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Thousands converge to protest tuition

BC government bears brunt of criticism

by Paul Evans
NEWS STAFF

Students outraged by tuition fee hikes rallied all across Canada last week as part of a "Day of Action," and the message in BC was clear: "Gordon Campbell must reduce tuition fees."

In Vancouver, about 2000 post-secondary students descended upon the Art Gallery downtown to protest against the BC government and recent tuition increases. They were joined by unions, high school students, parents and other concerned citizens.

UBC students were fueled up for the rally by a free pancake breakfast held outside the SUB before they boarded chartered buses destined for the Art Gallery. There, they met with students from colleges and universities across the Lower Mainland.

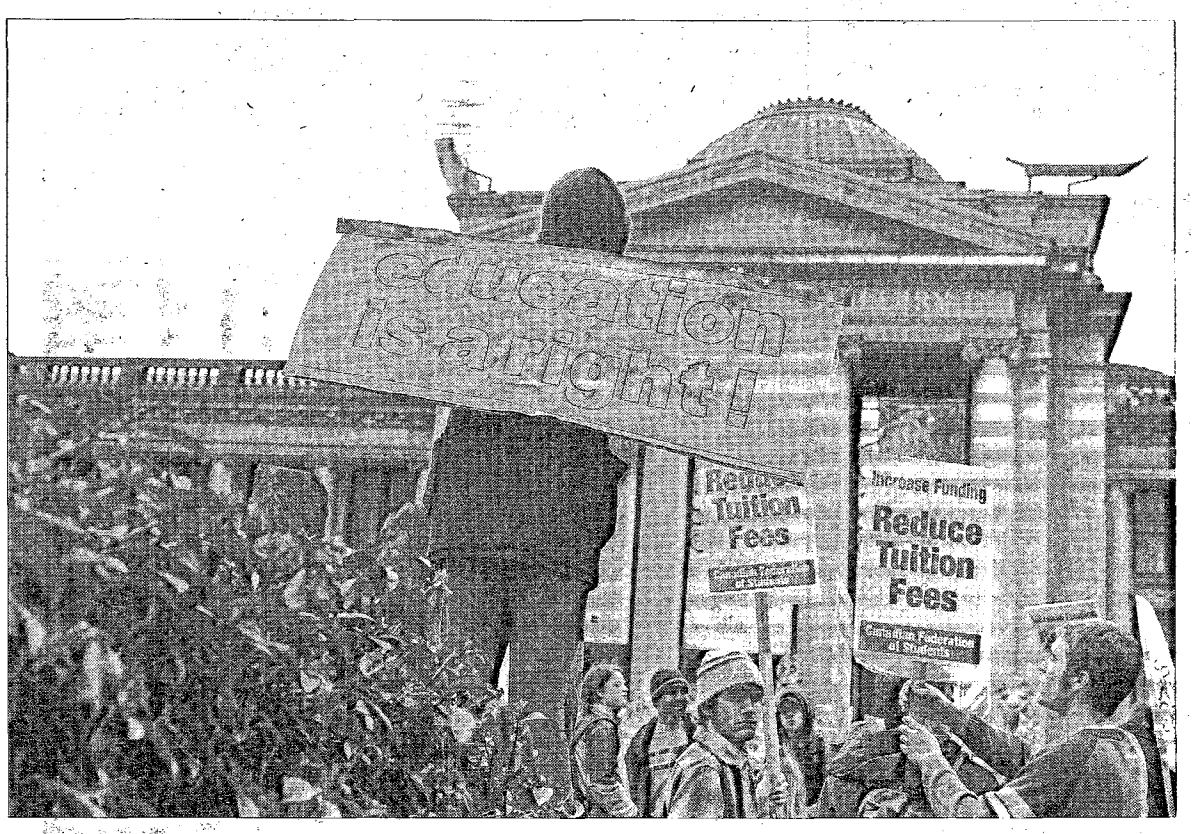
"Students are turned back because they don't have big enough chequebooks," shouted Summer McFadden, BC chairperson for the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS)—the group behind the rally—to a rowdy crowd of placard waving students.

Hand-painted signs with slogans like "Public Education is NOT for Sale," mingled with a menacing looking paper-maché head of BC Premier Gordon Campbell and CFS placards that read "Reduce Tuition Fees."

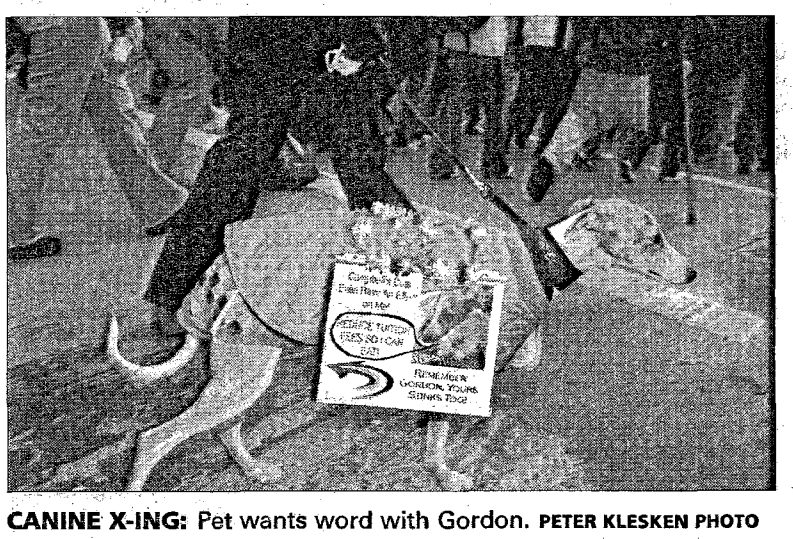
McFadden reminded the crowd that when Campbell took office he promised a five per cent reduction in tuition fees but instead fees have increased as much as 113 per cent since 2001. She also said students are now in overcrowded schools with fewer services.

"We know through polling that 90 per cent of British Columbians oppose tuition fee increases and believe they should be frozen or reduced," said McFadden. She added that 75 per cent would be willing to give back recent provincial tax cuts if they knew it would make education more accessible. Helesia Luke, a parent with a son entering university next year, also expressed her frustration with the financial burden being placed on students.

"I'm outraged that the government expects our children to mortgage their futures for their education," she said.



FIGHTING FOR RIGHTS: More than 2000 passionate students call for lower tuition. ANTON BUENO PHOTO



CANINE X-ING: Pet wants word with Gordon. PETER KLESKEN PHOTO

While Liberal officials did not attend the rally, Karen McDonald, a spokesperson for the BC Ministry of Advanced Education, said the decision to raise tuition lies with individual universities, not the government.

"The government does not decide to increase tuition fees," she said. "Government funding has been maintained for all of our post-secondary institutions."

But UBC officials announced last month that they are expecting a $10 million reduction in core government education funding next year and are expecting to increase tuition by up to 30 per cent. Simon Fraser University has already committed to a 35 per cent hike.

McDonald also said even with the tuition hikes, BC students are still heavily subsidised. "Tuition makes up between 20 and 30 per cent of the actual real cost of a seat for a university student."

Following the speeches, the crowd, escorted by a watchful police detail, began marching through the streets of downtown shouting "No More Hikes," and "Hey ho, hey ho, Gordon Campbell has got to go."

The resulting downtown traffic jam left some drivers frustrated.

"They should pay less," said one driver as he inched along behind the rambunctious crowd, but blocking traffic is the wrong way to go about it, he added.

Students interviewed had mixed motives for attending the rally, but agreed high tuition was making post-secondary education more difficult.

"[The Liberals] are making it harder and harder for us to get anywhere in life," said Vancouver Community College student Scott Johnston.

UBC student Mike Bruce said he would like to see a return to pre-2001 tuition levels.

Amina Rai, Alma Mater Society (AMS) president-elect, was in attendance and pointed out the significance of multi-campus lobbying.

"I think it needs to be such that we can strengthen the relationship between all student unions and apply pressure to the government so that they can look at more core funding for education," she said.

AMS VP External Sam Saini,

See "Protest" on page 4.

Student society calling on UBC to "come clean"

by Megan Thomas
NEWS EDITOR

In the wake of a week of damaging press for UBC, the Alma Mater Society (AMS) is calling for full and public investigation into the alleged manipulation of course enrolments to improve the university's standing in the annual *Maclean's* rankings.

Through a freedom of information request, *The Vancouver Sun* and *The National Post* reported on a series of internal UBC senior administrator memos that suggested ways to manipulate class size to better the last place finish of the university in the medical/doctoral category in the 2002 *Maclean's* rankings.

"We just want them to come clean," said Oana Chirila, AMS president. "They need to make sure they have a statement to the students in general."

The Post and *Sun* reported on an eight month campaign to reduce class sizes, including suggestions to deceive students about room capacity, deny students the ability to major in some subjects and push some high enrolment classes to second term because *Maclean's* only looks at first term numbers.

Chirila said she is puzzled as to why the university has not told their side of the story.

"They have not been very forthcoming with any information," she said. "They have been very quiet to the media as well."

In a letter to President Martha Piper, Chirila asked UBC to publicly

See "Ranking" on page 2.

UBC may have violated Pickton ban

University's broadcast e-mail of Fox News story a mistake

by Jonathan Woodward
NEWS EDITOR

Both Fox News and UBC may have broken a sweeping publication ban on the case of accused serial killer Robert William Pickton last week, sparking an RCMP investigation.

Fox News aired a story by Seattle-based reporter Dan Springer that reported what he said were "unbelievably gruesome" details about the crime scene and the ensuing investigation—and then said that most Canadians were unaware of the "horrifying evidence" because Canada's courts have barred the media from reporting it.

PICKTON

The information may have been in direct contravention of the ban, and RCMP Corporal Catherine Galliford said Fox is under investigation by a criminal investigation unit.

"There is definitely the potential for charges if we find that the story and the information therein is in violation of the publication ban," she said.

UBC was drawn into the potential breach when it reproduced a version of the story, which quoted two UBC professors, on its daily media summary—an e-mail newsletter about events at UBC that gets sent to about 300 addresses. It also placed a synopsis of the story and links to it on a UBC public affairs website. Both of these were removed when a reporter from the Canadian Press called and told UBC of the mistake.

The story was on the Internet for

See "Ban" on page 2.

THIS ISSUE:

FEATURE: Enter the Pit of carnal desire, if you dare!
Why do *you* go to the Pit Pub? **Page 8.**

CULTURE: The Wild West!
Mae West portrayed in *Dirty Blonde*. **Page 6-7.**

LETTER: Martha Piper responds
Addressing class sizes and the *Maclean's* rankings. **Page 10.**

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CLASSIFIEDS

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POWELL RIVER 3RD ANNUAL FILM FESTIVAL – "The Corporation" with special guest, director Jennifer Abbott on Friday, February 20 + on 21st the Canadian Premiere of "Kla ah Men". Special guests, great documentaries, features films, receptions, book-signing, art exhibit. February 19-21 at the Evergreen Theatre. See website for complete details, including travel specials: www.prfilm.ca Phone: (604) 485-3892.

