of interest rates and the extra revenue for trawlers provided by subsidies, high seas fisheries are under an immense amount of pressure, stated Sumaila.

UBC Department of Economics professor Brian Copeland echoed Sumaila's concerns about fishing subsidies.

"The problem with fisheries subsidies is the more you fish, the more you decrease the stock. Other subsidies could potentially keep uncompetitive industries viable for a long time," explained Copeland. "But, in some sense with fisheries, the more successful the subsidy program is in keeping people fishing, the more likely it is you're going to 'kill the golden goose.'"

While subsidies can be beneficial by allowing governments to maintain jobs and output in industries where they are internationally uncompetitive, explained Copeland, they could actually damage a natural resource based industry like fishing.

"In a lot of cases the reason why you have employment problems in fisheries is that the stocks are depleted. You've got this ecological problem which you're trying to counteract with subsidies but it's only going to be a short term, and in fact the subsidies are only going to make the ecological viability of the industry even worse." @

Antidepressants linked to osteoporosis, says study

by Stephanie Taylor
NEWS WRITER

A new study on osteoporosis in Canadians has found a link between antidepressant drugs and higher instances of osteoporosis.

The study focused on the use of a widely-prescribed group of antidepressants known as selective-serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) in patients over 50 years of age. It was found that patients taking SSRIs doubled their risk of incurring osteoporosis-related injuries, said David Goltzman, Director of the Metabolic Bone Disease Centre at the McGill University Health Centre, and head of the study.

"SSRIs were associated with a two-fold risk of developing minimal trauma or osteoporotic fractures," said Goltzman. "The absolute risk of developing fractures was 13.2 per cent in the individuals taking SSRIs and 6.6 per cent in the individuals not taking SSRIs."

The study was carried out as part of the ongoing Canadian Multicentre Osteoporosis Study (CaMOS), which is coordinated through nine institutions across Canada. Researchers examined a cohort of patients 50 and older that has been monitored by CaMOS for the last ten years.

The researchers were aware of other age-related factors associated with osteoporosis, but were still able to establish a link with SSRIs after accounting for other possible variables.

"Increased age, female sex, sedentary lifestyle...are all known to predispose to osteoporosis, including osteoporosis in the CaMOS population," Goltzman explained. "Because we had recorded all this data in the CaMOS database as well as data on the bone density of these people, their frequency of falls...we were able to correct for all of this."

He added that SSRIs were still associated with an increased risk of low trauma fractures.

Goltzman also made reference to studies involving insurance company records of medications and injuries.

"Previous studies in administrative databases, [such as] large databases accumulated usually by governments or insurance companies to track health care usage and costs, had indicated that there was a relationship between SSRIs and osteoporosis," he said.

While the nature of the SSRI link is unknown, there are several theories that researchers are considering.

"SSRIs alter serotonin transport into cells and previous work in vitro and in animals had found that serotonin transport into bone cells and action in bone cells seems to be important to make bone," said Goltzman.

CaMOS is also theorising serotonin's role as a neurotransmitter and the potential for it to affect the sympathetic nervous system, which governs the mobilisation of the body in times of stress. Jerilynn Prior, professor of Endocrinology and Metabolism at UBC and research member of CaMOS, said that inhibiting neurotransmitters from the sympathetic nervous system, like epinephrine and norepinephrine, improves bones.

"Norepinephrine is hard on bones," said Prior. However, Prior said that serotonin's specific effect on the system is still unknown.

Prior added that there were certain behavioural patterns among depressed patients that could contribute to osteoporosis and associated bone fractures, such as inattentiveness to one's surroundings, as well as increased levels of stress-related hormone cortisol, which can promote loss of bone density and hinder bone growth.

Prior added, however, that depressed patients taking SSRIs instead of other antidepressant formulations showed a markedly higher incidence of osteoporotic bone fractures.

"The associations that we found suggests that SSRI use apart from depression itself increases low bone-density," she said. "There's something specific to the biochemistry of SSRIs."

While all of this seems to paint a rather bleak picture for users of SSRIs, there are many lifestyle adjustments to one's lifestyle that can lower one's risk of developing osteoporosis.

According to Marcel Dvorak, associate professor and head of the Academic Division of Spine at UBC's Department of Orthopaedics in the Faculty of Medicine, having a healthy diet and getting enough exercise are the most important preventative measures.

"If you maintain a healthy, normal diet... and if you maintain a high level of physical activity, then those are the best ways to ensure the best [outcome]."

Dvorak also said that high bone mass needs to be maintained at every stage of life, not just in old age.

"If you think of your bone mass as a bank, and during your life, you're making deposits into that bank and you're building up your bone mass, at a certain point that bone mass starts to diminish and wear away," he said. "What you want to do is you want to get the best possible bone mass... before you hit those years when your bone mass starts to diminish." @

Could I bum a gel off you?

US company offering nicotine hand gel to replace smokes

by Erin Atack
THE EYEOPENER (RYERSON UNIVERSITY)

TORONTO (CUP)—A new cigarette replacement in the form of a hand gel recently hit US markets and is expected to arrive in Canada this summer, though experts say it may encourage smokers to keep the habit.

Nicogel is a clear gel similar to other anti-bacterial products, but contains nicotine extracted from tobacco plants. One 0.8 ml serving is rubbed into your hands either from a pump dispenser or from a single-serving packet similar to a wet nap. In about 45 seconds, the product claims to put a tenth of the nicotine that's in one cigarette into your bloodstream.

Scott Welch, US head of strategic marketing for Nicogel, explains that a tenth of the nicotine is all that's necessary because the remaining content found in a cigarette gets burned and does not get into your bloodstream when you smoke. With the gel, one serving should subdue a smoker's craving for up to four hours, he said.

"We don't advertise it as a stop-smoking product," Welch said. "It's for use when you cannot smoke."

Welch says the product's purpose is to satisfy the smoker, without bothering others or polluting the environment. He said Nicogel is useful for people who can't smoke on airplanes, in offices, in movie theatres and in restaurants.

Ryerson's health experts agree that a smoke-free environment is ideal.

"As long as a person is using this product to help them quit smoking—which I hope the main use of this is going to be—then I think the elimination of second-hand smoke is a good thing," says Melissa Matton, head of Health Promotions at Ryerson.

However, some experts disagree with the product's projected effectiveness.

"There are many reasons why this is unlikely to work," said Rachel Tyndale, a professor of pharmacology at the University of Toronto who also works at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. "It seems remarkably unlikely that you'll get significant levels [of nicotine] through a skin-delivery system."

Tyndale added that satisfying a cigarette craving is not just about the nicotine fix, since smoking has other effects on the body.

"The smell of tobacco is a reinforcing effect, the passage of smoke through the airways is also a reinforcing effect," she said.

She also said that she is not aware of any controlled trials of Nicogel.

Stephanie Barnhill, assistant pharmacist at Shoppers Drug Mart, suggested another need that the gel wouldn't satisfy. "The big thing with smoking is hand-to-mouth habit. A lot of times people just do it to keep themselves busy."

She recommended a nicotine gum like Nicorette because it gives smokers something to do with their mouths.

However, she won't pass judgment on Nicogel until she sees trial results.

Carol Hively, spokesperson for Walgreen's Co, an American drugstore chain carrying Nicogel, says it's too soon to tell how the product is doing.

"It's just arriving at stores now . . . some stores don't have it on the shelf yet," she said in an e-mail. "[But] we anticipate customer demand."

First-year student Daniel Ly is skeptical of Nicogel. "It's not reasonable or practical. Whenever you crave a smoke you're going to rub your hands with some gel?"

Over two million packets have been sold so far in 30 countries.

