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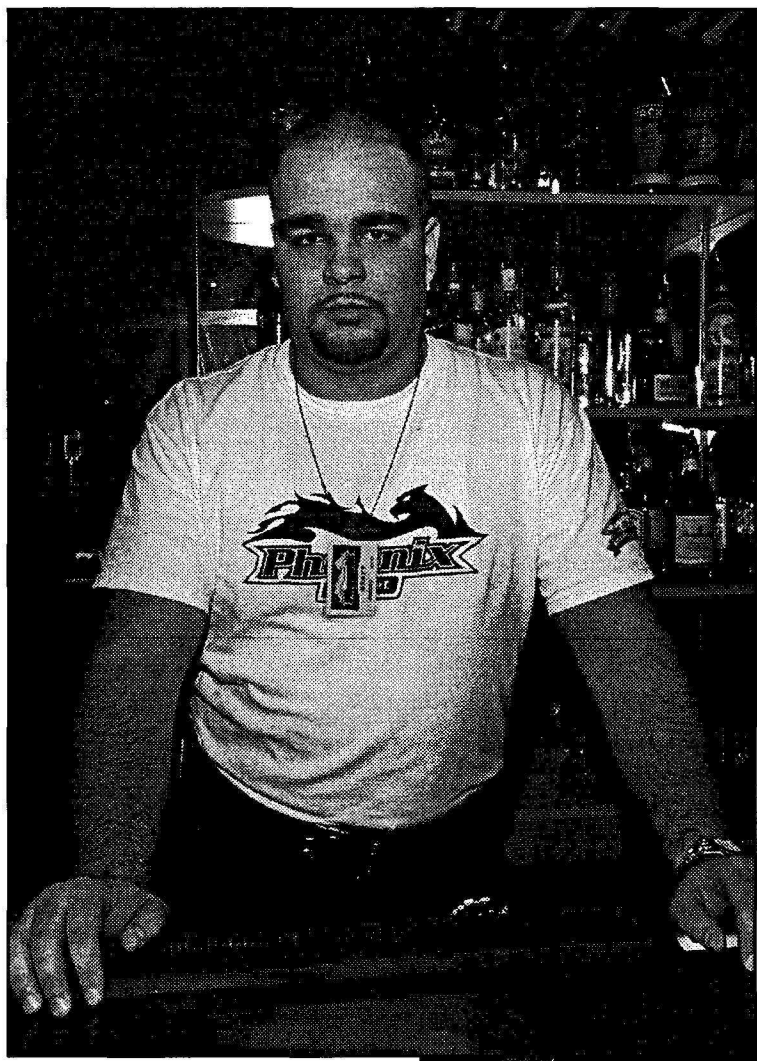
Blood on the dance floor

Nightclubs can be a place of mystery and music, and now murder. Two nightclub managers deal with the violence.

by Sarah Galashan



TAKE AIM: Ryan James (top) and Dale McRitchie have set their sights on maintaining their respective businesses despite bad press arising from recent murders. RICHARD LAM PHOTOS

Vancouver's club scene is not what it used to be. For Dale McRitchie it's recently become a nightmare. As manager of Madison's nightclub he's had to deal with two murders in less than two months, something he didn't expect when he started at the club 18 years ago.

"I've never been struck by lightning in my life, but in the last 30 days I've been struck twice," he says.

The most recent incident was the sad end to a bar brawl that spilled out onto the sidewalk. The several young men involved got more than just the top 40 tunes played on Woozy nights—the name given to Saturday nights at Madison's. And 19 year-old Doan Minh Vu—shot at close range in the forehead—got more than he ever bargained for.

McRitchie was working that night.

"It happened so fast. These events just happen so fast," he says.

McRitchie called the cops as soon as the kids were kicked out, but only minutes later a shot was fired from a sport utility vehicle stopped outside the club. Cuong Manh Nguyen, 21, and Gurmit Singh Dhak, 20, were arrested and charged with second degree murder.

McRitchie called the cops as soon as the kids were kicked out, but only minutes later a shot was fired from a sport utility vehicle that had stopped outside the club.

"I'm quite sure that the gentlemen who were involved in the shooting, that their lives are over. What they thought they were doing prior to the event and now after the event are totally different things," McRitchie says.

Some managers are now worried that kids will be turned-off from clubbing. But seasoned managers like McRitchie say these events don't hurt business that much.

"[The violence] does have a short term effect, but not that much," he said. "Actually, business usually goes up."

Many club managers are blaming the violence on the music. It's life imitating art, they say.

Ryan James, the new manager of the Phoenix, one of many other night clubs that share the Richards strip, says certain nights require tighter security. He believes that some of the music, namely hip hop, is creating a violent atmosphere.

He's not the only one that sees the relationship. The Palladium, just up the street, has cancelled its hip hop night after gang leader Bindy Johal was shot on the dance floor while the DJ spun records.

But you can't just stop the music, says Madison's McRitchie.

"Sure, everybody is blaming it on hip hop, but it's beyond that. It's a certain small bad apple in the bunch who just happens to show up on that particular night because the image of that music is violent. But Rock n' Roll was the same way 20 years ago," points out McRitchie, adding that the most recent shooting happened on a night when top 40 dance music was played.

And despite three recent high profile incidents, police spokesperson Anne Drennan says violence in Vancouver's dance clubs is not on the rise.

"There has been several high profile incidents in the clubs in the last few months definitely, but overall I don't think that it's on the rise in clubs," says Drennan.

Like the December murder of Bindy Johal at the Palladium nightclub, and the January stabbing outside Madison's, this recent shooting received its fair share of media attention.

According to Drennan, the attention makes the situation seem worse than it is.

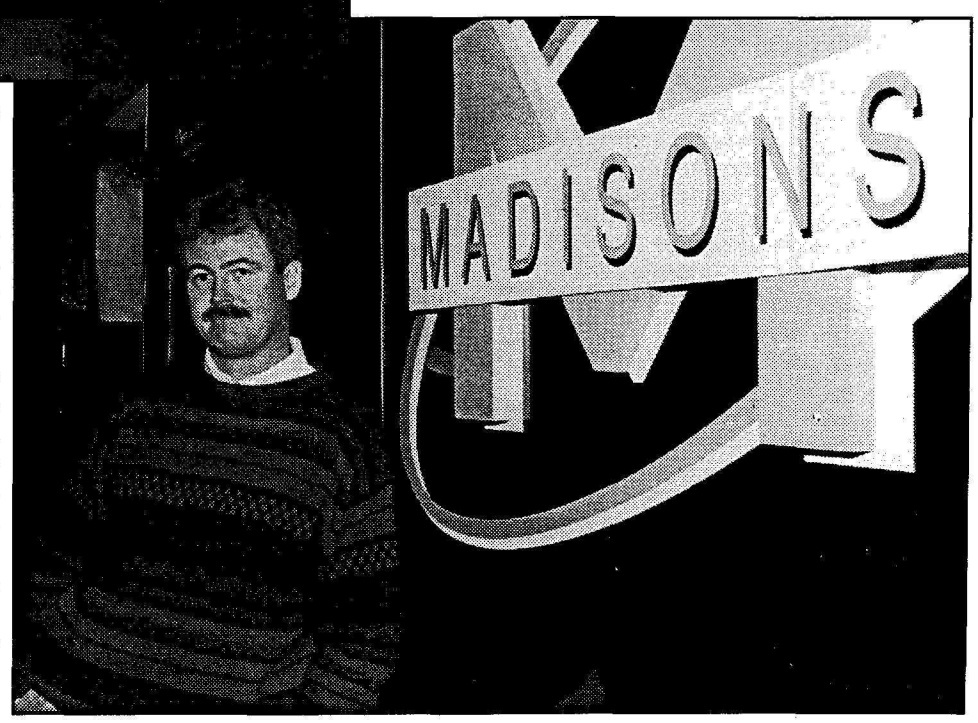
Both bar managers agree nightclubs have always seen random violence, but they admit the behavior has become dangerously aggressive.

Madison's is beefing up security with more surveillance cameras both inside and out. Bouncers will be keeping a close eye on things—the nightclub has always used metal detectors.

"In terms of violence in nightclubs, nothing is different now than it was, say, 20 years ago. It's just that now there's more people going to clubs and there's more guns involved," says James.

Still they can't toss out anyone without just cause. The night before Johal was shot and killed he was told to leave Madison's and, in light of what happened at the Palladium, McRitchie stands by that call.

He says Madison's will survive the bad press it's gotten recently. Vancouver Mayor Philip Owen recently withdrew comments that he would try to have Madison's license revoked.



Meanwhile, Madison's is still open for business, says McRitchie.

"I'm hoping, obviously, that this won't happen to anybody else, but I can guarantee that it will happen."❖

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WINNIPEG (CUP)—"There's such thing as a deadline."

Playing for time

by Jeremy Nelson

These seven words are the credo of Mike Kolbus, a history student at the University of Winnipeg. While most students occasionally put off writing an assignment, Kolbus, 21, makes it his sworn duty to hand in the majority of his assignments late. You might go so far as to say he is a professional procrastinator.