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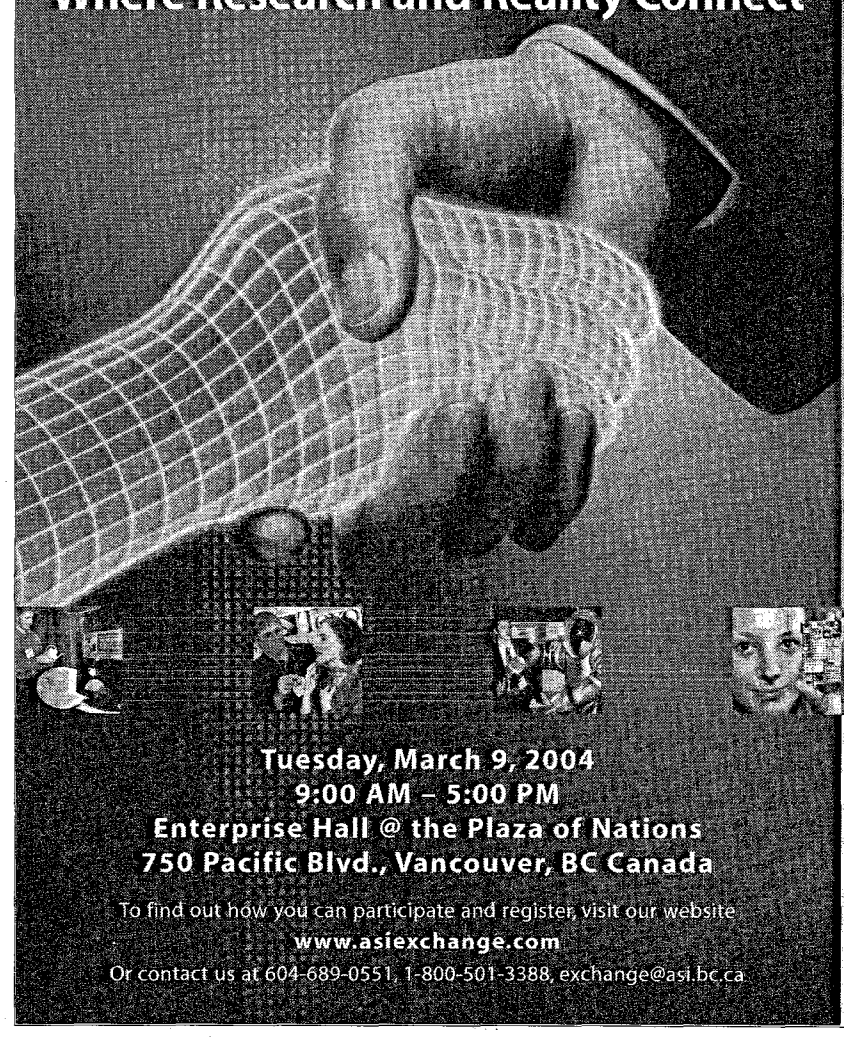

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THE ASI EXCHANGE 2004

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PM's Throne Speech gets good review

A speech from the throne on behalf of Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin echoing UBC's own commitment to financial access got positive reviews from student groups last week.

"The government's goal is to ensure that a lack of financial resources will not be allowed to deny, to those with motivation and capacity, the opportunity to learn and aspire to...a univeristy degree," said Governor-General Adrienne Clarkson. The speech outlined a plan to increase student loan limits, allow deductables such as computers and increase eligibility for higher income students.

The speech also promised a new grant for first-year students, and proposed to modify the Registered Education Savings Plan to ensure investment by low-income families.

While happy that much of the student agenda was included in the government's priorities, Alma Mater Society President Oana Chirila said that not enough was done to address the long-term problem of student debt.

"Just increasing loans just increases debt," she said. "This doesn't address the affordability of education from the very beginning." ❖

—Jonathan Woodward

University responds to inquiry request with memo

"Ranking" from page 1.

release the documents, hold a full inquiry, prove that course enrolment practices were based on "legitimate academic pressures" and to postpone any tuition reviews until the investigation is complete.

"The AMS believes that such measures are both prudent in the current climate of doubt, and necessary for restoring the faith of the student body in the academic integrity of the university," wrote Chirila.

But she also said the AMS is not calling for Piper's resignation, something several people have done on local radio talk shows.

Scott Macrae, a UBC spokesperson, said the AMS request is being considered, but could not say if any action will be taken. He also said he does not think the article in *The Post* and *Sun* were fair to UBC.

"The article made it appear as if [the suggestions] had been put into effect," he said. "There is absolutely no evidence that any student was impacted."

Piper wrote an article for *The Sun* in defense of the university over the weekend explaining that while suggestions may have been made about artificially reducing class size, none were implemented.

Despite the suggestions, UBC did not better its fifth-place finish in this year's *Maclean's* rankings.

So far the AMS has received a memo response and meeting with Barry McBride, VP Academic and Provost.

"To the best of my knowledge, no UBC student was denied access to courses needed to graduate, or denied entry into a program because of actions to reduce class sizes," he wrote.

McBride also denied that any classes were flipped to second term to try and improve class size ranking and said the suggestion to lie to students about room capacity was never implemented.

"We would never sanction any suggestion that would deliberately mislead our students," he wrote.

Chirila said a memo is not enough to rectify the situation. The AMS wants the administration to make a statement to UBC students about the matter.

"This has made a lot of people wonder about UBC," she said. ❖

Inadvertent mistake likely won't draw charges against UBC

"Ban" from page 1.

about five hours and many of the e-mails were not sent because a delay in UBC's e-mail services allowed them to retract the newsletter, said UBC spokesperson Paul Patterson.

"That was strictly an error on our part. Once it was brought to our attention we corrected it immediately," he said.

Recognising the lack of motive, Galliford said UBC is not being investigated for breaking the publication ban. "It was an inadvertent breach," she said.

A Canadian media outlet would normally be charged with obstruction of justice or be held in contempt of court for a violation of the ban, bringing up to a two year jail sentence, said Galliford. The fact that the Fox story came from Seattle, but is easily accessible in Canada, poses problems for the ban's enforcement.

"They can't bring a lawsuit against Fox in the United States," said Stephen Ward, a journalism professor at UBC. "[This] system is no longer working in an age of the Internet, in an age of global media. It's like trying to put fingers in a dike that's leaking in a thousand places. You're not going to prevent these guys from getting the news out."

While it is unclear whether the Canadian assets of Fox can be targeted in this investigation, a punishment suggested by Pickton's defense lawyers may still be an option: banning errant American journalists from court when the trial begins.

But this could have the unfortunate side effect of barring Canadian journalists from upcoming hearings, as Pickton's defense lawyers have suggested, Ward said.

The media ban is enforced in Canada to avoid tainting potential jury members with information about the crime before they see it in court, said Mary Lynn Young, a UBC journalism professor. The US system rarely imposes these bans, she added.

"We don't want to go to the extent of the US system where you get trial by media," she said, citing the infamous trials of O. J. Simpson and Kobe Bryant.

But Fox News says the publication ban has a "dangerous flip side." Public knowledge of the case provides police with critical scrutiny that ensures that they are doing their job correctly, said the report.

This case hasn't reached the trial stage yet, said Wes Pue, UBC associate dean of graduate studies in Law.

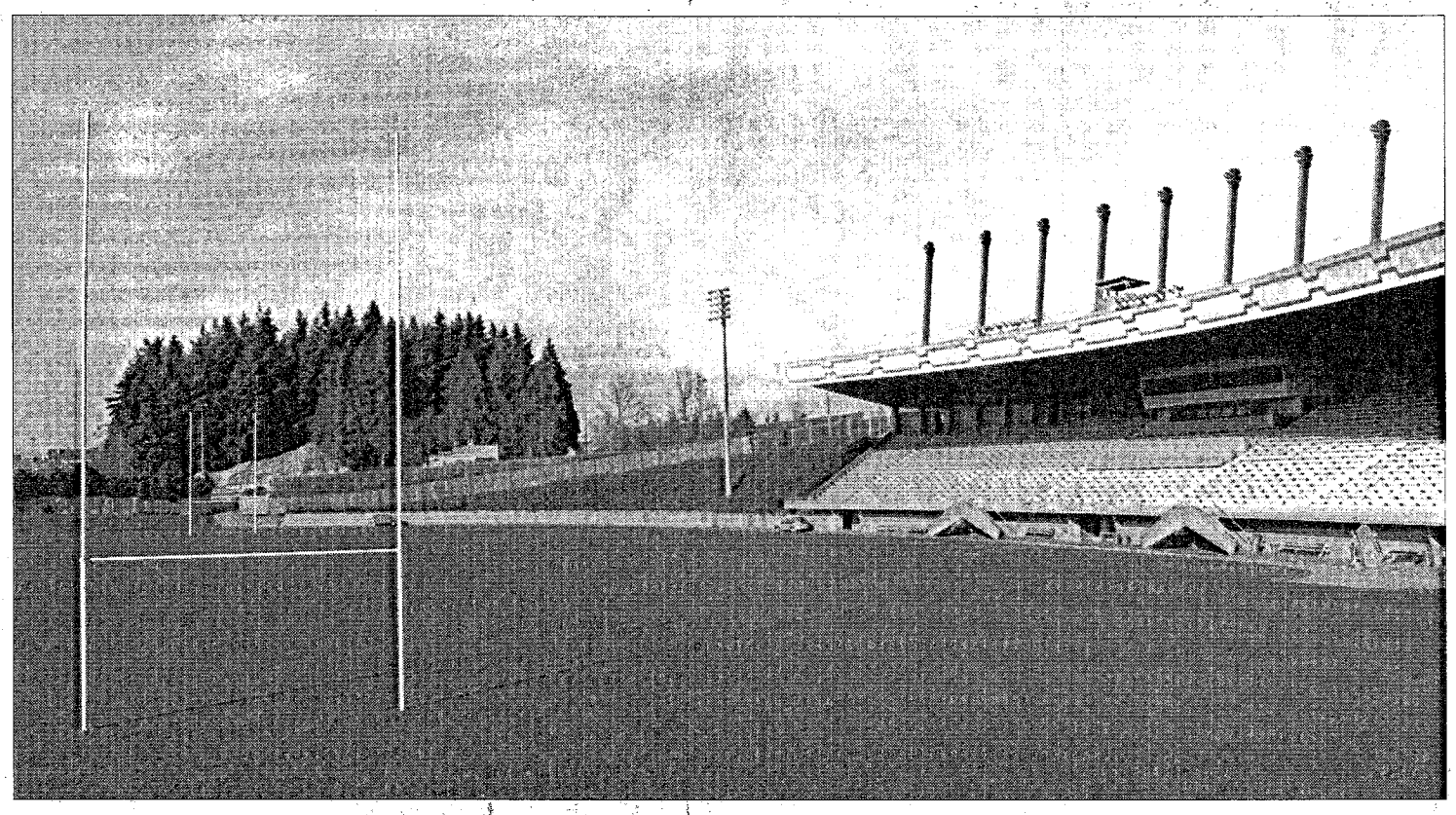
"Once you move into the court arenas it's a public process. It's there for the public, and this is one of the greatest protections our legal systems provide against abuse of power."

Pickton is currently under investigation in the disappearance of at least 15 women from Vancouver's Downtown East Side. The DNA of up to 31 women has been found on Pickton's Port Coquitlam Pig Farm. ❖

T-Bird concerts too loud, say residents

Homeowners complain that commercial events not part of student life

by Jonathan Woodward
NEWS EDITOR



NOW YOU SEE THEM, NOW YOU DON'T: Some campus residents want to get rid of lucrative commercial summer concerts because the noise they hear is too much. MICHELLE MAYNE PHOTO

Commercial summer concerts that bring the likes of Radiohead and the Warped Tour to Thunderbird Stadium are not part of university life, disturb the peace and must stop, says Jim Taylor, the outgoing president of the University Neighbourhood Association (UNA).

The stadium, which used to be isolated in south campus, is now a fact of life for new residents of University Town, and UBC has to recognise its obligations to those residents to keep noise that's unrelated to student life down, he said.

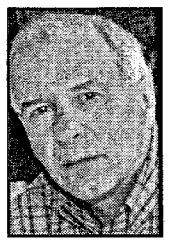
"The noise gets into the higher buildings, and it echoes, and it's quite outstanding. You'd think it was next door, but you know it's half a mile away," said Taylor.

The university is building residential developments for non-students to bring millions of dollars into UBC's endowment—a fund spent on academic pursuits. Taylor, a 1968 UBC Law graduate, lives in Hampton Place, one of those developments.

He supports student-run events like Arts County Fair, but said that commercial concerts that happen during the summer are not part of living in a university environment.

"That's a part of student life and it's going to be noise that someone's going to hear. We don't have any God-given right to say we shouldn't hear it," he said. "For any legitimate student activity I take the same position. But I do draw the distinction between purely commercial offerings that are designed to attract non-students. They're designed to market to anyone, just to make money."

Having up to four concerts in the summer brings in over $100,000 for UBC Athletics to finance games and sporting events for students, said Bob Philip, director of athletics.



PHILIP

"Up to now the concerts have actually paid the bills," he said. "To put on a game [at the Stadium] there is a reasonable charge and it doesn't have that many seats. Years that we haven't had concerts we've lost a reasonable amount."

The summer is the only time that athletics can rent the stadium out to non-university events because during the school term rain increases the chance that the grass field will be turned into mud—something rubgy and football teams can't play on.

Also, noise during the school year would interfere with genuine student activities like classes, said Philip.