Welch said Nicogel is in the process of getting approved by Health Canada and has "no doubt it's going to pass." @

University of British Columbia
UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD
the heart of university town

University Boulevard Concept Drawing

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Following up on the results of the University Boulevard International Architectural Competition in April 2005, this highly anticipated project is now in the design phase and construction is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2007.

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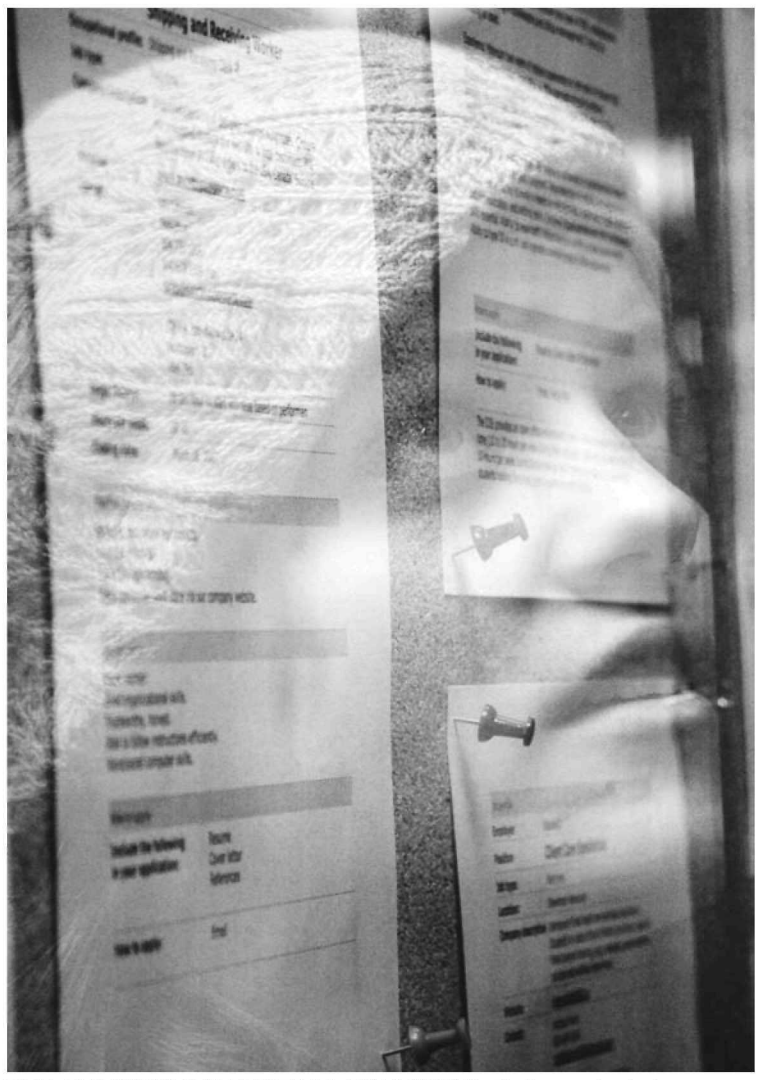

FLIP-FLOPPIN' ON FEDERAL FINANCIN': Tories re-instate funding for student summer jobs. **OKER CHEN PHOTO**

Summer jobs are back

Federal funding $11.6 million less than it was

By Nadya Bell
CUP OTTAWA BUREAU CHIEF

OTTAWA (CUP)—The Conservative government has restored most of the funding for the student summer job program.

Last fall, $55 million was cut from the Summer Career Placement program, sparking opposition from student groups, non-profit organisations, and opposition parties.

Diane Finley, then minister of human resources, said at the time that they were refocusing the program, which subsidised wages for students. She said the government did not want to fund summer jobs for large corporations that could afford to pay for interns themselves.

The program has been renamed Canada Summer Jobs, and the cuts are not as deep as was originally planned. The budget for the new program will be $85.9 million, still $11.6 million less than the budget of its predecessor.

The program has focused on cutting corporate funding rather than funding for non-profit organisations. Public sector organisations—such as municipalities—and private corporations with less than 50 employees still qualify for the program.

Denise Savoie, NDP critic for human resources, said she is satisfied that the program has been reinstated.

"I'm pleased that we have been successful in convincing them thus far, yet we are still far from what is needed, and what we would have expected, given the student debt burden that most people are facing," she said.

New criteria placed on the program are still going to eliminate some summer jobs, Savoie said. Organisations now have to prove that the jobs being funded could not be created otherwise. She said this means organisations will be forced to cut back elsewhere to pay their summer employees.

The short time for organisations to fill out applications—only four weeks—could also be a problem, Savoie predicted.

> *"I'm pleased that we have been successful in convincing them thus far, yet we are still far from what is needed, and what we would have expected."*
>
> Denise Savoie
> MP for Victoria (NDP)

"Everybody works on a skeleton crew, so additional output in time to fill out applications really adds to the pressure, and takes away from some of the valuable community services they provide," she said.

Canada Summer Jobs covers the entire wage for non-profit organisations, but only half of the province's minimum wage for public and private sector employees.

Savoie said the program should be expanded to cover full salaries in order to provide more summer jobs.

Amanda Aziz, chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students, said the decision to reverse most of the cuts to the program is only a partial victory, because the program is so essential.

"We're happy to see Stephen Harper abandon his student job reduction strategy," she said in a release. "Summer jobs are not a luxury—they pay the bills."

She said the government should consult with students and the public before making further changes to the program. @

Mother Courage wants no sympathy

TIM MATHESON PHOTO

MOTHER COURAGE AND HER CHILDREN
at the Frederic Wood Theatre
to March 17

by Joanna Chiu
CULTURE WRITER

On April 19, 1941, Bertolt Brecht missed the premiere of *Mother Courage and Her Children* because he was in Finland making arrangements to leave Europe and avoid persecution by the Nazis. He was enraged when he learned that some audience members cried during the premiere.

As a reformer of the theatrical arts, Brecht is most renowned for his theories on "epic theatre." He utilised innovative, alienating techniques to purge audience members of empathy for the characters on stage so that individuals could remain continually aware of their positions as spectators.

Watching the Theatre at UBC production of *Mother Courage and Her Children* in the Frederic Wood Theatre on opening night, I soon grew tired of my alienated role. Director Camyar Chai, along with cast and crew, delivered an exemplary Brechtian theatre experience. Much to my initial displeasure, I found myself unable to become absorbed in the storyline and had to sit and think rationally about the play's presentation of a reality made strange.

The story takes place during the Thirty-Years' War. Brecht's "untragic heroine," Mother Courage, follows the armies with her canteen wagon, obsessed with selling her merchandise to make a profit, even at the cost of her three children's lives. UBC Theatre graduate Lois Anderson takes on one of the most challenging roles ever written, and manages to execute a nuanced and masterful performance.

During the play, characters address the audience directly through solo songs, harsh white light illuminates the depravity onstage, and a petulant little peasant girl walks across the stage with a cardboard placard to introduce each scene. Chai, recipient of the Ray Michal award for "Most Promising Director" who most recently performed for the Governor General, applies Brecht's alienating aesthetic in an understated, but thoroughly effective way.

One aspect of the production, however, that did not quite hit the mark, was its humour. *Mother Courage* implores the audience to laugh at war, but it wasn't that funny when cast members dropped their pants and gyrated all over the stage. I enjoyed the more subtly comic performances by Evan Frayne and Joanna Rannelli, who played the characters of the cook and the prostitute. In *Mother Courage*, laughter serves to further distance audience members from the possibility of catharsis. Instead of being able to feel sad about the death and suffering onstage, the humour creates an unbearable lightness of the worst being.