Since beginning his bachelor's degree four years ago, Kolbus has managed to make deadlines only four times. "I'll always be a procrastinator," says Kolbus. "I was born late and I'll die late—that's just the way it is."

Asked why he views deadlines as suggestions, not hard-and fast rules, Kolbus simply laughs. "Because I can. In high school the extensions had to be fought for really hard—they were really rigid and stupid there.

"I think one of the most valuable things I've learned in university is how to negotiate stuff, like how to hand in a paper a week late without being penalised."

Although few students are as comfortable dragging their feet as Kolbus, his difficulty with time management isn't unique. Depending on the definition of procrastination and the university in question, studies have suggested that between 40 and 80 per cent of students dilly-dally regularly.

"It's certainly the most common problem among university students," says Lilly Walker, chief psychologist at the University of Manitoba's counselling service.

"For some people procrastination is a lifestyle and it just causes them a bit of stress. But for some individuals it destroys their academic performance and with it, their career possibilities."

Procrastination can also leave deep emotional scars as students gradually lose faith in their abilities because of low grades and missed opportunities.

"The guilt is so self-destructive that it can have really serious side effects if it isn't dealt with," Walker adds. "Lack of self-esteem and faith in oneself are the psychological consequences of long-term procrastination."

Simply defined, procrastination is letting low-priority tasks get in the way of high-priority obligations. For some, this means watching television instead of cleaning the house, or going to a bar instead of studying for an exam.

For Kolbus, putting off studying involves any number of distractions.

"I'll do just about anything when I'm procrastinating," he says with a laugh. "When I've got a lot of essays due, my room is probably the cleanest it will ever be. My friends find I'm the most willing to go out and drop everything around exam time. Basically, I'll do anything rather than do an unpleasant thing like write an essay."

While the definition of procrastination may be simple, the root of the problem is often complex, ranging from poor time-management skills to low self-esteem.

But Walker says that while most procrastinators have several reasons for delaying unpleasant obligations, they generally fit into four categories: the perfectionist, the postponer, the politician and the punisher.

Perfectionists set such high goals for themselves that they delay projects until they're in the perfect frame of mind; even then their intense fear of failure often holds them back. Creative and astute, they often slip into fantasies as a way of putting off unpleasant or unexpected situations.

Mark Saunders graphic

Then there are postponers, who live for the moment because they find routines and structures confining. These ditherers thrive on the difficult situations caused by deadlines, and use procrastination as a way to avoid feeling responsible for their own destiny.

People whose self-perception is based on what others think of them fall into the politician category. They worry so much about disappointing others that they take on more work than they can handle, and then stall for fear of not meeting people's expectations.

Punishers are overly self-critical people who are prone to jump to extreme conclusions. They overestimate others' abilities and underestimate their own, thus producing feelings of worthlessness and cynicism about their ability to manage their own life.

Whichever category procrastinators fall into, they all thrive on the pressure that comes with playing for time until the last possible moment.

Kolbus says if an essay is due in a month he'll sit in front of his computer for hours and only write one page, but if it's due in two days he can write the entire thing in just a few hours.

"I have no idea why that is but it seems to work," he says. "Pressure is what I need."

Walker says procrastinators require pressure because they're addicted to the feeling of conquering seemingly impossible odds. "The pressure charges them up, gives them an adrenaline rush and lets them stay up all night to get their essay or project done," she says. "The rush, coupled with the sense of victory, are both very powerful motivators for the practiced

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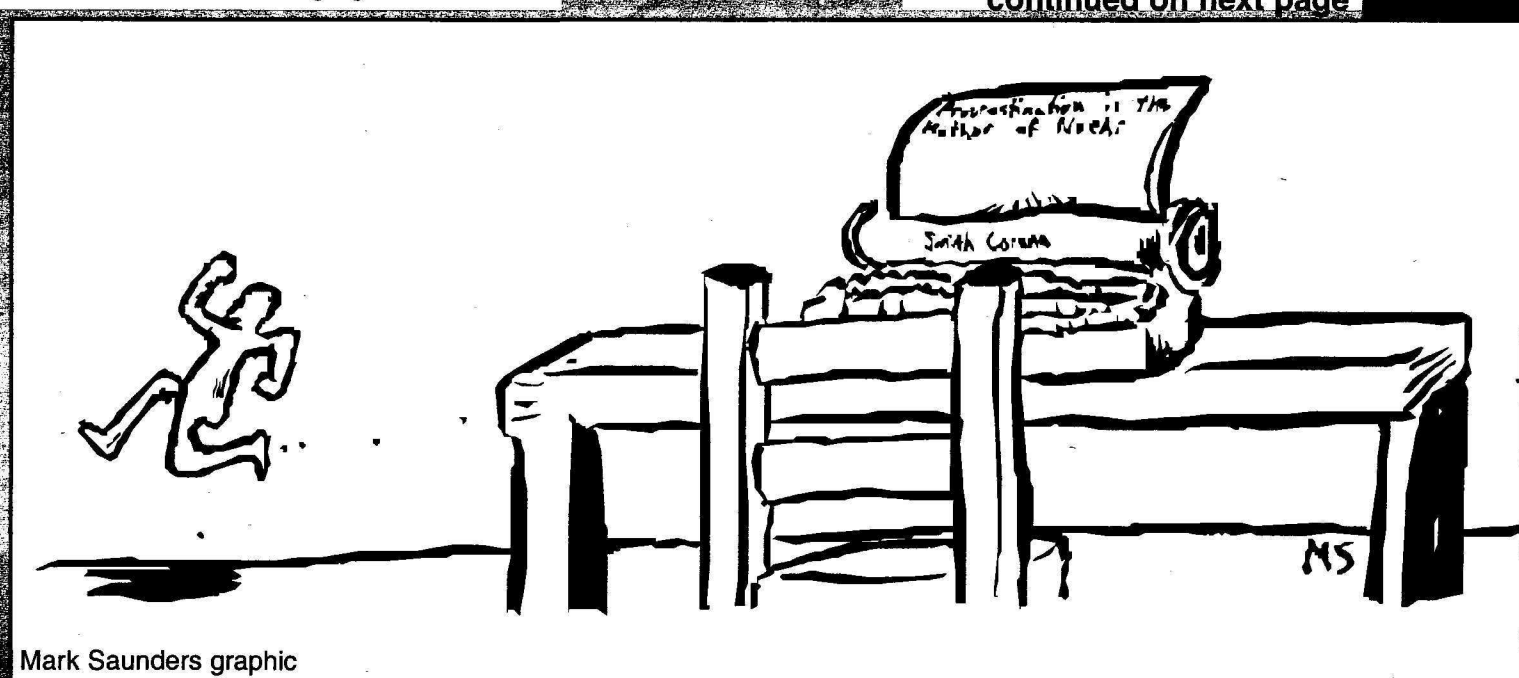

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continued from page 3

procrastinator."

The best way to counter this, she says, is for the procrastinator to find other ways to get a rush. "Until those pressures come, they can't get their motivation up," she explains. "So what we tell them to due is to chop their deadlines into chunks. Rather than having a paper with a big deadline, make mini-deadlines with the parts: have a deadline for when your research has to be done, when your draft has to be written and when your final copy is due."

Aside from addiction to pressure, Walker says the university environment—which she terms a "procrastination system"—also prompts students to put things off until the last minute. The lack of a rigid structure in university allows students to drag their feet instead of learning valuable time-management skills.

"If I've got a plane to catch at 8:30, I know that it leaves at 8:30 so I'm there on time to catch it—there's no flexibility in those sorts of things. But if you give me flexibility on something then I'm going to take advantage of it," says Kolbus.

For many students, university marks the first time they're free of formal structures—and the first time they can take charge of their own future. For some, this freedom spurs them to take control of their time and gain a sense of empowerment from doing so. But for others, it means learning to procrastinate.

While procrastinators can get away with humming and hawing for some time, Walker says the habit eventually catches up with them and makes them reconsider their ways.

"The only reason we change anything is when we meet a crisis," she explains. "It could be a small crisis or a big one, but it is always something. As long as procrastination is costing less than the benefits, then procrastinators will keep putting off their responsibilities."

"So what we tell them to due is to chop their deadlines into chunks. Rather than having a paper with a big deadline, make mini-deadlines with the parts: have a deadline for when your research has to be done, when your draft has to be written and when your final copy is due."

—Lilly Walker
Chief psychologist at the University of Manitoba's counselling service

Jeanna Struntinsky, coordinator of the University of Manitoba's peer advisors centre, agrees. She says many students make the mistake of dismissing minor crises instead of dealing with them before major problems arise.

"Around exams and mid-terms a lot more people come to the peer advisors offices [with procrastination problems]," she says.

"A lot the time all we need to do is take people back to the basics and tell them that they really need to schedule their time better instead of cramming it in at the last minute—common sense stuff that people need gentle reminders about."

Walker says that when procrastinators realise their stalling tactics are no longer paying off, they must deal with their habit the right way. Rather than feeling guilty about missed opportunities, students should realise they can deal with their procrastination relatively easily.