"It's not just residents that complain about noise, but if you're trying to run classes and stuff, the noise tends to reverberate all around campus," Philip said.

Although Athletics relies on the concert money, its operations must be in line with UBC's obligation to people living on campus, said Taylor.

"I understand the social value of athletics getting more money to get good things, but that is not an answer," he said. "If athletics was financing its facilities by allowing off-street drag cars to drag up and down by a student residence under lights, people would say, 'There has to be a limit.' Those concerts are beyond that limit."

UBC has no noise policy and the University Endowment Lands has a bylaw that prohibits "unreasonable noise," but every policy is a balance, said Nick Losito, the director of environmental health at the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority.

"There is an expectation that people can go out and enjoy their concert and have a good time and a conflicting...expectation that people can get their peace, quiet and rest in their neighbourhood," he said.

Vancouver city council makes exceptions to its noise bylaw to maintain this balance, he said. Certain GM Place concerts and the Molson Indy get exceptions.

As the university builds more housing close to the stadium, it will have to deal with more complaints, which may shift the balance, said Losito.

The university administration says residents must accommodate students if they choose to live on campus, said Linda Moore, associate director of UBC's University Town development.

"Anyone who chooses to live on campus is choosing a certain lifestyle," she said. "If people are looking for a quiet lifestyle with no students, they may not want to live there. I think a very fundamental and unique aspect is living with a student atmosphere." ❖

Pit night gets more exclusive

Thanks to a new Pit Pub policy, the company you can enjoy on busy bar nights has become a little more selective.

As of January 21, the campus pub is restricting entry after 6pm on Wednesdays and Fridays, allowing only UBC students, staff, faculty and their guests to enter. According to a sign posted at the Pit door, each student, staff member, or faculty member may bring up to two non-UBC friends, who must sign in on arrival—and the inviting individual will be held responsible for guests behavior.

The Pit hopes this new move will allow the bar "to better serve [its] student patrons," the sign reads.

Former PM a UBC Hall-of-Famer

Former Prime Minister John Turner will be recognised for his remarkable career in sports when he is inducted into the UBC Sports Hall of Fame later this term.

Turner was a sprinter with the UBC Thunderbirds in the late 1940s and later wrote sports for *the Ubyssey* newspaper.

Ex-Social Credit education minister Pat McGeer will also be inducted for outstanding performance while playing basketball with the UBC Thunderbirds, culminating in a 42-38 victory over the Harlem Globetrotters.

While Turner wrote for *the Ubyssey*, McGeer was often reported about for his ministerial position of removing students from UBC's Board of Governors. He was often topic of discussion in the student newspaper in a time of government cuts and it was not always in the most charitable of lights. ❖

AMS insurance costs skyrocket

President says society lucky to get insurance

by Megan Thomas
NEWS EDITOR

To keep the cold beer flowing in the Pit and to keep the doors of the SUB open, the Alma Mater Society (AMS) is looking at insurance premiums that will nearly quadruple next year.

The AMS was given notice a year ago that its insurance provider for more than a decade, Canadian Universities Reciprocal Insurance Exchange, would no longer be insuring student societies. Instead AMS insurance will be provided by Campus Advantage—a consortium of student unions that work together to lower the price of services. But the new deal will cost about $120,000 a year, instead of the $35,000 the AMS was paying.

AMS President Oana Chirila said the student society is lucky to get insurance at all.

"We are a new face on the market. We have had some claims recently. I think we are very lucky to get anything," she said.

Recent claims against the AMS include flooding in the old Bank of Montreal space in the SUB, a claim involving Arts County Fair and a claim involving the Pit Pub. The last two are currently before the courts but will be settled by the AMS's last insurance provider, said Bernie Peets, AMS general manager.

While the AMS approached more than 20 different insurance brokers, only Campus Advantage came forward with a viable proposal.

But the Campus Advantage package does not include insurance for alcoholic events taking place outside the SUB, meaning when the switchover happens March 1, clubs could have to work out individual insurance for their events.

"We are still sifting through all the details of that," said Henry Chen, AMS treasurer and controller. "Come March it is going to be a different kind of environment for sure."

The AMS is still working on a plan for beer garden insurance, but VP Finance Brian Duong said extra costs may fall to clubs.

"If there is incremental costs to a certain event, they will likely be borne by those constituencies," he said.

One event that has been notified it will need separate insurance is the annual Arts County Fair concert in April. Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS) President Chris Payne said the organising committee is currently in negotiations to secure the required insurance but has yet to receive a quote on the cost.

"If by the beginning of March nothing is set in stone that is when you've got to start to wonder a little bit. But right now we are looking pretty confident," said Payne.

While insurance premiums will increase the cost of running Arts County Fair, Payne said ticket prices will not increase and safety will not be compromised.

While the AMS knew premiums would go up, the large increase was a surprise.

"We had developed some preliminary budgets but...this is a little more than we expected," said Chen.

The difference will be incorporated into next year's AMS budget but will put a considerable strain on the society's finances, said Duong.

But the AMS is not alone in having insurance woes. Insurance premiums have increased in all areas, says a university official who helped the AMS to broker the new deal.

"I don't think you will find one living soul in the universe right now that had a premium go down last year," said John Welch, risk and insurance manager for UBC.

The perception that student societies are high risk also caused premiums to skyrocket, said Chirila.

"Nobody wants to insure anything, and especially not a student union of our size," she said. "There is no comparison across the country for anyone who has two pubs, 200 clubs—and a skydiving club." ❖

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BC government says tuition is university's responsibility

WALK'N THE TALK: Students blocked traffic and took the rally to the streets. ANTON BUENO PHOTO

"Protest" from page 1.

who also joined the rally, said that students who missed class to show support did not receive academic amnesty from UBC and would be responsible for classes missed.

Saini also said that the AMS is not against tuition increases, as long as they benefit students. "We do support tuition increases that will eventually increase the quality of education at UBC," he said.

McFadden was pleased with the rally turnout but said it is only part of a larger strategy.

"We're not stopping now. We're going to continue to get petitions signed and served to the government in the next couple of weeks...and we'll continue to campaign until the government actually follows through in reducing tuition fees," she said. ❖

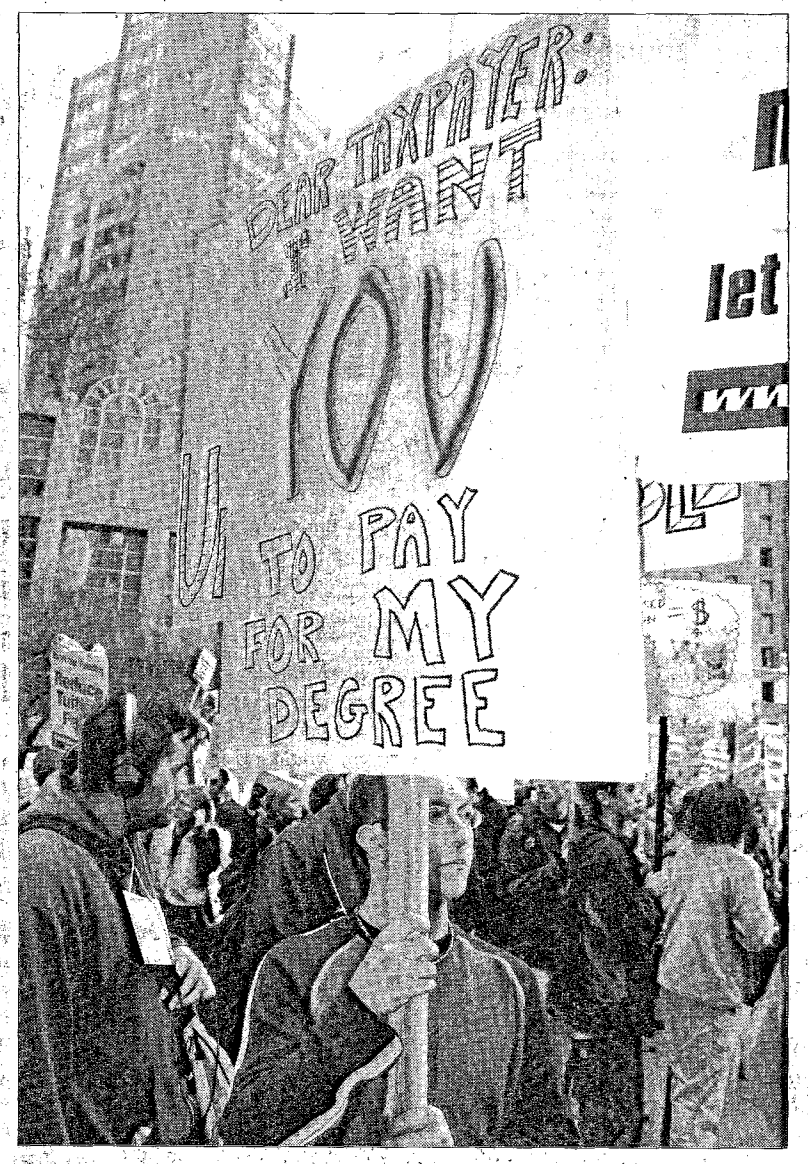
Not all students agree with rally

by Paul Evans
NEWS STAFF

Students protesting rising tuition fees were not the only ones at last week's downtown rally.

A small but vocal group of UBC students, led by Joel McLaughlin, the head of the UBC Young Conservatives, a student club at UBC, were on hand to stage a counter-protest in defense of tuition increases.

McLaughlin and his supporters argued that the cost of tuition should be increased.



BRAVE SOUL: McLaughlin says up tuition. PETER KLESKEN PHOTO

"I think that tuition fees should go up a reasonable amount," said McLaughlin, adding that the increased fees will improve the overall quality of education. He also thinks that if tuition fees were reduced there would be negative effects for students.

"I'm concerned that if tuition fees are reduced, we'll see the exact same thing that happened during the tuition freeze: bigger classes, fewer labs, six-year undergraduate degrees," he said.

With signs sporting slogans like, "My Right: Your Wallet," McLaughlin and his supporters immediately drew intense opposition from the crowd of protesters.

One student from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design described McLaughlin's presence as "Not cool." She said he is welcome to his opinion but should not be at a rally in support of reducing tuition.

Although no physical violence erupted, incensed protestors frequently engaged McLaughlin in passionate shouting matches. McLaughlin said one protester tried to grab his placard and swore in his face.

When the protest began to march, McLaughlin and his supporters marched slightly ahead of the crowd, trying to ensure that their signs were seen in photographs being taken by the press.

At one point the crowd paused in an effort to distance the throng from the counter-protest.

But McLaughlin was not fazed by his unpopularity.