The only opportunities for relief happen between scenes with the music that Patrick Pennefather wrote especially for the Theatre at UBC production. In other respects, *Mother Courage and Her Children* is worth watching, if not for the actual experience, then for the lasting impressions it will have on you.

In the final scene, Mother Courage sings a last lullaby to her daughter, and then hands over a few coins for the villagers to take care of funeral arrangements, as she leaves to follow a passing regiment. The spotlight is trained on Courage pulling her wagon alone as she looks straight at the audience, and shrugs. @

Peeling away stereotypes through humour

BANANA BOYS
at the Firehall Arts Centre
to March 17

By Eva Lillquist
CULTURE WRITER

Perfectly relevant to our multicultural city, playwright Leon Aureus' *Banana Boys* meditates on one of the fastest growing subcultures in Vancouver—the CBC, or Canadian Born Chinese.

In a hybridised environment where the demands of family and cultural heritage clash with the norms of a changing Western society, five friends of Canadian-born Chinese descent, Mike (Simon Hayama), Shel (Parnelli Parnes), Rick (Victor Mariano), Dave (Rick Tae), and Luke (Vincent Tong) share their frustrations as they navigate through a society where they are targeted by labels and typecasts. But through it all, these combatants stand firm by sticking together, fighting everyday battles as they come.

Banana Boys isn't afraid to take stereotypes and throw them at the audience with force. With its liberal use of less than politically correct terms like FOB and impersonated Asian accents, the play pumps up the racial typecasts to a highly exaggerated level.

In one scene the actors actually suit up in military gear and fire their machine guns at labels like 'nerd,' 'unable to get a date,' and 'computer programmer'—the enemy targets. Another extreme performance includes a portrayal of the Asian mother, shown here sporting a sumo wrestler-like get-up, determined to see her son become a doctor, lawyer, engineer or businessman so that he can take care of her when she's old. The effect is a hilarious, satirical look at typecasts that makes you step back and say, "It's all so true."

Aureus lays out *Banana Boys* like a series of short scenes with little relation to one another. Directly after a teary break up there is a bar scene, followed by a police interrogation, and then a game show, and so on.

But through all the fragmentation that could have made this play a disaster, the whole performance was a series of peeks into the lives of the characters, strung across an ill-defined timeline, livened by vivid performances and smart direction. The plot actually wasn't too important, but the production still managed to throw out a powerful, complete picture.

Perhaps it was the lack of coherent time and space that fostered Derek Butt's somewhat uninspired set design. A grouping of wood-framed and cellophane-paneled walls, it didn't really complement the stage too much, and just sort of sat there with an ambiguous purpose.

Banana Boys is a witty, must-see show that never fails to express stereotypes like they are. In the words of Rick Tae, "Good job soldier, for that, you get a coke!" @

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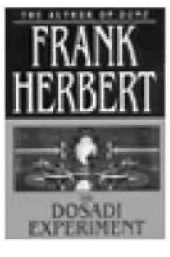

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Black Snake Moan says bondage is the greatest healer

BLACK SNAKE MOAN
now playing

by Drew Gilmour
CULTURE STAFF

Black Snake Moan opens in a fit of tragedy. A part of Lazarus (Samuel L. Jackson) died when his wife decided his brother was a better lover than he was; Rae (Christina Ricci), the town tramp, is neglected by her single mother and was molested—yet she still walks in darkness moaning for more of the "black snake".

The new film by *Hustle and Flow* director Craig Brewer heats up when Lazarus wakes up one morning to discover a beaten, might-as-well-be-naked Rae in front of his middle-of-nowhere farm. He does his best to help by cleaning her wounds and giving her a place to rest. Rae, now too damaged to think straight, wants to go right back to the guys and pills that left her in such a ragged position. Lazarus, realising that this is a bad idea, asserts that he has a right to interfere in someone else's life because he knows better. Because of this conviction he attempts to convince Rae to stick around for some healing with the help of his friend the radiator, and a length of 40-pound chain.

The narrative then proceeds to act out its blatant message (that sometimes a little bondage is a good thing) by having its symbols act in traditional ways. The radiator does not move; Rae attached to it finally becomes grounded and can thereafter sing sunshine onto Lazarus; Lazarus, now able to see the light, is raised from the dead back to his life of singing and music. All of this would all seem very drab if it wasn't for the startling performances of the leads.

Jackson's depression and Ricci's pitch-perfect personification make these shallow characters look deep enough for the high dive. As individual characters they both shine. Lost and alone they struggle onward as they scrape to find the strength to put their next foot forward. It is gripping, whether it be Ricci's quavering voice struggling through a rendition of *You Are My Sunshine* or Jackson's pipes belting out Blind Lemon's "Black Snake Moan," their performances save this film. @

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Frank Miller's *300* is a virtual slaughterfest

300
now playing

by Kaan Eraslan
CULTURE WRITER

The main question people are probably asking about *300*, is if it's more than just a treat for the eyes. Fear not, because although *300* is indeed an orgy of special effects, it also happens to be a pretty great movie. *Dawn of the Dead* director Zack Snyder successfully turns the pages of Frank Miller's graphic novel into a moving work of art.

The film is a larger than life retelling of the Battle of Thermopylae. Gerard Butler (*Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life*) plays the Spartan King Leonidas, who must defend his country from the invading Persian Army led by their god-king Xerxes. Although the situation is urgent and the fate of Greece depends on him, Leonidas cannot get approval from the Spartan elders to assemble an army to battle the Persians. He thus decides to break the rules and take three-hundred of his best men to defend the kingdom. His journey is perilous, and will surely fail, but he persists anyway, hoping to severely cripple Xerxes's horde.

From the beginning of the movie we are introduced to Spartan philosophies and the brutal upbringing of their children, who are trained to kill at a very early age. Despite this, there is no history lesson to be found here, so it is recommended that all of you history buffs put your brain in hibernation mode for two hours. This is not a historical retelling, but rather Frank Miller's interpretation of the Battle of Thermopylae in his graphic novel. Fellow scholars needn't worry, for there is still plenty of fun to have because the acting, music, and action are all top notch.

Butler has been on the sidelines in movies for a long time, just bursting with potential. It's really great to see him let loose, center stage, as he physically and mentally embraces the role of a warrior king. Butler brings a vulnerability to Leonidas that one would not expect from seeing the previews. Viewers will really see his torment as he must choose between tradition and his duty as a king. Lena Headey is strong and beautiful as Queen Gorgo, who guides Leonidas to do what is right for Sparta. Unlike many female leads, Headey retains her beauty and feminine charm while being a ferocious presence in front of a cast dominated by males with too much testosterone.

Upon viewing the trailers, many people may think that the main character of *300* is green screen technology. Snyder has somehow managed to find a way to have these special effects compliment the story and mood rather than overshadow them. The environments created are beautiful but not so over the top that it gives the viewers a feeling of saturated cheapness. The effects are used tastefully and made with quality *and* quantity. The battle scenes are exhilarating with the effective use of slow motion coupled with high speed spliced in between. Though the movie is violent with body parts flying, it's not nearly as gory as Frank Miller's other big screen graphic novel adaptation, *Sin City*, which features a dog eating Elijah Wood's bloody stumps. Nevertheless there are a few cringe-worthy beheadings.