"You have to face yourself," Walker says. "Admit you are a procrastinator and realise what areas are causing your problems. Then, consult with either a counsellor or a book to understand the particular roots of your procrastination and what you can do to correct it."

Most procrastinators simply have never learned proper time-management skills, she adds. But once they develop these basic abilities, they quickly recover.

"Time management is simply a system of taking your time, figuring out where you waste it, and taking control of that time so you have it when you need it," Walker says.

"Make a list of three things you are avoiding doing and then do them for at least 10 minutes first thing in the morning. If you get in the habit of getting them out of the way first thing in the morning, you'll find the remainder of your day will be much more enjoyable."

Kolbus insists he'll always be a procrastinator. But since his crisis last year he's learned to manage his time a bit better. While he still regularly seeks extensions, he now stays on top of his assignments and does at least some of the work before hand.

"It's just one of those things that you have to get slowly into," he says. "I think it's normal to procrastinate in university but what you learn at some point is that it is not necessary to pull an all-nighter. You don't need to abuse your body like that—it screws up your sleeping patterns and that's far from healthy."❖

essays suck

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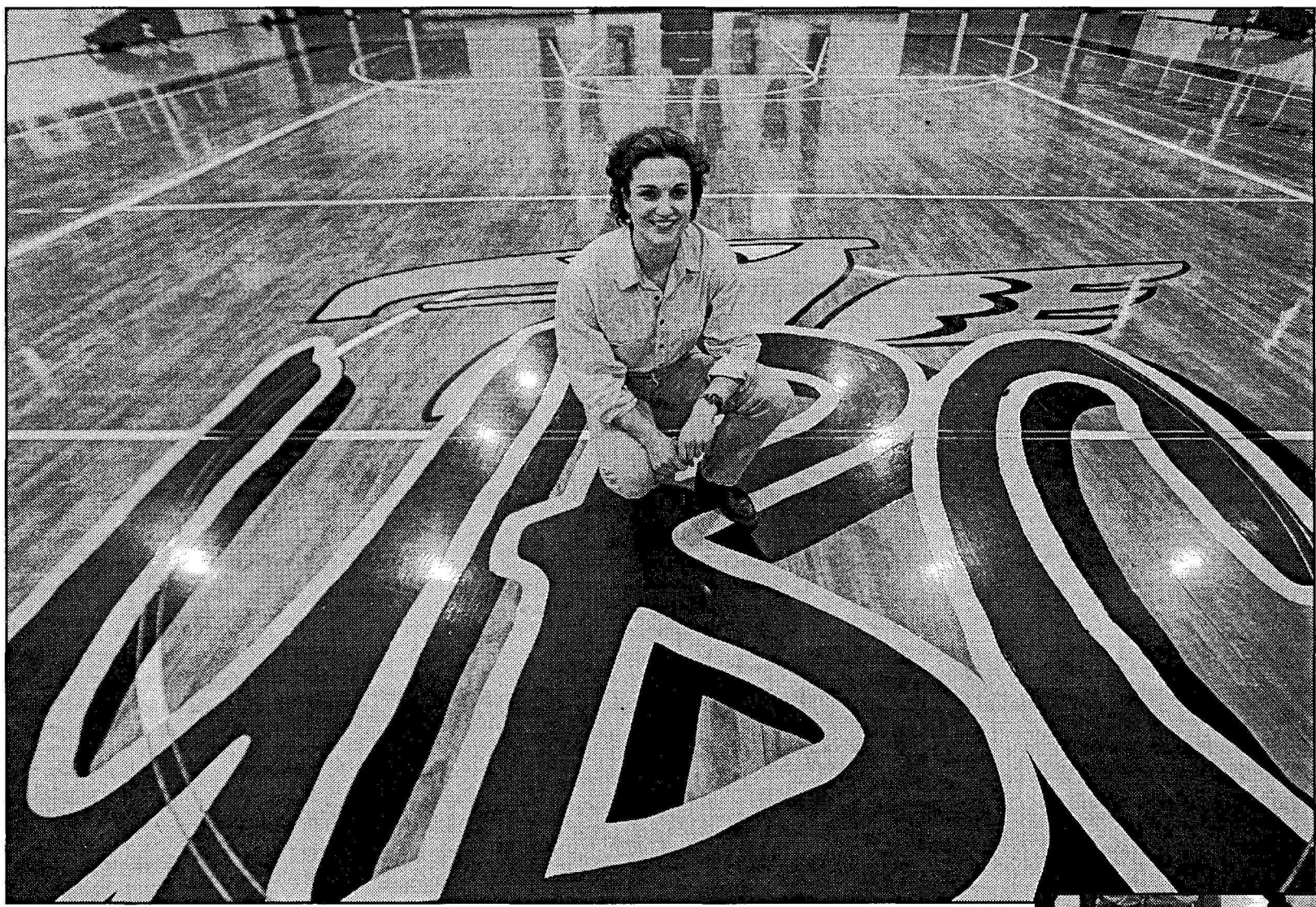
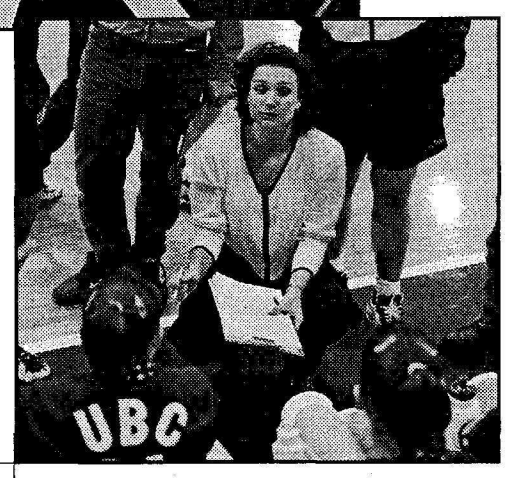


THE BEST INTERIM HEAD COACH YOU CAN FIND: Erminia Russo has amassed a 34-10 regular-season record in two years at UBC, and the women's volleyball team is number one in the country. But with regular head coach Doug Reimer returning from the national team after next year, Russo is faced with finding another place to be.
RICHARD LAM PHOTOS

The top of her game



Erminia Russo is one of the top volleyball coaches in Canada. But not for too much longer

by Bruce Arthur

She's the best player on the floor, and she knows it. She is possibly in the best physical condition of her life. She is intense, she is self-assured, and she is in control.

She'd better be. She's the coach.

* * *

Erminia Russo has it good. She coaches UBC's number-one women's volleyball team in a city that she loves. Plus she can still play top-level World Tour beach volleyball in the summertime. Only 34 years old, and at the top of her professions. Pretty good.

Unfortunately, it's nearly over.

Russo was a lame-duck coach the second she arrived at UBC in 1997, and that was fine. When she took the coaching reigns at UBC from Doug Reimer, who was departing to coach the Canadian national team, it was never forever. In her first year, UBC went 16-6 and won the Canada West finals over the three-time defending champion University of Alberta Pandas only to fall to the Pandas in the national semifinals. For that effort, Russo won the national Coach of the Year award.

"The fact that she got Coach of the Year so fast is amazing," says fifth-year middle blocker Janna Lunam. "She doesn't accept us playing poorly even if we win."

This year, UBC is riding higher still. The Thunderbirds are 13-3 and are ranked number one in Canada, and have only to sweep the 2-10 University of Regina Cougars to host the Canada West finals in their bid for their first national title since 1978. But for Erminia Russo, next year will be her last as head coach of the UBC women's volleyball team, and maybe of any team.

"If I get out of coaching [university volleyball], I would get out of coaching completely, which is kind of sad," she says. "But that's the way it goes. I knew coming into this position that this was the way it was."

How it was, or is, is that Russo may be the world's best caretaker. She was handed the keys to a top-notch program from a top-notch coach, and the program hasn't missed a beat.

"I think everyone just really respects her a lot," says fourth-year power hitter Barb Bellini. "Every player totally, really takes everything she says to heart because she's developed such a good relationship with everyone. She's totally earned that respect."

That respect also comes from coaching in the Canada West, currently the toughest league in Canada.

"It's a pressure cooker," says assistant coach Paul Funk. "If she can coach Canada West, she can coach anywhere in Canada."

> **"I think everyone just really respects her a lot. Every player totally, really takes everything she says to heart because she's developed such a good relationship with everyone. She's totally earned that respect."**
>
> **—Barb Bellini**
> **fourth-year power hitter**

But Erminia Russo doesn't want to coach just anywhere. After a vagabond lifestyle that has sent her around the world more times than she knows, one that has seen her live in four cities since university, Russo has found a home. She likes it here. But she can't be a university volleyball head coach here. She was offered SFU's head coaching job at the same time as she was offered three years at UBC. Which school she would choose wasn't even a question.

"It was worth it to be here for three years," she says. "I'd like to stay in Vancouver, which obviously limits my coaching opportunities. If I want to coach, I'm going to do it as a professional. The reality is that Doug is coming back, [but] for me to uproot, it'd have to be a fairly significant type of position."