"I just want to expose some of the hypocrisy of some of the students here," he said. "I want Mr Campbell to know that there are students out there who support him."❖

—with files from Dan Burritt

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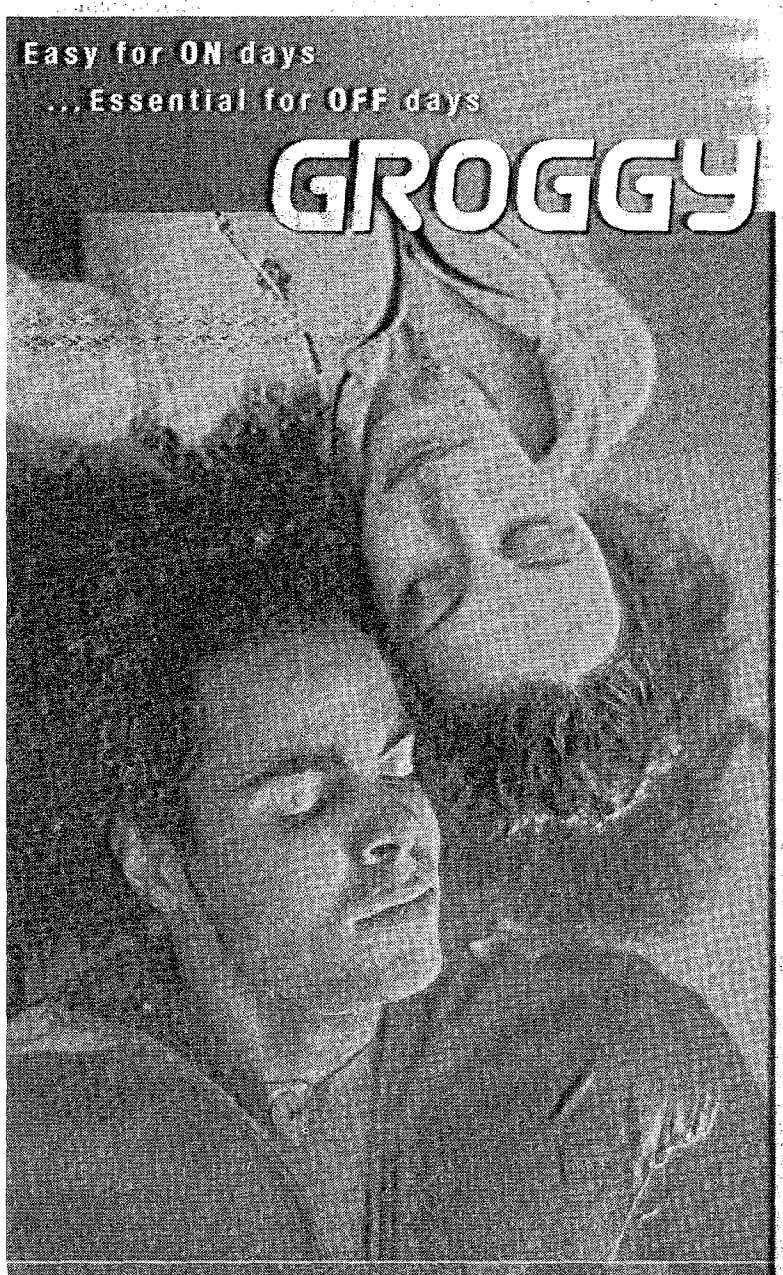

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The way we pay for music has to change, panellists say

With lawsuits looming, an outmoded system needs updating

by Robson Fletcher
NEWS WRITER

With lawsuits looming for 40 Canadians who share music online, the old legal and economic models for distributing copyrighted material need to be updated, panellists said last week at UBC Robson Square downtown.

"The way that music is financed has to be re-thought," said panel member Margo Langford, who studied Internet law at Harvard and has managed anti-piracy cases for multinational record companies.

The current system is bound to break down, she said. With so much music available for free on the Internet, fewer and fewer people are paying for professionally-recorded CDs.

And despite the objections—and lawsuits—from the recording industry, many Canadians who download music don't plan on stopping because they feel they are doing nothing wrong, said the panel.

Geoff Stowe, a BCIT journalism student and panel member who shares music online, said he often hears from fellow downloaders that they are only harming the already-rich record companies, not the artists.

"Here's the thing. How much money do [the record companies] make in a year?" said Stowe. "Most people assume it's in the billions."

With only about five major multinational record companies controlling the majority of music sold, record sales of US$32 billion are split among a very small pool, said Langford. And the record companies are feeling the online crunch: sales were six per cent less than the year before.

Six per cent may not seem like a big change, but Langford said record companies only break even on 15 per cent of the artists they invest in. The other 85 per cent actually cost the companies money, which needs to be subsidised by the profits reaped from highly successful artists.

The Canadian Recording Industry Association (CRIA), acting on behalf of these companies, has identified 40 people in Canada who share music online and will likely file lawsuits against them later this month, according to sources in a number of recent media reports.

If the lawsuits go ahead, they will follow the lead of the Recording Industry Association of America, which sued hundreds of Americans for downloading copyrighted songs off the Internet.

The CRIA has been reluctant to take legal action because Canadian laws regarding file sharing are not as clear as in the US.

Last December, the Copyright Board of Canada said that it is legal to download music for your own personal use, but it is illegal to upload music to other people.

This caused confusion, as sharing music typically involves both downloading and uploading. The legal authority of the statement is also unclear, said Langford.

"The Copyright Board is really just a rate-setting body," she said. "They're not supposed to practice law."

Copying music for personal use is legal in Canada because Canadians pay a levy for blank CDs and digital music devices which subsidises artists.

Not everyone in the industry is opposed to the online music sharing. Many unsigned artists welcome the chance to distribute their music around the world.

Panel member Ian Giesbrecht was a campus DJ and programmed his radio shows largely with songs he downloaded after contacting the artists.

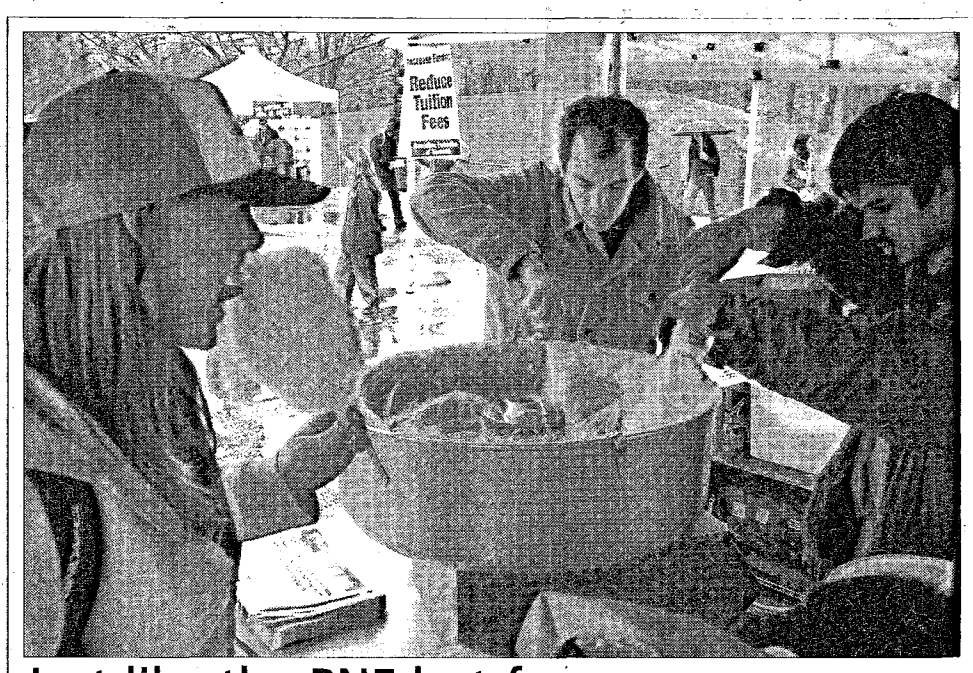
Giesbrecht believes that in the future many artists will abandon record labels entirely, in favour of a direct-to-market, online distribution system.

But it is unlikely that record companies will disappear altogether, said Langford.

"I think there will still be a need for somebody to market the music," she said. "It isn't enough just to publish it. Somebody has to get out there and pay for the promotion and marketing."

Langford believes one of the results will be a less concentrated distribution system.

"We'll be back to almost the 1950s when there were thousands of labels and people were doing things very differently, before consolidation," she said.❖



Just like the PNE but free

UBC students treat passers-by to raise tuition awareness. MICHELLE MAYNE PHOTO

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Staff meeting agenda? Hell ya!
1 Introductions
2 Rant/Special Issues
3 Athletics/Social
4 Other Business
5 Post Mortem
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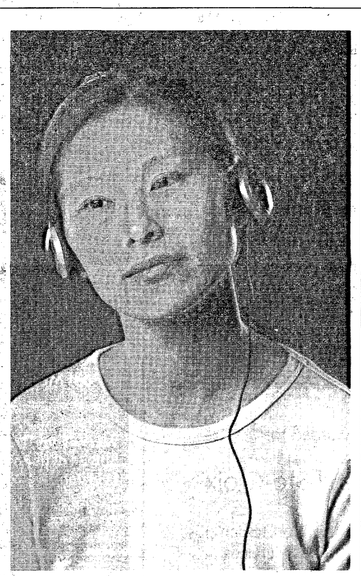
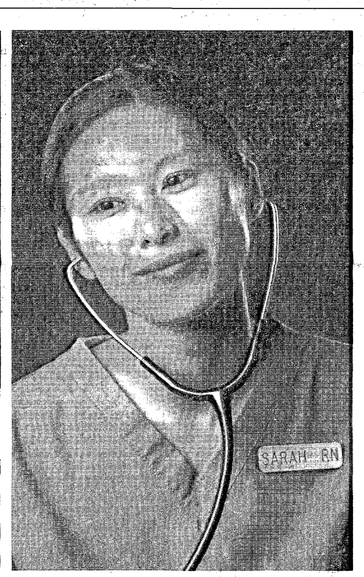
THE UBYSSEY
EATING 'TIL WE PUKE SINCE 1918

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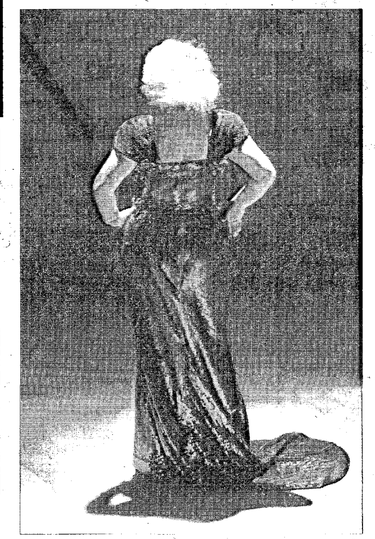
Badunkadunk

Cavendish gets down and dirty as Mae West

DIRTY BLONDE
at Stanley Theatre
until Feb. 29

by Sarah Bourdon and Dan McRoberts
CULTURE STAFF

Few movie actresses in the last century have created more controversy and scandal than Mae West. Known for her blatant sensuality and unmistakable voice, she rose to notoriety in a time when women were supposed to be modest and refined. "Dirty Blonde" is a wonderful portrayal of the personality and allure of Mae West and the effect her life had on those around her, even years after her death.



Nicola Cavendish, an accomplished local actress and former UBC theatre student, is excellent in her portrayal of Mae West. Her colourful performance is highlighted by her ability to master the sultry vixen's voice and mannerisms. Cavendish brings to life the energy, sexuality and spontaneity of West, while at other times drawing sympathy and even pity for a woman who would do almost anything for fame, even in her old age.

Cavendish also plays the character of Jo from the parallel storyline which occurs in modern times. Jo is a Mae West fan who, while visiting the star's gravesite, meets Charlie, another avid fan.

The two other actors in the play, Allan Morgan (who plays Charlie as well as many other male characters) and Peter Jorgensen (who similarly plays multiple roles) are outstanding. Both resist the temptation to overact, which wouldn't be hard to do when onstage with the character of Mae West—the archetype of the bombshell caricature. Morgan's portrayal of Charlie as a teenager is at first distractingly reminiscent of the character Harold from *The Red Green Show*. Thankfully, the matured version of Charlie drops several of these awkward tendencies, making for a much more enjoyable character.

The first act is more or less a sexual romp, but the second act is characterised by a little more darkness and greater dramatic depth, both in the storyline of Mae West and the contemporary love story. This works very well, as the actors are able to find an interesting balance between pathos and humour, but maintain a positive undercurrent.

The friendship that develops between Jo and Charlie adds a touching quality to the story and explores the often-stigmatised idea of obsession. But, instead of depicting their fixation with Mae West as a bad thing, the play shows obsession to be a wonderful element of how people define themselves. While it is presented in a funny manner, the humour is neither brutal nor degrading. Charlie's obsession even extends to dressing up as Mae, a subject the playwright treats in a positive light and one that is carried off brilliantly by Allan Morgan. In the end, self-discovery appears as the overall theme of both stories.

Cavendish's wonderful performance and the witty, well-crafted dialogue between characters drive the play. Complimenting the acting and script are the simple yet strikingly beautiful sets and fantastic costumes. Each locale lends, as it should, a real mood to the scene, essential when you have the same actors in different roles.

While "Dirty Blonde" is over two hours in length, the audience is kept entertained the entire time, for as Mae West herself said, "Too much of a good thing can be wonderful." ❖

A blast of cool air

AIR
Talkie Walkie
[Astralwerks]

by Neil Braun
CULTURE WRITER

Even if you don't recognise the band's name, you're more than likely familiar with Air's music. Soon after its release, the Parisian duo's 1998 debut album, *Moon Safari*, became every major cosmetics company's wet dream. Air's music was subsequently used to sell every beauty product from mascara to nail polish, a trend which has only just recently faded. Such corporate whoring from a non-mainstream band would have been deemed unforgivable, except that *Moon Safari* was a solid-gold masterpiece that has defined the electronic pop genre through to the present day. The album's fluid and effortless combination of lush pop melodies, kitschy Continental lounge and early 80s analog synths practically screamed cool and thus made it the perfect mood music for many a trendy coffee shop, jet-setting cocktail party and sex-drenched dorm room the world over.