Zack Snyder continues to build on the success of his *Dawn of the Dead* remake. With *300* he makes a huge leap forward; it's almost hard to believe that this is only his second movie. Parallels will be made between Snyder's new baby and Ridley Scott's powerhouse sword-and-sandals classic *Gladiator*. Both are charming in their own different ways and although *300* needs more time to take up its status as a classic such as *Gladiator*, it is undeniably beautiful in its own right. I highly recommend *300*, as it is a film that has already made its mark on pop culture and will undoubtedly spawn a pile of clones in the future. It's probably best to see this classic work while it's out on the big screen. @

French military a success—on film, that is

DAYS OF GLORY (INDIGENES)
now playing

by David Harakal
CULTURE WRITER

Days of Glory opens with a black and white montage of historical footage in French Algeria. With a slow dissolve, as though clouds were passing over the light of the sun and foreshadowing a bleak period in French history, an aerial view of the Algerian landscape gradually begins to take on life and colour and we find ourselves immersed in director Rachid Bouchareb's brilliant and thought provoking examination of the participation of Algerian troops in World War II.

The story centers around four Algerian men, Said, Abdelkader, Messaoud, and Yassir, the "indigenous soldiers" that the original French title *Indigenes* refers to. These soldiers enlist in the French army to "protect the motherland" from the spreading Nazi threat of tyranny and fight battles in Italy, Provence, and the Vosges. Despite their good intentions and valiant efforts, they find themselves at the mercy of French discrimination and guarded racism, essentially denied the possibility of promotion within the army, having their rations withheld from them and having to make do with mediocre army supplies to fight in battle.

The characters were very believable and drawn out emotionally with the battle-scarred surroundings frequently mirroring the emotional states of the men on screen. Most significant is the depiction of a dead horse lying in the foreground of the screen during an especially violent battle that takes the lives of most of the battalion, perhaps symbolising their loss of manhood and power, having used up almost all of their ammunition and weaponry.

Somewhat unrealistically, the troop then proceeds to Alsace to protect a fallen village but perhaps this only goes to show their impassioned devotion to their cause. The final battle at the Alsatian village reminded me of the intense but somewhat melodramatic finale in *Saving Private Ryan*, which felt like a cheap way to end a film as powerful as *Days of Glory*. More than once this film brought to mind Clint Eastwood's recent *Letters from Iwo Jima*, also a slow, character-driven war film that deals with an aspect of the Second World War that has previously gone either unnoticed in films or been touched upon in only a circumspect fashion.

Nevertheless, the movie concludes in present day France, and although the discriminatory practices of the French government continued after the war, it is noted that French president Jacques Chirac took steps to have the pensions which were previously withheld from Algerian retired soldiers reinstated and back payments made upon seeing the film. Despite these reparations, the movie ends with Abdelkadir, the only surviving member of the four main characters, holding his head as though questioning the Algerian involvement in World War II and still wondering how to integrate himself into modern French society. Hopefully the post-mortem efforts of the French government to honour his efforts and those of his fellow soldiers are compensation enough. @

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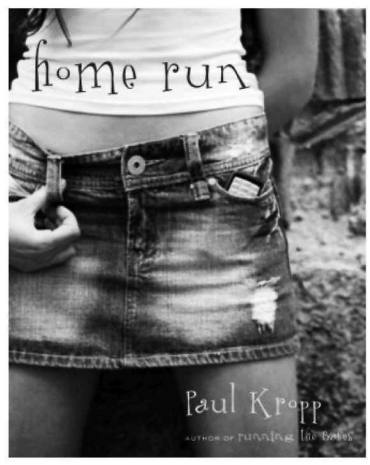
Home Run strikes out at first base

HOME RUN
by Paul Kropp
Doubleday Canada

By Isabel Ferreras
CULTURE WRITER



There is something to be said about young adult literature. Some of it can be quite inspiring, and some can be entirely legitimate when it comes to the "lit" label. We look to it to find guidance, comfort, and perhaps even prepare us for the reading of much more difficult works. *Home Run*, written by much-acclaimed author Paul Kropp, does none of these things. It is quite possibly the worst piece of young adult fiction that I have read in the past ten years.

The story begins in the setting of Burrard University (a thinly-veiled institution in Vancouver). Our story's protagonist, Alan Macklin, is gearing up for his first year of post-secondary education, and, like many other first-years, his ultimate quest for first year is to get laid. Yes, this is the whole premise of the book.

Moving right along, we get to know our protagonist's roommate and eventual best friend, Kirk. He is enrolled in the School of Theology, training to become a minister later in life. He is handsome, moral, and has an incredibly beautiful and equally devoted girlfriend. In other words, he is everything Alan isn't.

What contrast! What tension! What drama!

What follows is a series of attempts, on Alan's part, to get laid. These include a girl in his residential building, an older woman who is also his academic advisor, and even a girl in Mexico. However, by far, the closest that Alan comes to getting laid is at the hands of Kirk's sister. That said, I won't spoil the moment by telling you what happens. You'll have to read this stupefyingly crappy book to find out.

As an enticing subplot, we read of email exchanges between Alan and his high school flame, Maggie. She and Alan were together for the duration of the 12th grade but broke up because of distance. Maggie decided to go to an Ivy League school out east while Alan settled for a no-name university (TRU anyone?) Maggie never once put out for Alan and that is something that plagues him throughout the entire book. Judging by Alan's choice of words, one wouldn't be surprised. See for yourself:

"Somewhere in the how-to-be-a-parent guidebook it says that parents must drive their children to the school, transport the offspring and his/her goods to the dorm room, and then engage in tearful farewells and worthy admonitions. *Admonitions!* Pretty good word, isn't it? See what first year has already done for me?"

There are many reasons why Paul Kropp's *Home Run* is a terrible book. For one, the writing is elementary, at best, and brings to mind a 14-year-old boy instead of a university student. The book's premise is pathetic, immature, and gives 18-year-old males a bad reputation for caring about nothing but sex. One would hope that would be a false perception. Finally, the book's ending is about as sappy and anti-climactic as they get. Do not ever pick up a copy of *Home Run*—it's worth less than the schoolbooks you ordered through Scholastic in elementary school. @

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NOTICE
RE AQUATIC CENTRE GYM

Concerns have been voiced regardin g the announcement of the closing of the Aquatic Centre Gym.

This decision was premature as it had not been rev iewed with the Aquatic Centre Management Committee. The Committee (including three AMS appointees) is meeting to discuss this matter.

The gym will remain open, as usual, until April 16/07 when the Aquatic Centre closes for its regula r, annual facility maintenance.

We will keep students, faculty, staff and the community advised as we go through the consultation process.

Sincerely,
Aquatic Centre Management Committee

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Thunderbirds lay giant egg at Nationals

by Wilson Wong
SPORTS WRITER

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND — 6am, Monday morning in the lobby of the St. John's, Newfoundland, Holiday Inn. If all things went as planned, this should have been where the UBC players gathered after a night of celebration after repeating as national champions. Instead, a lonely Kelsey Blair is reading a newspaper on one of the lobby couches.

She can't sleep. She's thinking about end of her career with UBC, all the great moments, and what could have been if anything had gone right in the past three days.

Blair's Thunderbirds were the top seeds and came into the CIS Women's Basketball Championships as one of the favourites to leave St. John's with the Bronze Baby Trophy. Instead, they finished in a tie for seventh.

Their fall started with a shocking 88-77 loss to the 8th seeded Dalhouse Tigers from Halifax. The Tiger guards, April Scott, Kelly Donald and Alex Legge, were successful in scoring or drawing UBC fouls when they drove to the basket. They also managed to hit a couple of early long-range shots to open up the UBC defence.

Their forwards dominated the boards, outrebounding the Thunderbirds 39-28. With that offensive attack, Dalhousie got off to a quick 7-1 lead and UBC spent the rest of the game trying to catch up. UBC tied the game at the end of the first quarter but were down 39-34 at the half.

The UBC deficit was still five after three quarters of play but Dalhousie increased their lead to 71-63 with seven minutes to go in the game. Then the T-Birds made what looked like a game-changing run.