And she could go anywhere. But she's traveled enough and she's moved enough, so a stable home base is a pretty appealing prospect. This summer, she and University of Toronto head coach Christine Drakich will play beach volleyball in Mexico, Toronto, Thailand, France, Portugal, Japan and China. It makes it pretty hard hard to put down roots.

"That would explain why I don't want to move again," she laughs. "Up to a certain point, which is this point, you don't want to do it again."

* * *

Russo has been this good at what she does because she knows hard work. Her parents came to Canada from Italy 47 years ago, settled in Kelowna, and raised seven children by doing whatever needed to be done. They worked, they sweated, they worked. Whatever needed to be done.

"My father worked 28 years in a sawmill," she says matter-of-factly. "Hated it, worked 28 years in a sawmill. But this is not a sad story—it's just a great thing, I think, that they were able to instill in us."

Russo is the sixth of those seven kids, the last of the five girls. But of all those athletic, bright kids, she is the one who has gone shooting out into the world. After a strong high school career at KLO Secondary, she came to UBC in 1982, and she played volleyball. In only her second year she was named a second-team All-Canadian, and the next year she made the first team.

It was then that the national team came calling, and she moved to Regina to train full-time. And boy, she did train. Six days a week, 12 months a year, from 1985 to 1991. She was never a spectacular player, but she was good enough to change over from outside to setter—a transition that is nearly unheard of at that level of play. Again, whatever needed to be done.

Between trips to tournaments and championships all over the world, Russo worked her body and her mind, pushed harder and harder, but Canada failed to qualify for either the 1988 or 1992 Olympics. So in 1991, at the age of 27, Russo changed gears and went

continued on next page

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continued from page 5

all the way to Strasbourg, France, to play semi-pro volleyball. But while there, she applied for a few coaching positions, and the University of Western Ontario came calling. And Russo, coaching for the first time in her life, made it work.

"We did OK first year, and second year we won bronze in Ontario, which was the first time that had happened in like 15 years," she says.

But the siren song of the Olympics again came calling—the national team asked her back to train in Winnipeg for the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, and she couldn't say no. Two good years of coaching couldn't compare to seven years of Team Canada. So Russo started to train. She had been working out—she calls the three months that she abandoned exercise "the worst experience of my life"—but it was still a long way back.

"It was tough," she grimaces. "I had actually worked pretty hard to get back into shape, [but] volleyball is one of those sports, no matter how hard you train outside, the jarring, the agility stuff, the stop-start—it's really hard on your body."

"Sometimes it's tough to be in the gym when you've done it. I was in the gym for 20 years as a player, and I'm still in the gym every night and every weekend. That's just hard on your life."

—Erminia Russo

Not only was it a hard road to get into playing shape, but Russo was again a power hitter. A shoulder that had been rested for two years was thrust back into action, and the tendons screamed. She thought that eventually it would need surgery, but she played, and Canada finished ninth in the world. She still wears the Olympic ring—when she doesn't have to hit balls, of course.

* * *

Her beach volleyball career may peak with the 2000 Sydney Olympics—she and her playing partner Drakich are currently on the bubble for qualification. But afterwards, her playing career is likely done.

If she does walk away, she will be justified. Erminia Russo has spent a lifetime on the volleyball court.

"Sometimes it's tough to be in the gym when you've done it. I was in the gym for 20 years as a player, and I'm still in the gym every night and every weekend. That's just hard on your life."

She has been in transition forever, from UBC to Regina, from Regina all over the world and back again, then to France, to Western, to Winnipeg, and to UBC. It is time to settle down. She doesn't know what will come, but she will be ready to do what is necessary to make it work.

"I know that this is happening, so I'll have a year to sort of explore," she says. "[Establishing roots] has been tough, but I definitely in the last little while have made a better effort. You have to work at it." She pauses. "Nothing comes easy. You have to work hard at everything."

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by Michael Chang

They said I was too small, didn't have the strength and wouldn't cut it on the pro tennis circuit. I'll admit, it's been tough, really tough. When I won my first Grand Slam title, it would've been easy to become conceited and get caught up in the money, fame and glamour of winning. But having a relationship with Jesus has made all the difference. I realize that God, through Jesus Christ, gives me the strength to do what I do. When I keep my focus on him, I always have the joy he alone can give—both on and off the court.

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[Capitol Records]

This is the kind of thing that makes you go "huh?" The harsh speed electronica of Fluke next to the easy-listening vibe of Bonnie Raitt. Bran Van 3000's "Drinking in LA" partnered up with another of Chet Baker's takes on his signature tune, "Everything Happens to Me." James Bond composer John Barry side by side with a mournful PJ Harvey. What *were* they thinking?

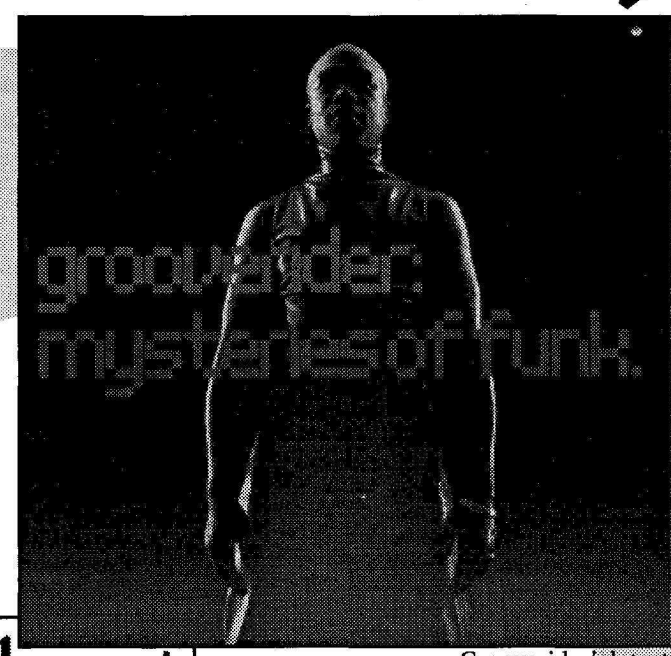
I suppose the 'diversity' of the *Playing by Heart* soundtrack is an attempt at representing the film's numerous generations, but it comes off as the work of a schizophrenic soundtrack coordinator. It's not that the songs are bad; in fact, most of them are middling to quite good. It's just that they don't work together.

Moby cooks up another one of his soundtrack tunes (I think he's on his fifteenth soundtrack now), while Ben Lee brings a neat little song that's better than most of his recent sophomore album. And though I'd rather drink laundry detergent than suffer through Ed Kowalczyk (of Live) and Neneh Cherry's "Walk Into This Room," there's a couple new tracks by Fluke and Cracker to ease the pain. John Barry's work is impressive, as usual, and meshes nicely with the laid back ambience of Chet Baker and the Charlie Haden Quartet West's "Everything Happens to Me."

Still, this is all beside the point. The songs on the album are fine, it's just that I can't think of anyone who'd actually buy the album. You'll have a hard time coming up with a reason to spend money on this, because the *Playing by Heart* soundtrack is really just an extremely confused mixtape.

—John Zaozirny

Smoky space bar funk



GROOVERIDER—MYSTERIES OF FUNK
[Columbia Records]

I usually don't get into an album, or at least, I usually don't feel myself transported anywhere. But the first half of *Mysteries of Funk* had me imagining myself in a dark smoky space bar on some barren planet. There I was, in a black zoot suit, listening to "Rainbows of Colour," "On the Double," and "Time & Space."

Grooverider's latest is best described as a slightly tranced, jazz meets drum 'n' bass mix, but with tracks like"Where's Jack the Ripper?" the album takes a hard turn into the realm of canned trance. And then, *Bang*! "Fly with Me" all but derails the groove—get a nail and scratch this track out. Thankfully, "C Funk" heads back to the original funk of the record, flavoured with a hint of trance.

But, unfortunately, annoying vocals and an abrasive rhythm make up the remainder of *Mysteries of Funk*. I couldn't get through some of the tracks without feeling as if my ears had been flushed clean with a highly corrosive acid.

Definitely an interesting sound, but this isn't an album I'd want to listen to over and over again. If you aren't a fan of jazzy drum 'n' bass, don't even bother.