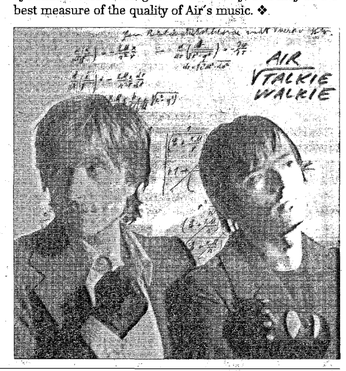
However, after composing the soundtrack to Sophia Coppola's *The Virgin Suicides*, Air's 2001 album, *10,000 Hz Legend*, sacrificed its predecessor's charms for "artistic growth." Air had created an overly dense, robotic and claustrophobic album that now bore the influence of bad 70s prog-rock instead of Burt Bacharach's 60s pop; certainly, this was not the album to inspire people to buy lipstick or to, er, make with the love.

Fortunately, Air's new album, *Talkie Walkie*, marries the strengths of both previous albums to create something more relaxed, simple and beautiful. This much is obvious from the album's final track, "Alone in Kyoto," which appeared late last year on the soundtrack to *Lost in Translation*, another Sophia Coppola film.

The spare mix of piano, acoustic guitar and triangle-pings radiate a warmth and comfort the band hasn't expressed before. Even better is the lead single "Cherry Blossom Girl"—again, it's Air's newfound (or rediscovered) subtle restraint that gives the song its beauty. The duo's gender-ambiguous vocals, aided by a hypnotic bed of melodic guitar lines and echoed synthesizer effects, will likely induce swooning with the sighing refrain: "Tell me why can't it be true."

Despite the odd misstep (the Transylvania-like organ and plodding beat of "Another Day" quickly becomes monotonous), Air manages to maintain the spirit of these two standout tracks throughout *Talkie Walkie*. The peppy beat and trotting banjo of "Alpha Beta Gaga" showcases Air at their most whimsical, "Venus" is awash in gauzy, inviting, New Wave-ish synthesizer tones and "Mike Mills" (as in R.E.M.'s bassist? It wouldn't be a surprising reference coming from a band whose remix album is named *Everybody Hertz*) is a lovely, miniature electro-symphony.

Though Air has not produced an album that equals the seminal *Moon Safari*, *Talkie Walkie* nevertheless remains an enchanting, gorgeous listen. Doubtless its songs will soon be supporting a Beyoncé pitch for some space-age eye shadow. However, given their history, that may be the best measure of the quality of Air's music. ❖



Sleuth plays an uneven hand

SLEUTH
at the Gateway Theatre
until Feb. 14

by Anna King
CULTURE WRITER

There is a game piece missing from the Gateway's performance of "Sleuth," and in a play that is built on strategy and the studied advance and retreat of players, the flaw throws off the focus of the game.

The flaw is relying too heavily on what is most often lauded about the play—its numerous plot twists—and failing to revel deeply in the characters. This is why the second act, with its writhing plot, takes off in this performance, while act one, which relies more heavily on characterisation, feels as flat as a chess board.

Playwright Anthony Shaffer was a master of cunning and guile, true, but his 1970 award-winning script also has enough nuance, parody and emotional sophistication to have taken it out of the realm of a mere thriller and into the ranks of a rare and lasting hit. One of the longest-running plays in history, Shaffer called it "the main event," as the play's fame reigned over his entire creative life (unfortunately eclipsing his screenplays for the brilliant hippie horror flick *The Wicker Man* and Hitchcock's *Frenzy*).

I must admit, the only performance of "Sleuth" I have seen besides this one is the admirable 1972 movie version starring Laurence Olivier and Michael Caine, which sets the bar a little high. Still, it is a play that needs to be risky to stay relevant, and for that it needs an unwavering commitment to character and to the sharpness of Shaffer's dialogue.

John Innes, who plays the writer Andrew Wyke, shows considerable examples of this commitment in act two, but the persona is developed too late and too inconsistently.

Bob Frazer plays Milo Tindle, the seducer of Wyke's wife and unwitting player in the older man's wily games, and is relatively capable, although his English accent is smartingly bad.

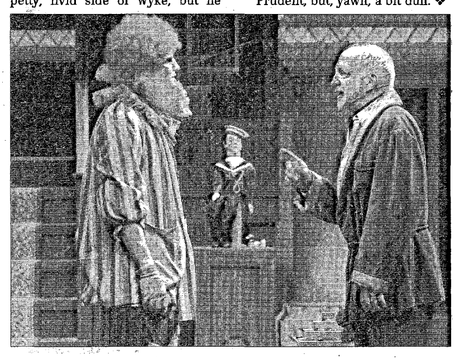
Wyke, obsessed with the cheesy detective stories he churns out, comes from a bygone era of butlers, sitting rooms and blatant lass hatred. Wyke invites Tindle to his country manor for a drink and ostensibly to discuss ridding himself of his troublesome wife. But Wyke begins to show his true colours when Tindle reveals he is the son of a failed Jewish-Italian watchmaker. Hijinks ensue and then things get pretty ugly.

Innes has a good handle on the petty, livid side of Wyke, but he doesn't adequately portray the glee and playfulness of the games master necessary for our understanding of his actions.

Frazer's goofiness in act one is too close to farce for a play that is actually quite frightening, although he reverses that persona nicely in the second act. The other characters are beguiling, but somewhat undeveloped.

With an extravagent set in the ornate Gateway Theatre and a plodding pace, this production felt like it was aimed squarely at the seniors who surrounded me and who clapped politely before disappearing to their sedans. Maybe director John Cooper decided a generation used to seeing half a dozen plot twists in the average movie trailer wasn't going to fork out the 32 dollars anyway, and decided to head straight for the pockets of the folks who saw the show in the 1970s when it first made a splash.

Prudent, but, yawn, a bit dull. ❖



Yo Bush, he's talking to you!

Robert McNamara's eleven lessons are more important than ever

THE FOG OF WAR
now playing

by Duncan M. McHugh
CULTURE STAFF

Director Errol Morris may have begun work on his latest film, *The Fog of War*, before September 11, 2001, the US invasion of Afghanistan or the current US occupation of Iraq, but his film could hardly be more appropriate for its time. Culled from a series of interviews with Robert McNamara, along with archival footage and audiotapes, Morris—one of the most acclaimed non-fiction filmmakers of all time—crafts a history of a man intrinsically linked to the events—and in particular the wars—of the 20th century.

Robert S. McNamara (the S stands for Strange, no joke) is known primarily for having been the US Secretary of Defense during the Kennedy administration and for the majority of the Johnson administration; however, his accomplishments don't end there. He's also been the youngest-ever assistant professor at Harvard, a WWII military advisor, president of the Ford Motor Company and the president of the World Bank.

Ironically, for a man whose name has become synonymous with the Vietnam War, McNamara's first memory is of the celebrations on Armistice Day in 1918. By the time WWII rolled around, McNamara was analysing data for the US military. Based on his advice, the US changed its approach to bombing Japan, opting instead for firebombs which proved disastrously effective on Japan's wooden cities. In March of 1945, for example, 100,000 people were killed in one night when Tokyo was firebombed, leaving 50 per cent of the city destroyed. As McNamara points out, paraphrasing US Air Force Commander Curtis LeMay, had the Allies lost the war, he and McNamara would have been tried as war criminals.

The movie is broken up into eleven lessons, ranging from the importance of empathising with one's enemy to the need to partake in evil to create good to the unchangability of "human nature." McNamara credits President Kennedy's ability to empathise with Soviet leader Khrushchev for having

averted nuclear catastrophe during the "Cuban Missile Crisis" of 1962. In fact, McNamara tells us during the film that it was not until 1992 that he learned that there had in fact been nuclear warheads on Cuba when, at the time of the crisis, the CIA had reported that there had been none.

Morris uses a device he created called the "Interrotron" to conduct his interviews. The device allows him to make eye contact with the interviewee with a mirror while they face the camera. It makes for an arresting style, even more so given McNamara's articulate and revelatory commentary. While he may not apologise for what he's done, McNamara, who was 85 when these interviews took place two years ago, comes across as a brilliant but remorseful man. One might not agree with the decisions he made, but one can certainly appreciate some of the wisdom he has acquired over his long and colourful life. ❖

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Song of This Place
BY JOY COGHILL

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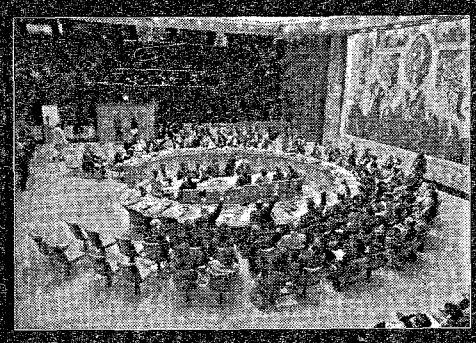


Come and share your ideas, pitch your stories and discuss the theme of the issue this Friday, January 13th at Noon in our office, SUB Room 24. Everyone welcome!

THE UBYSSEY
Roundtablin' it since 1918.

It's the Pit

...so why on earth do we go there?

by Tessa King
FEATURES WRITER

It's 9:30pm on the third Wednesday of second term and everyone who is (or isn't) anyone is crammed into the seething, sloping stream that feeds directly into the Pit Pub. Girls in black tank tops and low-cut jeans press against the railings as they try desperately to make room for their cleavage. A guy wearing what looks like a white swimming cap pushes past me to join the line. He already reeks of alcohol and tells me that the line-up is pretty short. He must be used to it; he's from Vancouver, I think.

"There's no one in there right now...They try and make you think that there's lots of people in there," some nearby exchange students complain. But the Pit has no shortage of customers. What is it that makes the Pit so popular?

"What UBC needs is a pub," former UBC professor David Suzuki wrote in 1968. "The presence of friends at different tables and the warmth of camaraderie engendered by beer would soon result in new friends and active discussion." He envisioned students and staff chatting together and buying each other beers. A place where "radical ideals would be tempered by the effects of alcohol."

I'm not sure that alcohol has the effect of tempering current UBC students' behaviour, especially on Pit Night. I haven't had many "active discussions" with professors over a beer in the Pit. But the Pit is a UBC tradition, the first place we legally drank alcohol.

It's renowned for being a primal courting arena where conversations are out and body language is in. It's "more touchy-feely...you just kind of go up and grab a girl. Sometimes you get slapped but other times it's good to go," says Phil Down, a regular Pit-goer.

"If you want to get laid you go to the Pit," an Aussie exchange student says.

I decide to chat to the guy in the spandex swimming cap, who has been to the Pit almost fifty times and, like the exchange students, he comes for the women.

"I got some moves but I don't pull 'em out for anybody." No way man, he saves them for "the special girls." He's met quite a few special girls in the past and says that you can take it "as far as possible" at the Pit. "When I'm here I get it wherever I want, whenever I want."

He explains that it's his "style" that makes him so irresistible. He's wearing a Sixer's jacket, baggy jeans and a "scully," the white spandex hat which makes him look "that much more sexy."

Richard Davis, a 3rd-year UBC student (and "the most quotable guy on campus," according to himself), says that guys go to the Pit because of "the cheap beer, no cover, no dress code and plus there are lots of ladies there." Guys circle the girls like "vultures," he says.

Davis says that the women go to the Pit because of the music. "There are the good songs like 'Rock Your Body' by Justin Timberlake, 'Summer of 69' by Bryan Adams or 'Like a Prayer' by Madonna, says Davis. "I guess sometimes girls go there looking for guys. I'm not too sure about that."

I WANNA TOUCH THE DIALS: Pit DJs say that the mood is super-chill. MELISSA ROHDE PHOTO

I decide to ask a group of girls who are dressed to impress if they're there for the guys. "Ah, no." They burst out laughing. The guys come for the girls, one of them explains, "But the girls aren't into the guys." Maybe they don't intend to pick up, it just kind of happens—otherwise the other boys are lying to me.

"We want to go dancing," they chant. And drinking is most certainly not on their agenda.