Erica McGuinness made a layup from the left baseline. Then Cait Haggarty nailed a three-pointer off a steal on the ensuing in-bounds play and then Leanne Evans hit a jump shot to cut the Dalhousie lead to 71-70. At this point, UBC looked poised to take the game over against a very young Dalhousie roster, which featured just two fourth-year and no fifth-year players.

But the resilient Tigers came right back down the court and Legge drew a foul after picking up a loose ball that got by two Thunderbirds under their own basket. She nailed the two shots to end UBC's run and start a 7-0 one of their own, effectively ending the game and UBC's chances to repeat as national champions.

Dalhousie missed only two of 29 foul shots all game while the more experienced UBC team hit just over half of theirs. It was almost surreal to see Dalhousie pick up every loose ball, which ended up in 20 second chance points for the Tigers, and shred the UBC defence for 88 points when UBC gave up an average of 58 per game all year.

Kelsey Blair, in her last meaningful game for UBC, scored 22 points and grabbed 11 rebounds while Cait Haggarty added 16 points and 8 assists.

The loss sent UBC to the consolation side where they met the McMaster Marauders, who were blown out by the eventual champions from Simon Fraser. It would have been one of the most anticipated games of the year, if it wasn't in the consolation round.

The two teams had spent a combined 12 out of 14 weeks at number 1 in the CIS polls. But instead of a classic, fans in attendance got a sloppy game that featured 30 turnovers.

And it was almost like Groundhog Day for UBC. Defensive lapses and lackluster play down low did them in again. McMaster routinely found their cutters to the hoop wide open, allowing their guard Taylor Smith to record 14 assists and their All-Canadian Lindsay DeGroot to score 30 points and 11 rebounds in a 85-68 Marauders win that sent the Thunderbirds home without a victory at the national championships.

UBC was also outrebounded for the second straight day, 40-28. Erica McGuinness lead all UBC players with 30 points and 9 rebounds but also had 7 turnovers. Leanne Evans was the only other Thunderbird in double digits with 13 points.

Coach Deb Huband could not find a simple explanation for why her team, full of veterans with championship experience, could not make the in-game adjustments to beat either Dalhousie or McMaster.

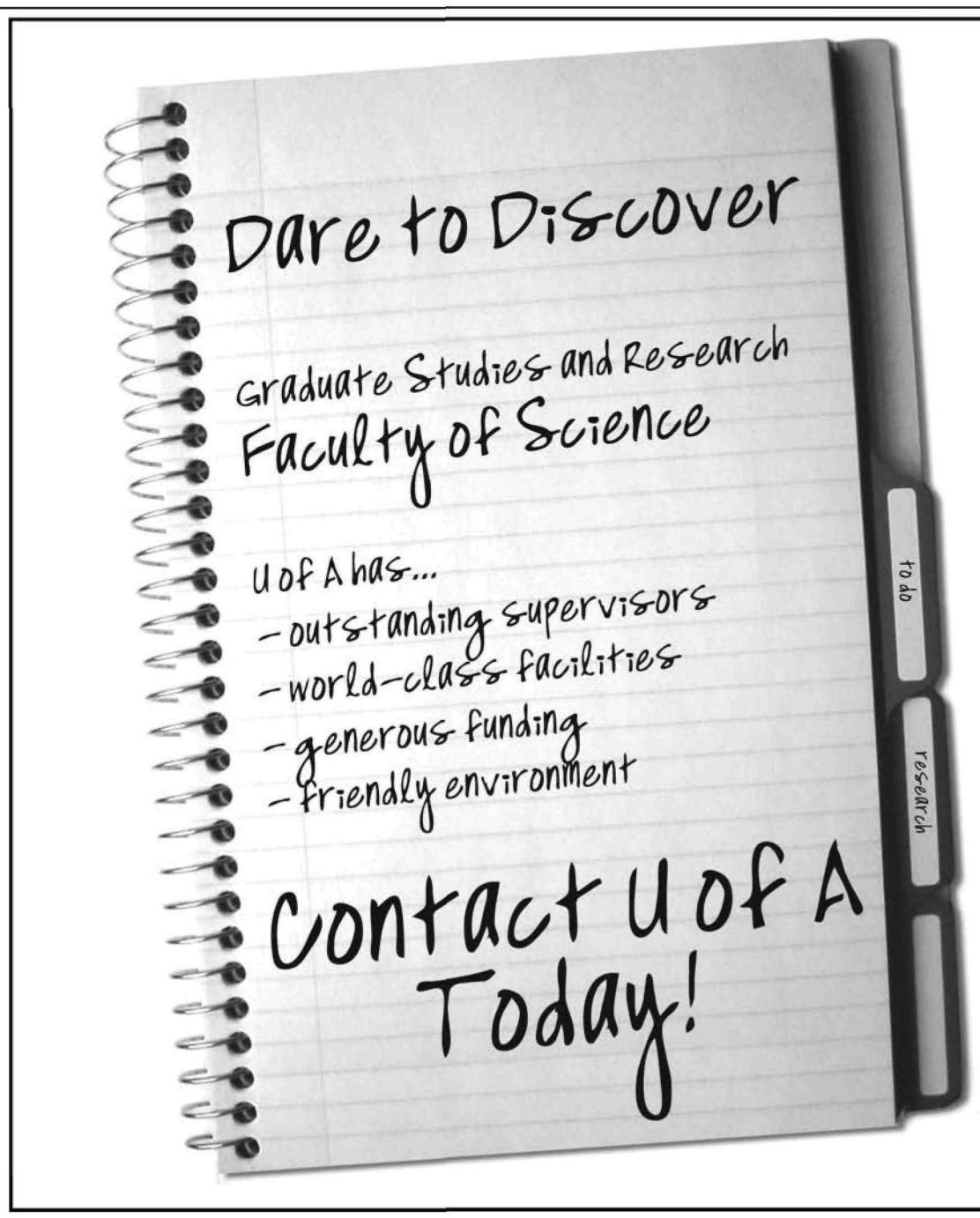
"The conditions are different, the officials are different, there's a lot of things to adjust to. You have to be able to adjust to it. For whatever reason, we just couldn't get ourselves going and I guess we'll take some time to reflect on that and see what we could have been able to do differently and what might have been in the mindset. I'm sure there's a lot of learning that happens when you come to a national championship and have the result we had and there's probably more lessons than when you come to a national championships and do nothing but win," said Huband.

DONE: Cait Haggarty (4) and her teamates were unable to defend their CIS title over the weekend in St John's. OKER CHEN PHOTO

The losses were a bittersweet end for graduating players Julie Little, Kim Howe and Blair, who could be seen crying at the end of the McMaster game. All three players won two national championships with UBC. Huband said all three have a solid legacy at UBC.

"Their legacy is a collective one. All three were a part of the rise of UBC basketball to one of the elite programs in this country."

In fact, all three have helped build UBC into a program where getting to the nationals and losing twice is no longer considered successful. @



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More women in politics can only be a good thing, right?

With a federal election likely to be announced in the next few weeks, and in light of International Women's Day, the time seemed right to talk about something we're all aware of but rarely question: the dearth of women participating in Canadian politics. As it stands right now, for every five people elected to office in Canada, only one of them is a woman. According to a recent study, we rank at number 48 worldwide for equal gender representation in politics—right up there with Pakistan, Poland, and China.

The issue was brought to the forefront of political debate recently when Liberal leader Stephane Dion announced his commitment to recruit more women into Parliament. To some, his plan is surprisingly direct, while to others it is infuriating: get enough women nominated in local ridings to ensure that at least one-third of candidates for the Liberal Party in the next election are female. If need be, women-only ridings will be enforced to help things along.