—Keith Turkowsk

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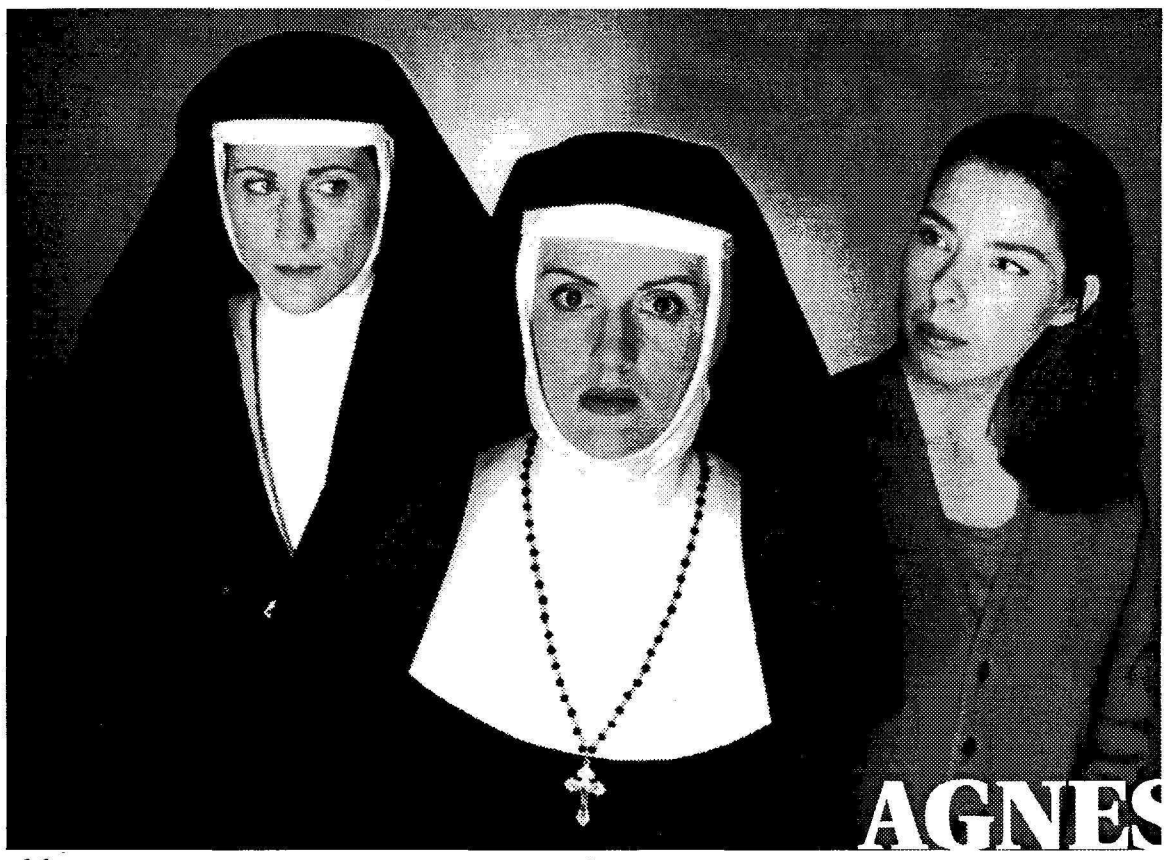

GETTING THE HABI
Katharin
Venour (
stars in A
God with
Chiarelli
(left) an
Wittenbe

AGNES by D O

"In every story, there is a happy ending. It just depends on how deeply you look for it." These are the words of Dr. Martha Livings trist assigned to a young and near killing her own newborn baby.

playing a
Pacific Th
until Feb

As the play un
story along is
these characte

THE LONG MARCH HOME: Nick Nolte (left) and Willem Dafoe (right) star in Affliction.

Nolte explodes in his Oscar nominated performance as Wade Whitehorse—the local sherriff whose life takes a constant downward turn

AFFLICTION
Opens today
At Fifth Avenu

Wade Whiteho
wards. He's th
duties include
the crosswalk.
able around h
painful divorce
Affliction tells
in a cycle
admirably by N
man haunted b
of his father's
normal life in t
town of Lawton

Renowned
human psych
screenwriter o
Bull, combines
Russell Bank
Affliction, to
thoughtful stor

Numerous themes emerge throughout th
lain with the deep psychological impact of W
acts as the distant voice of reason, narrating

As Wade's world slowly shatters before hin
His already low life sinks even lower, and thi
to be, his own abusive father. Wade's alcoho
unrelenting stance. James Coburn delivers a
of his children. Growing up in a male-domin

As Wade Whitehouse, Nick Nolte explode
of movie credits behind him, Nolte proves th
ing physique. The little problems which con
ordinary man helplessly driven to violence.

Wade Whitehouse knows the difference b
no simple answers. *Affliction* neither conden
Through *Affliction*, Schrader tackles the issu
not a simple story: it is a life-long affliction.

ETTING INTO
HE HABIT:
atharine
enour (centre)
tars in Agnes of
od with Gina
hiarelli and
eft) and Anita
Vittenberg.

THREE WISE MEN: Kevin Spenst (left), David Purvis (centre), and Young (right) star in Rosencrantz and Gildenstern are Dead.

y Duncan M. McHugh

OF GOD at the Theatre b 27th

igstone, a cynical psychia-ar-angelic nun accused of

lay unfolds, more and more questions arise. But the "whodunit" that moves the ong is really just a springboard for an examination of these characters. And it is aracters that make *Agnes of God* as gripping as it is.

As a "recovering Catholic" myself, I wasn't quite sure how I was going to respond to two hours of watching nuns. Mind you, I think playwright John Pielmeier would have probably felt the same way, had he not written the play. What he has crafted here is a metaphor for the modern, urban, psychiatric world versus the spiritual, unquestioning, Catholic world debate. Pielmeier makes full use of the three characters, and doesn't settle for stereotypes.

First, we have Dr Livingstone, whose monologues are the center of the play. She is a chain-smoking, nun-hating, court-appointed psychiatrist, and is determined to find the logical truth to what happened to Agnes, the nun who swears she doesn't remember either giving birth or the murder.

Dr. Livingstone is up against Mother Miriam Ruth, a fast-talking but extremely protective Mother Superior who is bent on sheltering Agnes from the outside world. Both of these characters have experienced very different lives: Dr. Livingstone as a Catholic and Mother Miriam as an unhappy housewife—and it's Agnes that provides a foil for both of them.

So what about our eponymous heroine? Agnes is completely naïve —her natural mother kept her sealed off from the world, and Mother Miriam wouldn't mind maintaining the separation. Yet Agnes' faith and singing elicit nothing short of wonderment. It is through her apparent simplicity that the complexity of the play's other characters show through.

Obviously with only three actors, the play's success is contingent upon the quality of the performances, and in nearly every respect, the acting is stellar. Gina Chiarelli plays Mother Miriam eyebrow raised and with a dry-witted one-liner ready to fire. But Chiarelli also keeps the maternal and spiritual side of her character ever-present.

I can't be quite so flattering of Anita Wittenberg's Dr. Livingstone. Her performance seems forced and occasionally slips into melodrama, something the other actors do an excellent job of sidestepping. Nonetheless, she does an adequate job portraying a very complicated character.

However, no one can touch Katharine Venour's Agnes. With the voice of an angel and a radiance to match, her Agnes is completely captivating. Dealing with some potientally over-the-top material, Venour keeps her performance grounded in intensity and introspection. And let me tell you, Agnes is one habit I wouldn't mind getting into, ho hum, er... sorry. Sorry.

Agnes of God, is a compelling psychological drama, interspersed with humour and supremely entertaining. There is more here than meets the eye and as the play unravels it becomes more and more gripping. I recommend this play highly, recovering Catholic or otherwise. Perhaps there isn't a happy ending, but what remains with the audience is much more powerful.❖

by Camilla Lade

One adjective comes to mind when I try to describe the United Players of Vancouver's production of Tom Stoppard's play: flat. The play is based largely on the plot of Hamlet, so if one is not familiar with that story, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* is quite confusing. And while Stoppard's play deserves a lively interpretation, this version is quite subdued. Not to say that there isn't a fine effort put forth by the cast—everyone is very dedicated to their parts—it's just that neither the plot nor the characters are engaging enough.

It might have been the interpretation of the script or the acting, but, whatever the case, the play did not work. I was left fidgeting in my chair and checking my watch for the second half, which should have been the engaging climax to the story.

There are some humorous moments where the wit in Stoppard's dialogue shines through—in particular, any scenes involving the Acting Troupe or the Player (played by Andrew MacBeth) come off well. Unfortunately, the same can't be said for the main actors. David Young, who plays Guildenstern, even forgot his lines at one point in the first act, though he redeemed himself in the second half with a committed performance. And, although Kevin Spenst does a solid job as a weak, weepy Rosencrantz, it would have been far more interesting to see more energy put into the role.

Sadly, many other weak spots mar the production, which perhaps needed more inspiration and polish. It's far too difficult to understand what Claudius is saying, and by the end of the play I was left to wonder what nationality he was, seeing as Hamlet is set in Denmark with a Danish royal family. And the mimed actions, which aim to tell the story and give some relief from the wordy dialogue, simply aren't interesting or even appropriate.