Some lipstick-loaded sorority girls say they're not here to court. "There's just not enough good guys," one says. Just wait till they've had a few.

"After a few pints anything is possible," says Davis. He's working with a success rate of approximately one in every three Pit nights. "I don't necessarily go there looking for that, but hey, what can I say?"

Davis believes the Pit is an ideal courting place for short-term relationships, but for long-term relationships he says, "Hell no." The loud music isn't conducive to talking about international politics (his favourite subject). "It's dark in there, it's hard to tell who you're talking with." But long-term relationships shouldn't "start with a drunken hook-up, personally." And just to drive his point home, Davis yells at the tape player, "I am not a man whore. I am not player. I am not."

But love isn't always what happens at the Pit. Down has some stories, he says. He offered them a hundred dollar bill to get in the back door, for the alcohol, and says he threw his fist through one of the windows. He shows me the scar. "I got kicked out of the Pit for about a good term, like four months...I owed them $500 and everything."

That wasn't Down's first outburst. He alleges that over the last three years he has caused a lot of the violence at the Pit. "I broke a glass over someone's face accidentally...no one remembers me. I was in disguise."

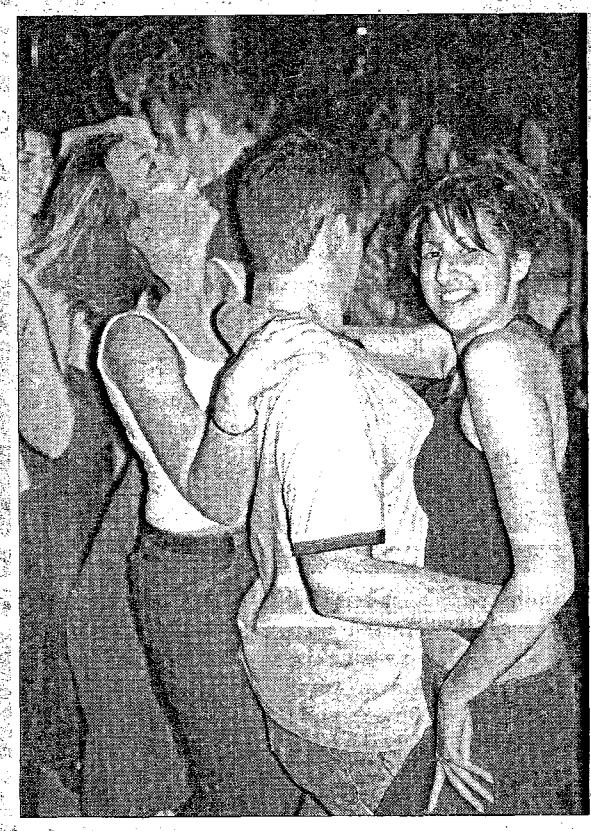
Nevertheless, Bill Anderson, the current Pit manager says, "Compared to other places there are not many problems." He aims to create a fun, safe atmosphere where "people don't have to worry about many problems that go on in other bars."

Davis, who has been going to the Pit regularly since February 27, 2002, agrees that it's a safe place. "The bouncers keep it well under control, you don't see any gang fights like there is in Gastown."

DJ Colione, who just started on Wednesday nights along with DJ Ichiban, likes the Pit because everybody's attitude is "super-chill."

I think he's hit the nail on the head. What makes the Pit so great is it's lack of pretension. There is no dress code, no snobs who won't talk to you, and no music that you haven't heard at least a hundred times. Let's face it guys, we UBC students aren't that stylish (except the spandex cap guy). We can relax, have fun, and make fools of ourselves now and again. And we don't have to worry about the girl in killer stilettos rolling her eyes while she sips her $15 martini.

"It's a totally different space," Pit patron Erin Lee says. "I can't believe it is right next to the library." ❖



BUMP AND GRIND! Girls only go to the Pit for the great tunes...cough. MELISSA ROHDE PHOTO

Sexual assault victims win review

by Sarah Petrescu
THE MARTLET

VICTORIA (CUP)—After months of petitioning and criticising the university's response to her attack, a young woman who was sexually assaulted at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) last November has won a victory in changing campus safety measures.

The U of S has agreed to an external review of campus safety after several women were assaulted at the university over the past years. The decision comes after considerable outcry from the victims and their families.

"I want to see protocols in place for when these things happen," said Eden, who does not want to disclose her last name for fear of being identified by her attacker, who remains at large.

"I want to see preventative measures," she said, adding that surveillance cameras would deter and help identify potential offenders. "I never want another person to go through what I went through."

Eden was on campus studying the night she was assaulted. She was grabbed by her attacker while entering a main bathroom and dragged to a smaller, usually locked private bathroom where she was brutally assaulted.

"I instinctively fought back, ripping off two fingernails in the process. With one hand on my mouth and one on my neck, which even days later left a mark, he started to strangle me. I reached a point too great of fear and too great of stress to even move."

The assault left Eden with a fractured wrist and vaginal bleeding. She was unable to identify her attacker because he turned out the lights before she could see him and there were no witnesses to the assault.

Although Eden is grateful for the assistance she received that night from campus security, she was disappointed with the university's immediate handling of the assault.

"Neither the police nor the university contacted me and my family to offer us guidance and assistance," she said. "We had only one phone call from the university president, Peter McKinnon, over a week after the incident and it was less than a minute long."

After the assault, Eden and her family requested a mass e-mail be sent to warn students of a sexual predator at large. The e-mail was sent after the weekend, but Eden says that it downplayed the incident, referring to it as an "alleged" assault, warning students to be "extra vigilant" and underlining the campus safety record.

"It hurt that they used those words, as if saying I could've done more," said Eden. "I was not an 'alleged' victim. What happened to me was very real."

Janice LaVoie, community safety manager at the U of S, said the university handled the incident responsibly and continues to handle it well. "We immediately made changes, adding more patrollers on foot, and continue to do so. The safety of our campus is a great concern for us," said LaVoie.

Eden and her family gained assistance from the Saskatoon Sexual Assault Centre and the U of S Women's Centre.

With the support of campus groups, both victims and their families began to lobby the school for changes. A petition for the external review garnered over 1000 signatures. Public forums and press conferences were held and the U of S students' union agreed to create a Victim Advocate Position.

The external review will assess the university's safety standards in comparison with other schools across the country and is set to be released in March.

"Reports of sexual assault are extremely rare on campus," said LaVoie, prior to the university's agreement to the review. "The last two incidents are tragic and regrettable circumstances, but the fact these incidents are so rare is a good thing." ❖

"Cyborg" displays digital eyesight

University of Toronto professor explores technological and philosophical boundaries

by Erika Meere
THE MCGILL DAILY

MONTREAL (CUP)—A man claiming to be a cyborg was at McGill University on Monday to speak about the melding of man and machine.

The cyborg, also known as Steve Mann, is a University of Toronto professor, inventor and author. He's best known for creating EyeTap—digital eyeglasses that modify light using a camera and a double-sided mirror in order to allow a tiny, built-in processor to record what you see. The EyeTap can recognise faces, filter out advertisements, or send images and video directly to the Internet.

An inventor since childhood, Mann came up with the earliest version of EyeTap in the 1970s, after realising how little eyeglasses had evolved since their invention.

"I remember thinking, why not have digital eyeglasses? Why are we still melting down glass?" said Mann, who wears his invention nearly all the time.

In 1994, he became the first person to broadcast his daily life on the Internet using the EyeTap.

"The idea I was trying to explore was inverse surveillance," he said. "Shortly after, other people began doing the same thing, like JenniCAM, but that was for different reasons."

JenniCAM, a voyeuristic Internet site that featured a constant webcam recording of the site's owner, closed last month after seven years online.

MANN

Mann had some difficulty in getting people to accept EyeTap's capacity for "sousveillance," which he defines as observation from below, rather than from above. When he started working on his invention with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), he was asked to work from home. Some faculty members were concerned about the possibility of lawsuits being launched against MIT if images of members of the public from Mann's eyeglasses were to appear on the Internet via MIT's network.

Casinos and department stores were especially uncomfortable with having a camera turned on them, according to Mann.

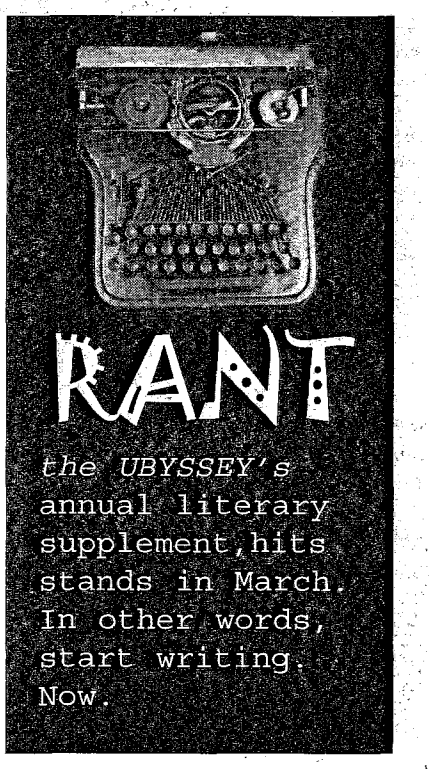
"Gambling casinos didn't like me too much," he said. "I noticed a correlation between the number of cameras and the amount of hatred towards me."

The EyeTap glasses also have the potential to help the visually impaired and those experiencing memory loss by keeping a record of their day-to-day life, according to Mann. However, one audience member questioned the sociological and evolutionary implications of humankind's dependence on technologies like EyeTap.

"This is the age-old question of whether technology is an intellectual crutch," Mann responded. "In a sense, technology has atrophied our bodies. We think of calculators, for example. I don't think there's anyone in the room who could work out the square root of two by hand. It doesn't mean it's a bad thing, it just means that we've adapted."

Omid Mehdizedeh, a PhD student in mechanical engineering from the University of Toronto, disagreed.

"I personally don't like the idea," he said. "I think people should get closer to nature, not further away. I don't like the idea of people as cyborgs." ❖



THE UBYSSEY
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It being International Act Like A Mime Day, Laura Blue and Jon Woodward decided to do a little soft-shoe to the soundtrack of "The Secret of Nhim." Megan Thomas scoffed, "Heather Pauls did that dance at the opening of the Vancouver Council meeting and Jim Green said he was moved...deeply!" Paul Carr, eager to point out that someone had talked on Mime Day, was cowed into submission by a fierce stare from Jesse Marchand, who was sporting sweat pants in public on a weekday. In the photo room, Hywel Tuscano was practicing his rendition of "If I had a Hammer" on the lute. Melissa Rohde, getting a sneak preview, clapped politely. In the production room, John Hua, after scarfing the last of the Beef and Broccoli, locked the door, put on his purple cape and leapt about as he clicked his Boggle game like a large castanet. Bryan Zandberg's original instrument was the sousaphone but, as Sarah Bourdon pointed out, you'd have more luck flushing an angry eagle out of a dark barn than try and fit one of those suckas' in a Taiga jacket. Dan Burritt harrumphed to himself that the only true mime was that one who appeared in a Golden Girls episode, but then Iva Cheung reminded him of Marcel Marcot, which shut him up a bit. Wilson Wong sat in the corner counting the 31 cents he had collected "for the children" while Dan McRoberts bit into what he thought was a cupcake, but turned out to be a frosted soy bran muffin! So far, only one person in the paper offices had uttered a word. Paul Evans wasn't about to, fearing retribution from that sullen and moody grade 10 student he had interviewed who didn't know why he was marching in the Bea Arthur Appreciation Parade. Michelle Mayne only sighed as she surveyed the horde around her and pondered Peter Klesken's query: was it the BC "Heartland" or "Hinterland...?