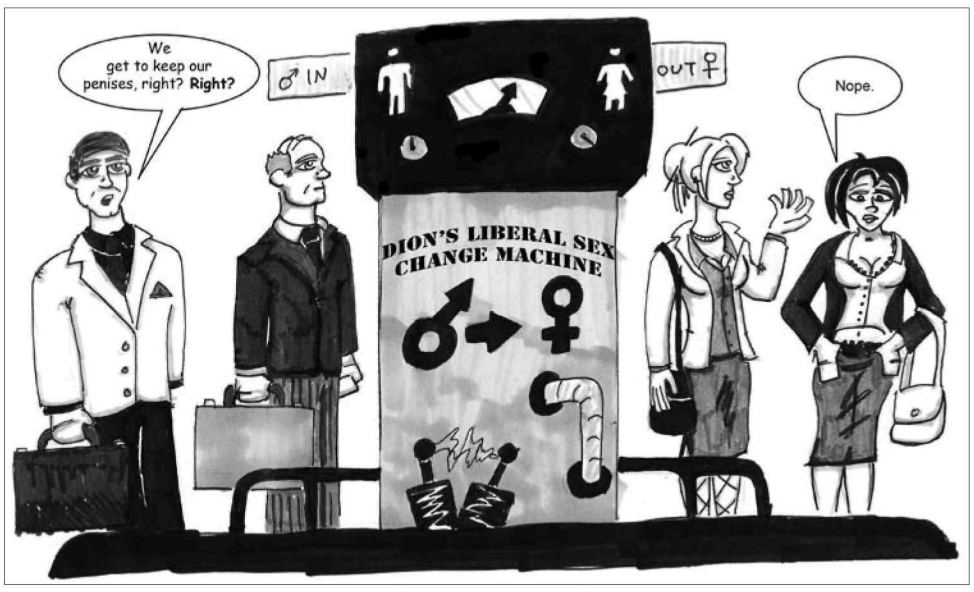
Such a hardline, interventionist approach to even out gender disparities in office might seem unusual for the Liberal Party, and at first glance may appear ironically undemocratic. Excluding people from politics based on gender to rectify gender discrimination in politics? It must seem like Dion has jumped on an affirmative action initiative run amok, and is set to suffer the consequences. One almost holds their breath awaiting the fallout.

But is it possible that this plan might actually help resolve the problem of gender equity? Research seems to point to yes, though Dion's rushed, aggressive approach may not be the most diplomatic way to go about it.

There seems to be a substantial level of support for this course of action—Christy Clark, a former politician who lost to Sam Sullivan for the Vancouver mayorship by a scant 63 votes, wrote in favour of quotas to balance out gender bias in politics.

"I once thought that setting quotas for women candidates was wrong," she wrote in column in *the Province* column on March 11. "I've changed my mind. We've tried the same old things for 30 years and we're backsliding."

Despite the far lower number of women who run for political office in Canada, a Brown University study entitled "Why Don't Women Run for Office?" shows that women who do run perform just as well as their male competitors. And yet, while women are more involved than ever in careers that typically lead towards politics, the number of women in these professions who have considered running for office are about 15 to 20 per cent lower than the total number of males.



So why aren't as many qualified women considering a run at political office? The study points to a number of factors, some of which may be addressed by Dion's plans and some of which will require a greater social change in the attitudes towards and by women regarding politics.

The study shows that women are typically less drawn to campaigning than men, and also less likely than men to be encouraged by friends, family, party officials, elected officials, and political activists. While the study does show that the women's age does not significantly influence the decision of whether or not to run for office, their income does: only 29 per cent of women who make less than $50,000 annually consider running for political office, compared with 54 per cent of men making less than $50,000. The domestic roles of women also appear to influence their likelihood of running, as do their perceptions of themselves; women tend to rate themselves as less qualified than men.

Dion's plan to bring more women into the world of politics may help change many women's perceptions regarding a run for political office. A significant change in the number of women in the House cannot help but inspire more women to seek election, at the very least. Additionally, women who have been successful in their bids will doubtless be far more likely to encourage other women to run for office.

But Dion's plan may also run into a major issue noted in the Brown University report: "The explanations of incumbency and too few women in the pool of eligible candidates both assume that similarly situated men and women will be equally interested in running for office. The findings presented suggest that is not the case."

In other words, creating a place for women in politics is not enough—women need to feel more empowered to fill that space.

Increasing the representation of women is definitely positive, but part of Dion's plan involves giving certain committees the ability to, when necessary, bar men from running in certain ridings. This plan is not only overtly discriminatory, but also runs counter to the previously mentioned study which shows that women who do decide to run for office are not at any significant disadvantage.

The very nature of the democratic process requires a range of candidates, yet Dion's plans will potentially allow a committee to decide which candidates party members will have the opportunity to vote on, and will ultimately affect the options that voters have when it comes to representing them in Parliament.

Dion's plan may work out yet, but that is hopefully because of increased recruitment efforts, and not due to the discrimination of qualified candidates from the process. One hopes that they're enough to generate interest from would-be female candidates, so much that Dion will not need to bar men from the race and mire the election in a philosophical firestorm about affirmative action and disenfranchisement. @

streeters

How do you think we can introduce more women into politics?

—Rose Zhang
Arts, 2

"Maybe bring up issues that are about women. Bring in more women for staff."

—Kuda Mutama
Arts, 3

"A lot of women are not interested in politics... if we addressed women's issues particularly issues like the wage difference."

—Bryan McKinnon
History, 4

"Engage them in the political process through education... Having high stakes women such as Belinda Stronach in politics helps; puts a celebrity spin on it."

—Francisco Enga
Applied Science, 1

"I have no idea."

—Amy Wong
Education, 1

"Make it pertinent, make it easy. Bring it to the level where women are, and make it relevant, including issues."

— Coordinated by Paul Bucci and Kellan Higgins

LETTERS

Reality check needs a check

by Bern Haggerty

I was stunned by the recent letter damning Green Party Leader Elizabeth May (Green Leader and Reality Checks [February 13]). I agree wholeheartedly that "progressive people who are interested in what May and the Green Party have to say might be shocked to hear about May's views on abortion."

Why should we be shocked? Because for a century and a half none of Canada's political parties have allowed Canadians to "hear" any views from a woman during a campaign for Prime Minister.

Paul Martin could have told us, *I would never have an abortion myself,* but this would have been nonsense. He could have said, *I would [or would not] allow my wife or daughter to have an abortion,* but this would have been presumptuous.

The letter revealed to me that Canadian men consider women incapable of serving as Prime Minister. In the next federal election, for the first time in the history of Canada, a woman will be allowed to express an opinion about her own reproductive freedom in a Leaders' Debate.

I am not a Canadian, but I am a Green Party Member. So, I accepted the writer's challenge and emailed Ms May to ask her opinions directly. As it happens, she is far more honest and candid about her ideas than the men who lead the other parties. She is an active blogger, she checks her own email, and she responds herself.

Ms May sent me a copy of her recent letter to a supporter answering the same questions about reproductive freedom for women.

Finally, I wonder how the letter writer concluded, "We've had the abortion debate in Canada. It's settled." That should be: "Men have had the abortion debate in Canada. They have settled it."

Until now, men, and their political parties, have unanimously declared themselves Canada's "settlers," in the same way that George Bush has declared himself the world's "Decider." I hope Canadians will take a first step toward rejecting male rule and embrace Elizabeth May and the Green Party for a change.

—Bern Haggerty is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Law

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Accusations without base

The GSS Elections Committee would like to formally respond to the March 6, 2007 *Ubyssey* article "GSS presidential candidate under fire" concerning presidential candidate Patrick Bruskiewich's claims of misconduct against Ed Durgan. We take these charges very seriously as our highest goal is for a fair democratic process. We are first and foremost deeply concerned that such allegations went to press without previously being brought to the attention of the committee in a formal complaint process. The GSS Elections Committee has fully investigated these charges and, as of March 9, 2007, has been presented with no hard evidence or firsthand testimony to prove these claims. To date, we consider Durgan formally clear of any allegations of campaign misconduct.