Unfortunately, what this production of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern* sorely needs is greater coherency, tighter delivery, and a livelier interpretation of this very good play.❖

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD

At the Jericho Arts Centre Runs until Feb 28

TION
oday
Avenue cinemas.

by Naomi Kim

affliction

Whitehouse's life only leads down-He's the local town sheriff, whose nclude plowing snow and guarding swalk. His daughter is uncomfort-ound him. He's gone through a divorce. But as the story unfolds, *n* tells of a struggling man caught cycle of abuse. Wade, played ly by Nick Nolte, is a middle-aged unted by the childhood memories ather's abuse. He yearns to live a life in the desolate and uneventful Lawton, New England.

wned for insights into the dark psyche, director Paul Schrader, riter of *Taxi Driver* and *Raging* mbines his talents with those of Banks, author of the novel *n*, to create a disturbing and ful story.

hout the film, including murder, child custody, and visits with parents, and all are under-act of Wade's childhood abuse underscores them all. Willem Dafoe, as Wade's brother Rolfe, rating the events from a safe perch away from the tumultous situations.

ore him, his true self becomes exposed layer by layer to reveal the raw and unwanted truth. and this regression leaves Wade talking and acting like the person whom he never wanted alcoholic and violent father embodies fear from his booming voice, unsettling laugh, and ivers a riveting performance as Glen "Pop" Whitehouse, a man given to hitting the mother dominated household himself, Pop passes on the pattern of violence to his son Wade.

xplodes with raw emotions and manages to humanise his character. Putting his rocky list ves that he is capable of a solid performance in which his emotions overshadow his brood-ch consume his life, including the constant throbbing of a sore tooth, build Wade up as an lence. A man trying to dominate an uncontrollable environment and his own fate.

ence between right and wrong, and he wants to do the right thing. But in reality, there are ondemns nor approves of Wade's actions, and in the end, we are left with silence onscreen. he issue of abuse and male violence, with sensitivity and artistry. He shows that abuse is ction.❖

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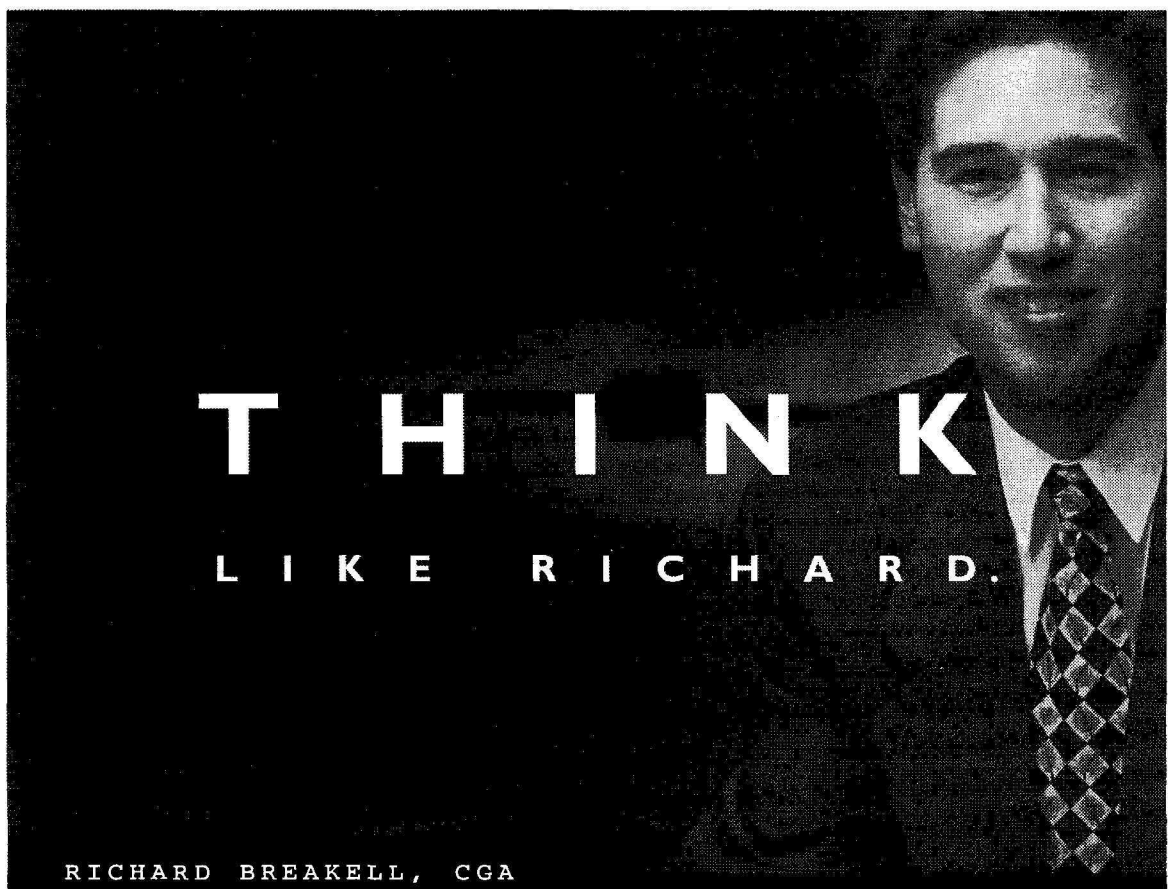

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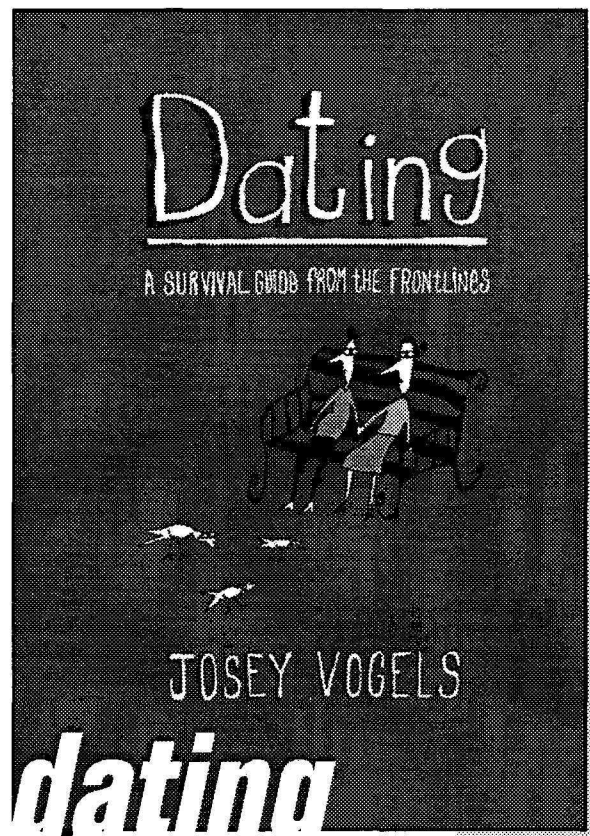


dating for sorry-ass singles

DATING: A SURVIVAL GUIDE FROM THE FRONTLINES
by Josey Vogels
[Raincoast Books]

by Anne Augustine

Well, it seems all my old friends are getting permanently hitched these days, right about when I've finally given up and moved into room and board so I don't have to eat alone again. *Now, Josey Vogels has come along to rescue me and the thousands of other sorry-ass singles out there with her sociological study and how-to guide, Dating. Thanks, Josey. Just when we all thought no one cared. Not that there's anything wrong with being single, except not getting backrubs often enough.*

Vogels covers everything from meeting the love of your life at a fetish night, to getting in touch (figuratively, I guess) with the Christian singles network, to the dubious joys of one-night-stands.

She's sharp, honest, tolerant, and often quite funny. Get this straight though: this is a resource book, a guide, not an entertainment magazine. If you aren't really looking at how not to be single, the only worthwhile part of it will be the little "Date from Hell" text boxes.

That said, satisfied or searching, single or involved, it's hard to get through this without being honest with yourself about why you are or aren't in something.

Is it a good guide? Well, I don't know, I haven't tried any of its suggestions yet. On the other hand, I often had moments reading about another person's encounter and said to myself, "Oooh, I know someone who did something that brutal to me." Worse for my self-respect but probably better for my soul, I also had moments where I realised, "Oooh, I did that to some poor guy once." I swear, I didn't know I was being obnoxious.

All in all, like any heavy dose of honesty, it doesn't really leave you inspired or despairing. I might carry it around though, just to see whose eyes stray to the title a little more than casually. ❖

Fear *of* freedom

Indonesian journalist and writer Seno Gumira Ajidarma sees the root of Indonesia's problems not in politics or economics, but in its society

by Ronald Nurwisah

Indonesia has never been free. But if that country is to have a shot at democracy—after decades of oppression—it will need to overcome some significant shortcomings.

Eight months after General Suharto's fall, the political landscape has been transformed. President BJ Habibie has promised democratic reforms, but little has happened. Instead, the number of parties has exploded from three to approximately 140. With another election only months away, things don't look like they're going to get any better.

Indonesia's economy is also in ruins. Its currency, the rupiah, has been devalued by up to 80 per cent, resulting in mass poverty and unemployment.

Indonesian writer and journalist Seno Gumira Ajidarma has a unique perspective on the current crisis. In the magazine *Jakarta, Jakarta* he published a personal account of the Dili massacre in East Timor which he witnessed. Ajidarma was pulled from the story soon after. His removal prompted him to write *Eyewitness*, a collection of short stories inspired by his experiences in East Timor.

Ajidarma sees himself as someone who thumbs his nose at authority. He recently sued the Indonesian government after his son was beaten by the police during last May's riots. Ajidarma wanted a formal apology, but he lost.