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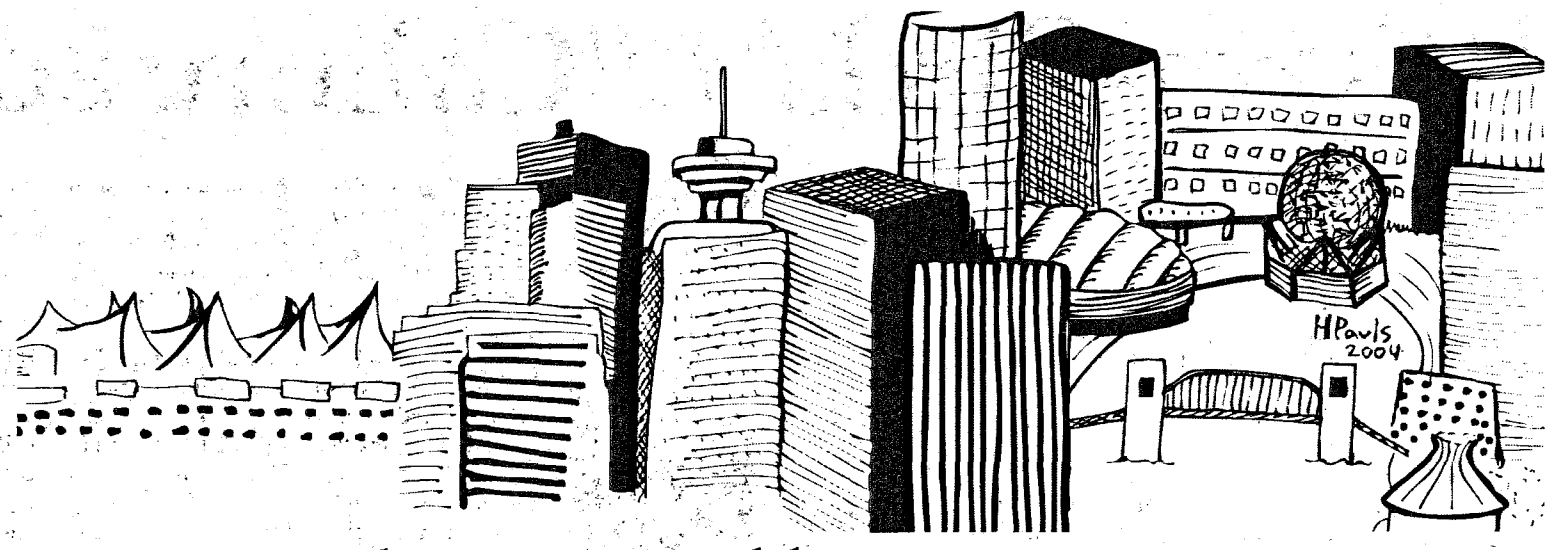


Spend it well, Vancouver

When mayors from across the country answered Toronto Mayor David Miller's call to discuss a new deal for cities from the federal government, they were expecting a lot more.

Cities across Canada are sinking under the burden of greater and greater infrastructure costs and booming populations.

The infrastructure deficit—the money that a city pays to maintain facilities like roads and water but doesn't—is piling up to a massive infrastructure debt, which estimates have placed as high as $125 billion nationally.

People who live in cities say that the greatest concern that they face isn't utilities falling apart around them, but the staggering poverty and crime. Vancouver has the highest break-in rate in Canada—a bank robbery happens every business day. Surrey has the highest car theft rate in the entire English-speaking world. Much of the property crime is fuelled by one of the worst skid rows in North America, Vancouver's Downtown East Side.

The mayors brought a few proposals to this meeting. Some called for cities to share some tax revenue with provincial governments, and Winnipeg Mayor Glen Murray took it far enough to call for a complete restructuring of his city's budget: instead of drawing money primarily from property taxes, his view would have raised more money for the city through user fees for liquor, garbage, utilities and a mysterious 'consumption-based tax.'

What they got was, in typical Paul Martin style, a half-step in that direction. Without giving cities any real reforms, Martin almost kept a promise that his Liberal government made nearly ten years ago: to eliminate the GST for cities.

This move would save cities about $450 million nationally and between $25 and $30 million for the city of Vancouver. And rather than tax every citizen for every necessity, property owners continue to pay property taxes that finance a lot more than what a user-pay system would see. The federal government instead will foot more of the bill.

However, Martin is not necessarily known for moving in any particular direction. His proposal, at first a sweeping, immediate gesture, is in fact a long-term plan that won't take effect until seven years from now. Is this the financial support that Canadian cities need for their growth?

But seven years is perfectly timed with the arrival of the 2010 Olympics. Hopefully this extra money will not go solely to the new sports venues and the Sea-to-Sky highway. While Vancouver stands as one of "the most liveable places in the world"—tied with Melbourne and Vienna as recently indicated in a poll by the Economist Group—our city has its share of major problems as well.

The city council has been active trying to fight Vancouver's underlying social issues: the safe injection sites and increased police enforcement. It's probably a good idea to give them some money to help such initiatives.

Most urbanites across Canada agree—minus Toronto, who have more problems driving across their huge city—that poverty is the largest problem in urban centres. After that, the needs of municipalities break down to regionally specific issues. Some may fear a third level of government, but greater financial clout will possibly empower cities enough to manage the specific problems that are simply unacknowledgeable at the federal level.

Canada's mayors may meet again to demand the sweeping changes that are necessary for the longer term. But Martin's reduction of the GST means that they have some money in the short term. They shouldn't meet for a while—they should spend the money on their problems right now. ❖

LETTERS

Setting the record straight

by Martha Piper

UBC students and the UBC administration agree that class sizes at our university should be reduced.

Students have been telling us this for years. Our exit interviews with our graduates and our alumni consistently report that if there is one aspect of the student experience that should change it is class size. This concern was reflected in the *Maclean's* data that showed us to rank 15th and last in third- and fourth-year class sizes. In the tuition consultation process we have often heard from students that class sizes should be smaller. We strongly agree.

PERSPECTIVE opinion

In our efforts to create smaller classes we asked our administrators and Faculties for solutions and suggestions. As you know, some of the responses to that brainstorming exercise were quoted very selectively from a number of internal emails obtained under a freedom of information request. The resulting newspaper article created the impression that student interests could be compromised as we struggled to meet standards set by *Maclean's* magazine.

I want to make this very clear. We have not, and will not, make changes to our mission simply to improve our standing in a magazine survey. Reducing class size is a high priority at UBC, but not at any price. No UBC student was denied access to courses needed for graduation, or refused admission into a required course, as a consequence of our efforts to reduce class sizes. Nor was there any artificial adjustment of room sizes or arbitrary switching of courses from one term to the next.

What we did do to reduce class size was to limit enrolment in some classes, but at the same time, add 83 new sections and hire more Faculty members. If UBC had wanted simply to reduce class sizes it would have been an easy matter to just limit enrolment. But instead, UBC actually admitted 1,200 more full-time students this year than were funded by the government because we believe that access is a higher priority.

The preoccupation with class size should not be allowed to obscure the many new developments that have occurred at UBC. Innovative approaches like Foundations, the Coordinated Science Program, problem-based learning, co-op placements and community service learning are taking students out of the crowded classrooms into exciting new learning environments.

Maclean's magazine will remain a useful tool to help us benchmark ourselves against other universities and point out weaknesses that we should correct, but it will never interfere with our core commitment to provide our students with the best education possible.

—Dr Martha Piper is the President of UBC

An open letter to Piper

As a UBC student currently on exchange at McGill, I look forward to hearing news about what is happening at my dear alma mater while I am on leave. However, a recent update from a mailing list leaves me sincerely disappointed.

Apparently representatives of the university have denied Pride UBC the opportunity to fly the rainbow flag during the Outweek festivities in February. I find this incredibly disheartening. Now, though I've never been a big fan of the rainbow aesthetic myself (it always reminds me of ponies and Phil Collins' "True Colors"), I strongly and steadfastly respect the symbolism that the image projects: a simple but powerful assertion that sexual diversity is okay and our differences should be celebrated. I think it is a blight on the university's reputation to refuse this very simple gesture (the McGill students I mentioned this to were certainly surprised that UBC would be so obstinate) and it seems to fly in the face of the school's stated commitment to respect the rights of all students and to promote a positive, embracing academic and social environment. To be honest, the university's position seems surprisingly anachronistic; maybe I am being naive, but I really am at a loss as to how this could possibly be a contentious issue with the majority of students and staff. It's a rainbow! If people have a problem with it, perhaps tell them it's Pony Week or something.

Sometimes, though, bureaucracy trumps common sense; you may or may not be aware that this is the position being defended by university representatives. If there is something you can do (which I suspect there is), I would hope you take the lengths necessary to reverse this ill-thought, offensive decision. At the very least, I would be interested in knowing your position on the matter, because at the moment I am quite ashamed to be a UBC student. And isn't absence supposed to make the heart grow fonder?

—Simon Underwood
Arts 4

Basket-Birds remain predictable

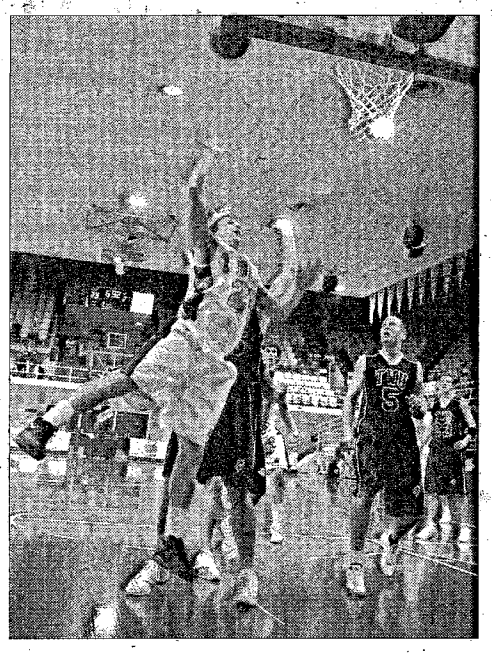
by Wilson Wong
SPORTS STAFF

LANGLEY—The good ol' UBC basketball teams, they are so predictable. If one had noticed some of the prevailing trends associated with both the men's and women's basketball teams, a wager or two could have resulted in some cold hard cash over the weekend.

In women's basketball, the match-up between Trinity Western and UBC went almost exactly like their first meeting back in early January, which saw the T-Birds easily defeat the Spartans.

Young and inexperienced in CIS competition, the Spartans stayed close but the talent of third-ranked UBC eventually took over and with the help of Kelsey Blair's double-double—22 points, 12 rebounds—the T-Birds clinched a 75-59 win on Friday night.

On Saturday night, UBC made team history, ensuring their best record since 1974 with their 14th win of the season. After taking a three-point lead into half-time, UBC proceeded to blow the Spartans out in the second half. In a performance that would make the cow pastures of Langley smell like perfume in comparison, the Spartans shot 18 per cent and scored 14 points in the second half to drop their sixth straight game, 62-39.



LAST TIME THEY MET: The UBC men took another split. PETER KLESKEN PHOTO

With an 18-point, nine-rebound performance on Saturday, Blair was the star of the weekend, although she was not quite satisfied with her team's play.

"We're playing some good defence and some good offence. Everything is there but we need to get it going all at once," said Blair after the series.

UBC needs to take Blair's advice when they finish off the season with games against Winnipeg and Manitoba this weekend. They sit second in Canada West with a 14-4 record but could fall as far down as fifth by season's end if they lose the rest of their games.

The men's basketball team won on Friday and lost on Saturday. And in losing on Saturday, the Thunderbirds dug themselves a deep hole before falling short in a valiant comeback attempt. That scenario has played out too many times lately for head coach Kevin Hanson.

Balanced scoring and good defence, as usual, was the key for UBC in their 74-63 win on Friday. Casey Archibald was the main target of the fans at Enarson Gym, getting booed every time he touched the ball. But he handled the attention well, scoring 20 points and grabbing eight rebounds. Pat McKay continued his resurgence scoring 16 points in only 19 minutes.

Having taken the Friday opener, the UBC men must have been dreading the return match the next night as they had only won one of the last seven Saturday games. And almost by design, UBC came out lame, shooting 30 per cent in the first. They trailed 42-24 at the half.

Trinity's lead would be at 24 points before UBC made their comeback. Sparked by Casey Archibald's 24 second-half points, the Birds closed the gap to one point with three and a half minutes left and looked to take the lead as Craig Rollins put up a three. The ball bounced in and out but unfortunately for UBC, that was the closest they would get. Clutch foul shooting allowed TWU to weather the UBC storm and to take the game 91-83.

"I'm certainly getting tired of the Saturday night performances on our part," said Hanson, who also indicated some possible solutions. "We're going to big-time it and we're going to have no cell phones allowed in the vans and talk straight basketball because it's our focus right now. We've addressed everything and it's got to come from the players now."