The claims follow:

1. Durgan has used materials gathered during his previous tenure as GSS-CEO [CEO=Chief Elections Officer -ed.] to benefit his current presidential campaign.

2. Durgan, during his tenure as CEO, acted toward the position of president in a manner that would keep it open for himself in a by-election.

The committee's findings concerning these complaints are that:

1. The elections binder was returned to the GSS office after Durgan completed his work as CEO and has been stored in the office since. Although previous election reports included information for publicising the elections process, no individual, without first being cleared by the GSS, has access to mass emailing through the graduate secretaries. During his tenure as CEO, Durgan communicated to the graduate student body only via the GSS public relations coordinator. The only other email listserve capable of reaching all graduate students is handled by the UBC admin. Neither of these situations has been observed to occur.

2. There were three candidates nominated for president during the original elections period: one who never responded to emails after nomination, and two who decided for personal reasons to withdraw on the eve of the first election. Durgan cannot be held responsible for their decisions. He was also elected to the Chair position in December after the previously elected Chair resigned from the position. It was only after his term as CEO finished, and he did not re-volunteer for the position in the bylaw election that he considered running for presidency. This is not in violation of the GSS constitution or policy by-laws.

Without any proof to corroborate these charges, we consider these complaints fully resolved. We also express our regret that the previous publication may have caused harm to Durgan's campaign.

On behalf of the GSS Elections Committee:

—Dave Noshad, Chief Elections Officer (CEO) and VP Services; Mike Bodnar, GSS Councillor; Emily Simpson, GSS Councillor, 2005/2006 CEO; Matt Dyce, GSS Councillor

Candidate remains on ballot with impunity

by Ed Durgan

As I write this the polls for the Graduate Student Society (GSS) presidential by-election have closed and the results are in. I'm glad that the best candidate, Matt Filipiak, has won. It looks like we had about 7per cent voter participation. This is a huge success. From my perspective the campaign was mostly an extremely positive experience. But it was also, in part, extremely negative.

As reported in the article "GSS presidential candidate under fire" [Mar. 6], the GSS elections committee held a special meeting to consider allegations made against me by Patrick Bruskiewich and an un-named graduate student.

While they met, Bruskiewich issued an "official press release" from the office of GSS president directly to *the Ubyssey* editorial staff. Since *the Ubyssey* respects the office of president of GSS they did not think to confirm the report with some other authority; they cannot be faulted for this. The essence of said press-release included accusations that I used special information attained by me as Chief Elections Officer to gain an unfair advantage in the election.

By the account of the GSS election committee, these statements amount to libelous defamation of character. It is also clear that by way of an abuse of power of the office of GSS president, Bruskiewich circumvented the elections committee to make this statement. What kind of arrogance leads to this behaviour? It was well calculated and, due to the inaction of the election committee, he got away with it.

Since the announcement of the March 6 elections committee decisions, their activities have left the realm of the transparent. It is unclear whether they have met, or what they may have decided regarding Bruskiewich's misconduct. He remained on the ballot so he must have since provided evidence of my wrong-doing. But, how could he if none could possibly exist?

Considering the state of disarray that characterised GSS before this bi-election, this is very troubling. Still more troubling is the fact that a slanderer was allowed to remain on the ballot with absolute impunity to the close of polls. We can never know what damage was done to my campaign by the false allegations, or how many votes were lost to any of us due to his mere presence on the ballot.

However, I'm sure we can now learn some valuable lessons and salvage the election.

In the message accompanying the release of the polling numbers Dave Noshad, Chief election officer, states: "...we decided to not to disqualify any of the candidates because of lack of enough evidence presented till now." This statement is clearly counter-intuitive as the evidence is literally in black and white in this paper.

I can only speculate as to why the elections committee failed to exercise their authority to punish, in any number of ways, these offenses while disqualification was clearly in order. To have allowed him to remain on the ballot, shaving votes from honest candidates and unnecessarily splitting the constituency, they must have been terrified of making the wrong decision. So they made no decision.

Moreover Bruskiewich remains seated as GSS exec, to preside over the most important meeting of the year: the Annual General Meeting (AGM)—very awkward.

Thankfully we can still put a legitimate candidate in office right away, prep for the AGM, and continue to come together and keep the momentum of this otherwise highly energetic and positive election.

With this behind us I can see a great year ahead for the GSS. Filipiak will be an awesome addition to the excellent exec we managed to already seat.

As a candidate, councilor, and regular member of the GSS and Alma Mater Society thanks again to the staff at *the Ubyssey* for their support in covering this and keeping their eye on the ball throughout. It has been crucial for the success of this bielection and for our efforts at connecting us again to the student community.

—Ed Durgan is a second year PhD student in individual interdisciplinary studies.

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write us a letter!

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AMS INTERACTIVE

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If you have ideas on how to make the AMS better, or issues that you would like to see addressed, please contact any one of us at:

Jeff Friedrich
AMS President - 604 822 3972 - president@ams.ubc.ca

Brendon Goodmurphy
AMS Vice-President - Academic and University Affairs - 604 822 3092 - vpacademic@ams.ubc.ca

Sarah Nieman
AMS Vice-President - Administration - 604 822 3961 - vpadministration@ams.ubc.ca

Matthew Naylor
AMS Vice-President - External Affairs - 604 822 2050 - vpexternal@ams.ubc.ca

Brittany Tyson
AMS Vice-President - Finance - 604 822 3973

Shagufta Pasta
AMS Executive Coordinator of Student Services - 604 822 9949 - services@ams.ubc.ca

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AMS Insider Editor
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MEN'S BASKETBALL

In UBC's way: Sizing up the field at nationals

It may say No. 3 beside their name, but make no mistake about it, the Carleton Ravens have to be considered the tournament favourites based on their outstanding performances in winning the past four national championships.

It's a shame the Canadian college game isn't as popular as it is south of the border because gamblers would have a field day betting on these games between many teams still capable of winning it all.

Here's a look at the final eight teams that stand in the way of UBC's first CIS men's basketball title since 1973, starting with the top ranked Concordia Stingers, who are looking for their first CIS championship in any sport in over a decade.

CONCORDIA STINGERS
Seed: First
National ranking: First
Conference: Quebec
2006-07 record: 15-1
Playoffs: 2-0, QSSF gold
Nationals since 1972: 16
Titles/finals: 1 gold, 3 silver

MONTREAL (CUP) A No. 1 ranking is unfamiliar territory for the Stingers, who haven't been challenged much since their Christmas tournament win in Victoria, breezing to the Quebec title. All of Concordia's starters played on the 2005 silver medal team, minus flashy second-year point-guard Damian Buckley, whose older brother Dwayne was the best Stinger in '05.

Concordia makes up for height deficiencies compared to most opponents through hard work on defence. Watch out for conference MVP Patrick Perrotte down low and Ben Sormonte, who just might lead the team to its first national crown since 1990 if he can duplicate his Quebec final performance (7-for-8 three-point shooting).

—Dan Plouffe, The Link

UBC THUNDERBIRDS
Seed: Second
National ranking: Third
Conference: Canada-West
2006-07 record: 20-3
Playoffs: 6-0, CW gold
Nationals since 1972: 15
Titles/finals: 2 gold, 3 silver

VANCOUVER (CUP) The UBC Thunderbirds find themselves back in the championship tournament for the fourth time in five years, and expectations are high for the Canada-West champions to make some noise this year.