He's also someone who fights for the truth. For him, the current problems in Indonesia are rooted in its social deficiencies—not in the nation's economic or political problems.

The clearest example of this, he explains, is the Indonesian media. While Ajidarma agrees that given the country's political instability the media has had a difficult job, he believes that rather than helping, it has only added to the confusion.

"The media should give the people a clear map of the situation, a clear view to the reader, but that's not happening," he says.

By focusing so intently on the political landscape, he argues, the media has ignored the country's societal and cultural problems, and freedom has given birth to anarchy.

"The main problem particularly in the media is who's going to be the next president, or which party is more legitimate than the other, or who's going to be the leader for the future, but not the cultural side," Ajidarma says.

He blames the problem, partly, on Indonesia's lack of self-confidence—a result of 350 years of Dutch colonialism, followed by another 50 years of oppressive dictatorships under Sukarno and Suharto.

"We were never trained to be clear and honest and to be reflective," he explains. "In the school, for instance, students were only taught to repeat everything their teachers said. So when the time comes to be themselves, they don't know how to express their feelings, or how to have an expression, an opinion."

He adds: "The Indonesian people, you can say, never have been self-confident. And maybe that's why when times of freedom come they are very anarchistic, because they are very afraid."

It's a fear and lack of self-confidence that has manifested itself in violence. Last May's riots were some of the bloodiest the country has ever seen. And continuing ethnic tensions have led to religious massacres and murders among Christians and Muslims.

"It seems that nobody is angry with the violence, it seems that there is not a problem," says Ajidarma.

It's a trend he finds disturbing; it's as if violence were a legitimate political tool.

AJIDARMA: The Indonesian writer is trying to redefine democracy. DALE LUM PHOTO

"It is as though violence can only be overcome by violence," he says, adding that everyone, from the government to the people, use it to get what they want.

Indonesia's lack of self-confidence has also meant the nation is still culturally and socially backward.

"We cannot say we have modern culture, maybe you see roads and tall buildings, and blue jeans, but culturally we are still traditional; to criticise is still not considered polite. To ask what the teacher, or what the old men, said is still considered not polite until recently. So politeness, culture, was always used as a tool to repress."

Yet Ajidarma feels that there is still a way out for Indonesia.

"They say before that if we build airplanes, or study technology, it seems that we're already modern, but you know it's not like that. Modern is to be self-confident, to be rational....If we are going to be rational it means we can accept criticism...we can look at our face in the mirror."

Ajidarma admits that the road to Indonesia's cultural modernisation won't be easy. "Indonesia will only survive on the cultural side... if everyone can save their humanity," he says.

The solution is in education and culture, he feels. "We have to build the system of education to make everybody not only smart but also to be cultural, to be self-confident."

"We still rely on culture as an entertainment. That doesn't challenge us to think, that doesn't challenge us to learn, doesn't challenge us to struggle," he says.

Ajidarma hopes that when this finally happens, democracy will follow. A democracy which he describes as "democracy without anarchy," where people defend the freedom of other people.

"In that kind of democracy maybe we can survive." ❖

No prose or poetry in Growing Up Stupid

GROWING UP STUPID UNDER THE UNION JACK
by Austin Clarke
[Vintage Canada]

by Keith Turkowski

Austin Clarke's memoir, *Growing Up Stupid Under the Union Jack*, relates his experiences as a child in the British-ruled Barbados islands from the mid-1940's on.

Apparently Clarke was an idiot as a child, or at least that's how he portrays himself throughout the choppy flow of anecdotes that make up this book. Clarke is obviously a skilled writer, but the undercurrent of resentment, bitterness and sarcasm in his words continually gnaw on the reader. Add that to the lack of continuity and the book is almost unbearable.

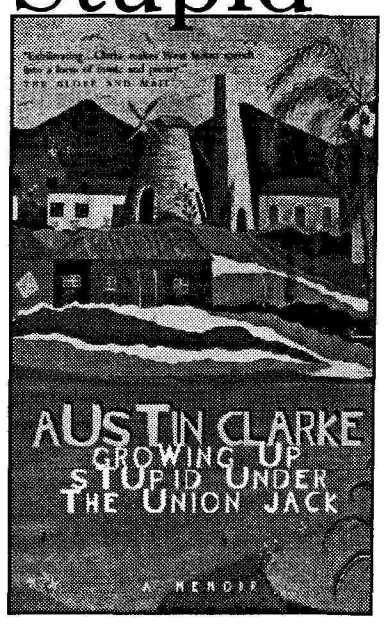
"the undercurrent of resentment, bitterness and sarcasm"

In the relatively isolated Barbados, young Clarke is sheltered from most of the outside world. Over the seas, World War II is being waged between the Axis and the Allies. America, Canada and European culture and ideas are imported and adopted by the islanders, but feelings of isolation remain.

Strict methods of education, frequent measures of corporal punishment meted out by oppressive school teachers, and assorted run-ins with religion form the core of Clarke's experiences. These events are woven together by the everyday life of haircuts, bartering, boyhood pranks, superstitions, and the occasional clothes-rending fights between village women.

Throughout the book, Clarke is always dreaming, and that is the one redeeming quality that allows the reader to catch the occasional glimpse into a young boy's mind. A quality that has been, apparently, lost to the author.

Growing Up Stupid ends up coming off as little more than a long complaint. The few bits of wit and the forced humor are spread too thin. Unless you enjoy reading about the foolish childhood of a resentful author, stay away from this one. There is no poetry or prose here. ❖



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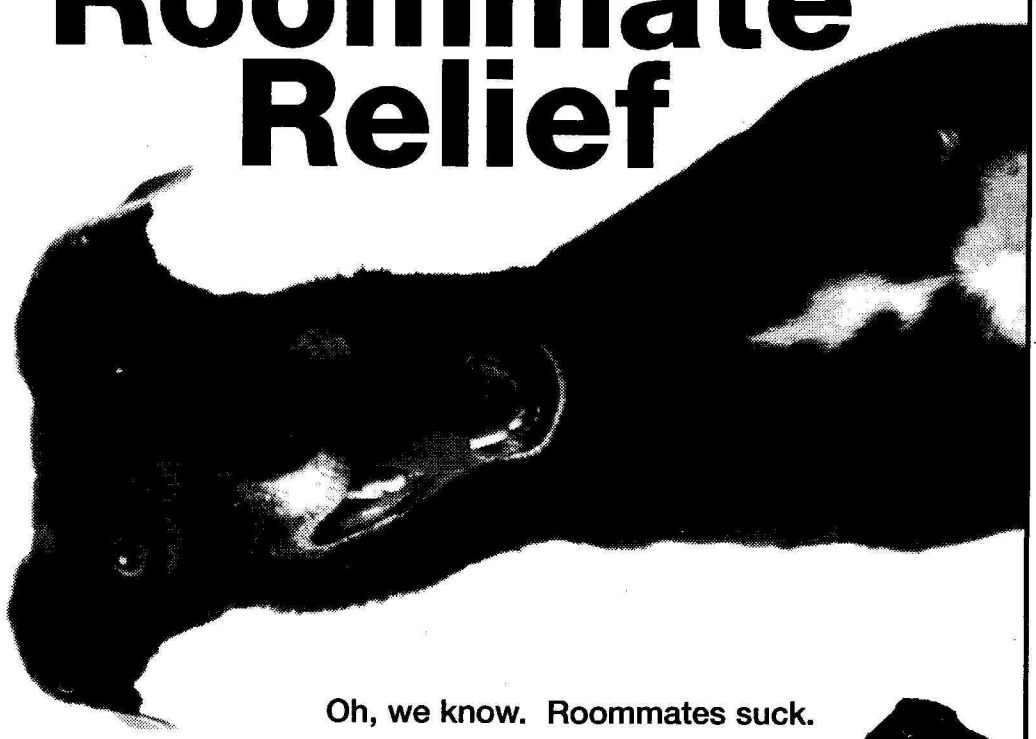

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BRAVE NEW WORLD: *Eve (Alicia Silverstone) warms up to Adam (Brendan Fraser) in Blast from the Past.*

BLAST FROM THE PAST
Opens today
Playing at theatres everywhere

by Vince Yim

And you thought *your* parents were weird!

Giving new meaning to the term "nuclear family," Christopher Walken plays an eccentric scientist who builds a fallout shelter during the Cuban missile crisis of the 1960s.

After mistaking a plane crash for a nuclear bomb, he locks himself and his pregnant wife (played by Sissy Spacek) in the shelter for 35 years.

Now, on the verge of the new millennium, their son Adam (Brendan Fraser) is all grown up. He must venture out into this brave new world to obtain supplies for his family and to marry a nice non-mutant girl from Pasadena. And yes, the film explains why he looks so young for a man of 35 years.

Alicia Silverstone plays the role of (are you ready for this?) Eve, the cynical, street-smart young woman who befriends Adam and helps him in his quest —although it's not an easy task.

As a cute, romantic comedy, *Blast From the Past* is perfect, relentlessly playing up the differences between the values of the early '60s and the values of today. One can't help but laugh when Adam finds out that Eve's roommate Troy (played by *Kids in the Hall* alumnus David Foley) is gay and responds with a hearty, "Well, good for him!"