The UBC men stand second in the Pacific Division, tied with Trinity Western. A number of playoff scenarios, from UBC finishing first to them finishing fourth, are possible as the team looks towards their home games against Manitoba and Winnipeg. ❖

Volleyball leaves home

It was the last weekend at home for the men's volleyball team and they ended it with another split. Coming out strong on Friday, the Birds won 3-1 against Trinity Western University but struggled on Saturday, ending it with a 3-2 decision for Trinity.

Now 8-12 for the season, UBC is fighting for the sixth playoff spot. They must maintain their lead against Calgary who still has two games left to play to gain a playoff spot. UBC faces off against number one Alberta for their last two games and a Calgary loss next weekend would take off some of the pressure for the team.

Second-place battle

For the 17th time this season, the Thunderbird women's volleyball team struck gold. Competing at home against the last place Trinity Western Spartans, UBC had little to worry about and won both sets 3-0.

With a third place playoff spot already clinched, the Birds can only try to increase their end of season standing in their last games against the second place Alberta Pandas this weekend.

No more ice-dreams

Playoff hopes were dashed this weekend as the women's Thunderbird ice hockey team played their last two games. Playing the Manitoba Bisons, the women were out-shot 25-15 on Friday and lost 3-0. While this knocked them out of a playoff spot, the UBC women were determined not to give up efforts and on Saturday they recorded a 1-1 tie, putting them on par with the last two contenders for a playoff spot. With no more games left, UBC is unable to make the fourth playoff spot leaving it up to a battle between Manitoba and Lethbridge who both face each other this weekend.

It is likely that the Alberta Pandas will take the CanWest win as they are currently ranked first in the CIS and stand 15 points above the University of Regina in CanWest standings. ❖

ams Interactive

Comments? Questions? Concerns? Visit us on the web at www.ams.ubc.ca or email us at feedback@ams.ubc.ca.

THE RISING COST OF EDUCATION: TUITION

Are rising tuition costs getting you down? Is increased tuition becoming a barrier to your education? Has your quality of education improved with the tuition increases? Fill out our upcoming tuition survey and get involved in our letter writing campaign to let the university and provincial government know how rising tuition is affecting you. For more information on the AMS Tuition Campaign and on letter writing and the survey, visit **www.ams.ubc.ca/tuition**.

TODAY!

Attend the Tuition Debate featuring Claudia Hepburn from The Fraser Institute and Michael Gardiner from the Canadian Federation of Students. February 10, 2004 • 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm • SUB Norm Theatre.

For more information call (604) 822-2050 or e-mail *vpexternal@ams.ubc.ca*.

AMS/GSS HEALTH PLAN ASSISTANCE FUND

AMS/GSS HEALTH PLAN PREMIUM ASSISTANCE FUND: Apply by February 13th, 2004

Partial or full subsidy of the health plan fee ($124.67) is available on a need basis from the AMS and GSS for any NEW Term II students beginning their academic year in January who have not opted-out of the AMS/GSS Extended Health and Dental Plan.

If you are a returning student, you are NOT eligible for the bursary. Applications will be considered based on financial need.

Premiums for spouses and dependent children who are enrolled in the Plan are not eligible for reimbursement. If your spouse or dependent children are UBC or Regent College students, they should apply separately.

Application forms are available at **www.gss.ubc.ca/health** The deadline for application is February 13, 2004.

AMS JOBS

AMS Tutoring Services
Assistant Coordinator

The AMS Tutoring Services office is seeking an Assistant Coordinator for February – April, 2004.

Duties

- *Responsible for tutoring programs, tutoring workshops, the tutor registry and other initiatives.*
- *Assist in long term fund development for the service.*
- *Assist the coordinator in scheduling and new initiatives*

Time commitment: 10-15 hours per week throughout the year.
Term: February to April 2004.
Remuneration: $ 750-1000.

Please submit applications by February 10th, 2004 to: Laura Best, VP Academic & University Affairs, Chair of the AMS Appointments Committee. Room 248-6138 SUB Blvd., Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1.(604) 822-3092.

ams tutoring

AMS MINISCHOOL

Minischool course registration closes February 20th, 2004 at 4:30. Courses are filling up quickly so register soon to avoid disappointment! To register, visit the AMS Administration Office, SUB Room 266. For more information contact Minischool at *minischool@ams.ubc.ca* or phone (604) 822-9342. You can find a comprehensive list of courses at **www.ams.ubc.ca/services/mini_school.**

FACULTY FOOD FIGHT

Faculty Food Fight is a food drive put on by AMS Volunteer Connections from Monday, February 9 through to Thursday, February 12. All proceeds will go to the Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society. Defend your faculty by bringing your food and/or money donations to the SUB Main concourse during that week between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm. The faculty that brings in the most donations will be awarded the title of "Best Faculty at UBC."

For more information contact Volunteer Connections at *volunteers@ams.ubc.ca*.

AMS PRESENTS...

Erotic Bingo
The 2004 V-Day UBC campaign presents: Erotic Bingo - not your grandmother's bingo! Thursday, February 12, 2004 at the Gallery Lounge Doors at 7:30. $2 per card or 3 for $5. Check out our fun and sexy prizes!! All proceeds raised will go towards the 2004 UBC production of The Vagina Monologues.

Billy Talent
Tuesday, March 2, 2004 at the Pit Pub. Doors at 8:00 pm. Tickets are $15. Available through TicketMaster (www.ticketmaster.ca).
** Please note - Billy Talent has been postponed from its original date to March 2.*

VALENTINE'S GIFTS...

Valentine's Shopping in the SUB. Valentine Gift Fair - February 11, 12, 13, 2004 - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Main Concourse, SUB. One stop shopping in SUB for Valentines gifts...chocolates, jewelry, lingerie, accessories, etc.

WANT MORE INFO?

Sign up for our electronic newsletter The AMS Interactive, and we'll send you updates on all the latest events and issues that affect you. To sign up visit www.ams.ubc.ca.

Filc stellar in Bird and Bear showdown

"Tie is just as good as the win" says coach Milan Dragicevic

by Dan McRoberts
SPORTS STAFF

The UBC Thunderbird men's hockey team came agonisingly close to erasing 16 years of losing tradition on Saturday night, but still managed to pull off an impressive comeback tie against the Alberta Golden Bears—the top team in the country. The Thunderbirds have not defeated the Golden Bears here in Vancouver since 1987, and although that streak continues, head coach Milan Dragicevic was not disheartened.

"We would have liked to have the win—but against Alberta, to be down 4-2 and tie is just as good as the win," he said.

The point UBC earned for its heroic effort will also loom large in the final two weekends of the regular season, as the Birds were able to extend their lead over Lethbridge in their battle for the final playoff spot in Canada West.

BACK AT PRACTICE: With playoffs only two games away, the T-Birds turn up the pressure during practice time to try and win the last playoff spot. MICHELLE MAYNE PHOTO

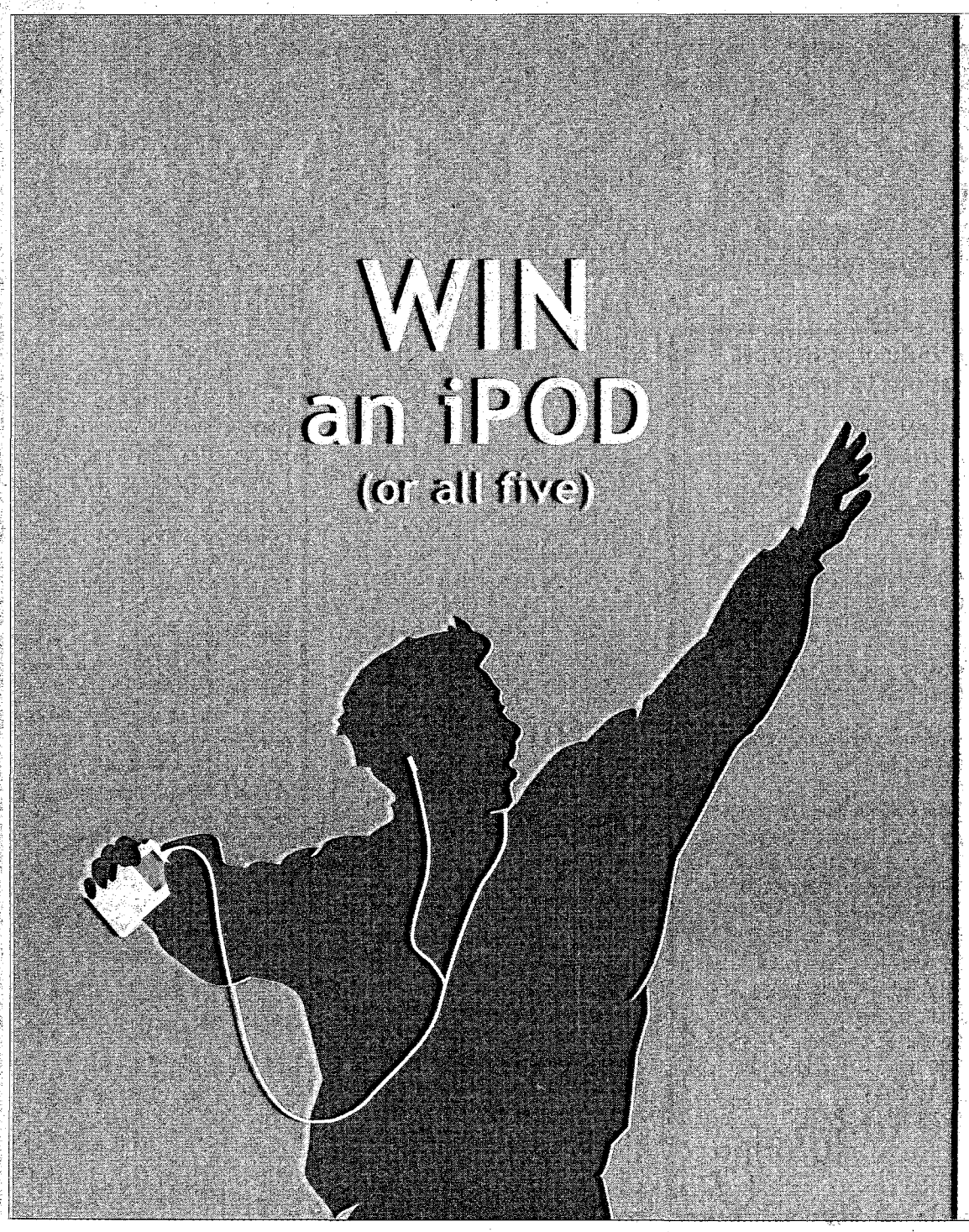
Saturday's 4-4 result is especially impressive in light of how badly the Birds struggled against those same Golden Bears the previous evening, losing 7-1. With the tie, UBC becomes only the second team all year to tie Alberta, which is still undefeated.

The entire Thunderbird team can share the credit for the comeback, but one man in blue and gold deserves to be first among equals. Facing a barrage of rubber all night, Robert Filc stood tall in the UBC goal, making 49 saves on 53 shots. After allowing Alberta's fourth goal early in the second, Filc was unbeatable, making several acrobatic stops as the visitors stormed the crease, looking to put the game out of reach.

"Rob [Filc] really gave us a chance to win," said Dragicevic after the game. "He was outstanding."

With their netminder providing an impenetrable last line of defence, the Birds were able to push forward in attack with greater confidence and in the third period their aggressive forechecking paid off. A fine bit of offensive-zone work from Eric Clark led to a tap in for Ryan Thrussel, and the Birds were within one. Just minutes later, the game was tied with the home team on a power play, as Steve Wilejto took advantage of a defensive miscue by Alberta and snapped home the equalizer. With the result still undecided, the Thunderbirds poured forward, seeking to become the spoilers in Alberta's quest for an undefeated season. The Golden Bears fell back into a defensive shell, and although they managed to escape unscathed, it was UBC who had the better opportunities in the final moments and overtime.

The Birds gained much more than a point on Saturday. The tie was an enormous confidence boost going into this weekend's games in Lethbridge where the race for the final playoff spot will likely be decided. "We have to cut back our shots against," observed Dragicevic," and our special teams have to continue to play the way they did this weekend." If UBC can manage that and Filc is capable of maintaining his dazzling save percentage, then the Birds should be playoff-bound a week from now. ❖



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