After suffering opening round losses in 2006, 2004, and 2003, as well as with the looming departure of fifth-year standout and two-time CanWest player-of-the-year Casey Archibald, the pressure to win has never been greater for coach Kevin Hanson and his troops.

Led by Archibald and Manitoba transfer Chris Dyck, UBC was 20-3 in conference play before a 6-0 playoff run when they defeated the top-ranked Brandon Bobcats on their own court to claim the conference title.

—Boris Korby, The Ubyssey

CARLETON RAVENS
Seed: Third
National ranking: Second
Conference: Ontario
2006-07 record: 19-3
Playoffs: 2-1, OUA silver
Nationals since 1972: 11
Titles/finals: 4 gold, 4 silver

OTTAWA (CUP) Halifax will hold few surprises for the Carleton Ravens, the four-time defending national champions. Carleton's hopes of extending its dynasty ride squarely on the shoulders of senior guard Osvaldo Jeanty, as the 2006 CIS player-of-the-year and championship MVP looks to make it 5-for-5 over the course of his outstanding university career.

The run hasn't been quite as smooth for the Ravens this year, dropping two games to the cross-town Ottawa Gee-Gees and falling 84-75 to Windsor in the OUA final. While the competition may have closed the gap, the Ravens will still be a heavy favourite at the championship tournament.

—Frank Appleyard, The Fulcrum

BRANDON BOBCATS
Seed: Fourth
National ranking: Fourth
Conference: Canada-West
2006-07 record: 20-2
Playoffs: 3-1, CW silver
Nationals since 1972: 24
Titles/finals: 4 gold, 8 silver

BRANDON, MAN. (CUP) The Brandon Bobcats have had an impressive year to say the least, topping the national rankings for five of the season's last six weeks. Barnaby Craddock won the conference coach-of-the-year award in just his second campaign.

The well-rounded, highly-talented squad is led by Dany Charlery in the back court along with Canada-West defensive player-of-the-year Yul Michel. Expect the Bobcats to head into Halifax with a chip on their shoulder after their 16-game winning streak was snapped with a conference-final loss to underdog UBC.

—Jennalee Burch, The Quill

WINDSOR LANCERS
Seed: Fifth
National ranking: Eighth
Conference: Ontario
2006-07 record: 16-6
Playoffs: 3-0, OUA gold
Nationals since 1972: 14
Titles/finals: 4 gold, 6 silver

WINDSOR, ONT. (CUP) In only two short years, coach Chris Oliver-transformed Windsor from a sub .500 team into an OUA champion—thanks to an upset of the Carleton Ravens. The Lancers are riding a seven-game winning streak with the help of Kevin Kloostra (16.77 points-per-game) and Greg Surmacz, who was third in Canada with over 10 rebounds an outing.

It's been a quarter-century since the Lancers have been to nationals and almost 40 since their last title. Despite their perceived underdog status, "putting up a championship banner are the things that we dream about," Oliver says.

—Julie Sobowale, The Lance

ACADIA AXEMEN
Seed: Sixth
National ranking: Ninth
Conference: Atlantic
2006-07 record: 14-6
Playoffs: 3-0, AUS gold
Nationals since 1972: 20
Titles/finals: 3 gold, 7 silver

WOLFVILLE, NS (CUP) After finishing in last place with only two wins one year ago, very few pegged the Acadia Axemen to make the playoffs, let alone the CIS final eight.

Acadia's biggest liabilities are free-throw shooting—last in the conference—and its dependence on centre Achuil Lual for rebounds. Under the basket, Lual is dominant, but foul trouble could expose the Axemen's overall rebounding weaknesses.

—Lucas Timmons, The Athenaeum

OTTAWA GEE-GEES
Seed: Seventh
National ranking: Fifth
Conference: Ontario
2006-07 record: 18-4
Playoffs: 1-1, lost OUA semis
Nationals since 1972: Five
Titles/finals: None

OTTAWA (CUP) The Gee-Gees come into the tournament as the wild-card entry, although they deserved a better fate.

Ottawa's two regular-season victories over Carleton—including a 64-62 Capital Hoops Classic win in front of a CIS-record 9,720 fans at Scotiabank Place—have demonstrated the team's ability to beat the nation's best, and the Gees will be hungry to avenge their playoff defeat. Beware the seven seed.

—Frank Appleyard, The Fulcrum

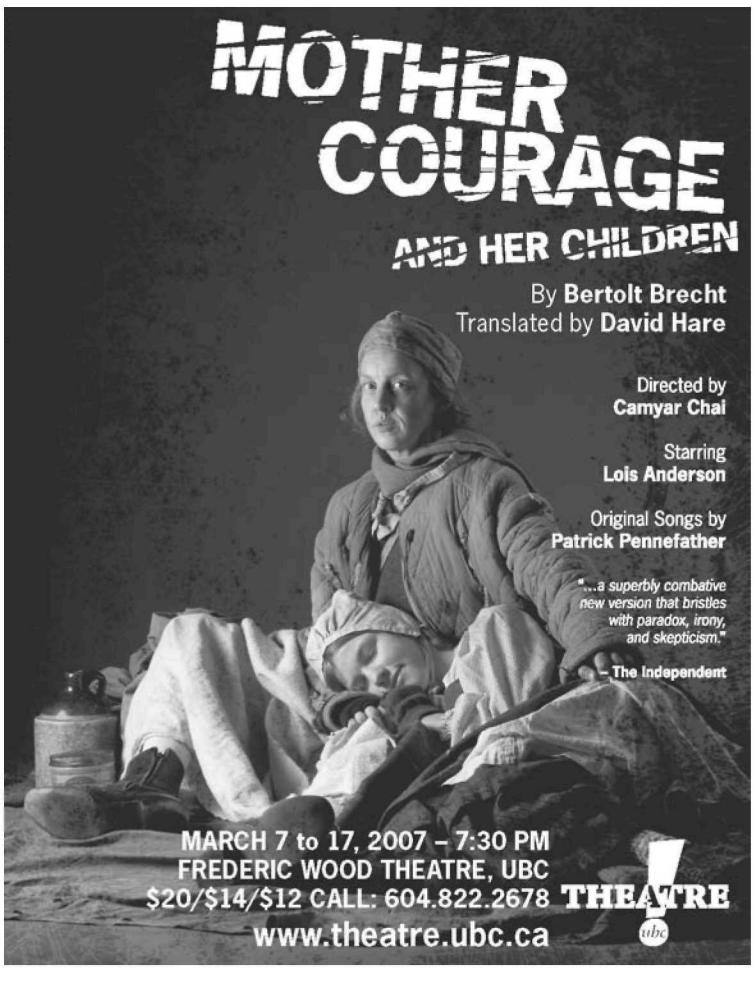
ST. MARY'S HUSKIES
Seed: Eighth
National ranking: Not ranked
Conference: Atlantic
2006-07 record: 11-9
Playoffs: 2-1, AUS silver
Nationals since 1972: 21
Titles/finals: 4 gold, 9 silver

It just wouldn't have been right to have the last tournament in Halifax (before it moves to Ottawa for 2008-2010) without the hometown St. Mary's Huskies, the most consistent Atlantic University Sport representative over the course of the 24-straight years nationals were held in the region. With just an 11-9 regular-season record, the Huskies picked the right team to have success against, beating conference-favourite Cape Breton three times in '07 enroute to qualifying for nationals.

St. Mary's will need good performances from two second-year stars, guard Mark McLaughlin and Nigerian-born Ikeobi Uchegbu, as well as maybe a bit of east-coast magic to upset the Stingers in round one.

—Dan Plouffe, CUP Sports Bureau Chief

No. 2 UBC opens the single elimination tournement Friday, March 16 against No. 7 Ottawa at 2 pm PST.



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