Although not in an altogether new role (he played similar parts in *Encino Man* and *George of the Jungle*), Brendan Fraser is solid as Adam, the naïve hero. Christopher Walken and Sissy Spacek are quite appropriate as Adam's quirky parents, while David Foley eats up the screen with his performance. Even Alicia Silverstone is effective, although admittedly, not a lot of people pay money to see her act.

Adding to Blast From the Past's charm is the slick and intricate production design of the film. The movie's sets, which range from the richly detailed bomb shelter/family household to a slowly deteriorating malt shop, are a definite plus.

Unfortunately, the film's script has a tendency to fall flat on its face. After notifying the authorities that Adam may be insane, Eve suddenly (and conveniently) has a revelation that perhaps Adam really was locked in a fallout shelter for 35 years. However, the comedic nature of the plot should be enough to cause most viewers to overlook its shortcomings.

For a fun movie that doesn't require much thought, *Blast From the Past* is hard to beat.❖

UBC failed to comply with own policies, student alleges

Sherry Tanaka refuses to give up in her battle to hold university administrators accountable for the way they dealt with her complaint of scholarly misconduct.

by Douglas Quan

Dennis Pavlich, UBC's vice president legal affairs, is defending the way university administrators handled a complaint of scholarly misconduct even though it appears they failed to follow the university's own procedures for dealing with such matters.

In the fall of 1996, UBC graduate student Sherry Tanaka filed a complaint with Sociology department head Brian Elliott against professor Millie Creighton. Tanaka alleged that Creighton had not followed ethical guidelines for doing research involving human subjects during the course of her field work in Japan and Russia in the early 1990s.

According to UBC's policy on scholarly integrity (Policy #85), passed by the board of governors in January 1995, there were three ways that this complaint could have been handled: the head could have looked into the matter and dealt directly with it, reporting the disposition of the case to the dean; the head could have looked into the matter and made a recommendation for its disposition to the dean; or the head could have made a recommendation to the dean that it be referred to the vice president academic and provost for investigation.

The vice president had three options: refer the matter back, dismiss the allegation or appoint a three-member investigative committee.

As it turned out, Arts dean Shirley Neuman took over the entire investigation herself. Elliott even wrote to Tanaka to say that the "matter was immediately taken out of the hands of the department and responsibility for any investigation was assumed by the Dean of Arts and the Equity Office." (Neuman subsequently wrote to Tanaka in November 1997—one year after the original complaint had been filed—concluding that there was no basis for her allegations.)

But UBC ombudsperson Sarah Dench, who was asked by Tanaka to look into the matter, wrote Tanaka last week and reported that "the University's position is that the Dean was authorised to deal with [her] complaint as a result of [the] non-prescriptive policy language."

Dench wrote further: "Pavlich is of the view that university policy is not law, and that what transpired was appropriate in that the spirit of the [1995] policy was upheld."

Tanaka told *the Ubyssey* this week that she found it ridiculous that the university could set up policies—the handbook refers to them as "Detailed Procedures"—and then not stick to them.

"Detailed procedures should be enforced in an objective manner," she said. "Once decided by the board of governors, it should mean something."

In February 1997, the university revised the policy to state that all allegations of misconduct are to be forwarded to the vice president research.

Tanaka also noted that under the revised policy, the university acknowledged that the investigation report was a "public document," and not a private document as the earlier policy had stated.

Yet, last year, when the federal Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)—the body that funded Professor Creighton's research—requested that UBC hand over a copy of its investigation report, the university refused. (Tanaka had sought SSHRC's help after Dean Neuman dismissed the allegations.)

In a May 1998 letter to SSHRC, UBC vice president research Bernard Bressler wrote that the province's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act prevented the university from handing over the material.

It wasn't until the fall that the university agreed to submit the documents.

Tanaka says the university failed to comply with another one of its policy revisions. "Where misconduct is found to have occurred," the policy states, "the investigative report and decision regarding discipline/remedies will be forwarded within thirty days...to any granting council that has funded the research." Nothing was ever sent to SSHRC.

WAITING FOR ANSWERS: Sherry Tanaka continues to pressure the university to admit it mishandled her complaint. RICHARD LAM PHOTO

While Neuman's letter to Tanaka seemed to indicate that Creighton had not been found of any wrongdoing, a March 1998 letter to Tanaka from Herbert Rosengarten, the executive director of the UBC president's office, reveals that Neuman hadn't exhonerated Creighton completely.

Rosengarten wrote: "Contrary to the statement in your letter that [Neuman] had 'essentially found nothing to be wrong with Dr Creighton,' Dr Neuman took the matter up with Dr Creighton, in an interview attended by Dr Errol Durbach, Associate Dean of Arts, and at which she made her concerns very clear to Dr Creighton with respect to the importance of obtaining a letter of permission to conduct certain kinds of research.

"By December 1996 further action had been taken consistent with Dr Creighton's ability to produce a copy of the letter in question. This is as much as I am able to say without offending against the laws of privacy, but it does appear that the Dean took firm action on that part of your complaint she found to have merit."

Tanaka says that the letter contradicts a letter to the editor signed by Elliott and 23 other members of the Sociology department and published in *the Ubyssey* last term declaring the allegations of misconduct groundless.

Tanaka says she hopes that SSHRC's ongoing investigation of the matter will shed some new light on the way her complaint was processed. Last November, SSHRC wrote to Tanaka saying that it was satisfied with the way the university had investigated the complaint.

But letters from Tanaka's lawyer, Ayman Nader, and federal NDP MP Svend Robinson prompted SSHRC to reopen its investigation. In a letter to Tanaka last month, SSHRC said that it was requesting additional information from the university.

Pavlich was out of town and unavailable for comment.❖

Faculty association opens its doors

by Jamie Woods

UBC part-time instructors can now be represented in a bargaining unit for the first time ever after a vote taken by the Faculty Association passed overwhelmingly this week.

Until now, these instructors, who make up about 550 of the 700 or so of UBC sessional instructors, had gone unrepresented in salary and benefits negotiations with the administration.

But in a vote, 86 per cent of the Faculty Association endorsed part-time instructors' membership. The part-time instructors, meanwhile, voted 91 per cent to join.

The number of existing Faculty Association members and prospective members who had voted in the elections was not available by press time.

The vote followed on the heels of the administration's controversial move last month to allow part-time instructors into the Faculty Association only days before some of those instructors were due to kick off a union drive of their own.

The drive, which is still underway, would see the formation of a sessionals-only bargaining unit in the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE).

"It levels the playing field... Now we're just getting back to going around and signing people up."

—Clint Burnham
SOS representative

Sessionals Organising Sessionals (SOS), the group responsible for organising the drive, hauled the administration before the Labour Relations Board as a response to the move. SOS said the administration had violated section 26 of the BC Labour Relations Code, which prohibits an employer from interfering with the formation, selection, or administration of a trade union.

Last Wednesday, the two parties settled the dispute before the LRB had to settle it for them. Originally, SOS offered to end the dispute in return for the administration's approval of a vote that would have seen sessionals choosing between membership in the Faculty Association and membership in CUPE. The administration rejected that offer.

The new agreement will allow SOS more communication options in their union drive. The group can now use campus mail for the distribution of information as well as contact sessionals during office hours to make an appointment to discuss their union drive.

SOS representative Clint Burnham says his group is happy with the agreement. "It levels the playing field," he said. "Now we're just getting back to going around and signing people up."

Meanwhile, part-time instructors will not become members of the Faculty Association until the UBC Board of Governors ratifies their membership. The board meets again at the end of February.

However, if 45 per cent of UBC sessionals sign union cards in the SOS drive, a vote will be held to determine whether sessionals want to form their own union under CUPE. If 55 per cent sign union cards, that union would automatically be formed, separate from the Faculty Association.

SOS has until April 27 to collect signatures in their drive.❖

the ubyssey

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"All right no one move, this is a hijacking," yelled Sarah Galashan. Doug Quan, her partner in crime held a gun to a blubbering Federico Barahona. John Zaozirny started to laugh thinking it was all a big joke, until Jamie Woods the leader of the gang glared at him. Ronald Nurwisah, that big baby started to cry. They knew what they wanted, "Take us to Mexico," ordered Sarah. Vince Yim the pilot nodded in agreement. But not before co-pilot Todd Silver, mumbled something about life insurance. Bruce Arthur, Duncan McHugh, and Nick Bradley, sitting in first class didn't know what was happening, only that they were no longer served complimentary beverages by Richard Lam and Dale Lum. Naomi Kim and Keith Turkowski, prayed for their lives. While Michelle Mossop could only curse her bad luck while sipping her cocktail. The flight continued without incident, Jeremy Beaume and Derek Deland, rich oil tycoons tried to bribe the terrorists and were forced to spend the rest of the flight in the overhead cabins. When the flight landed at the airport, Camille Lade and Anne Augustine got up before the plane had come to a complete stop, invoking the wrath of the terrorists.

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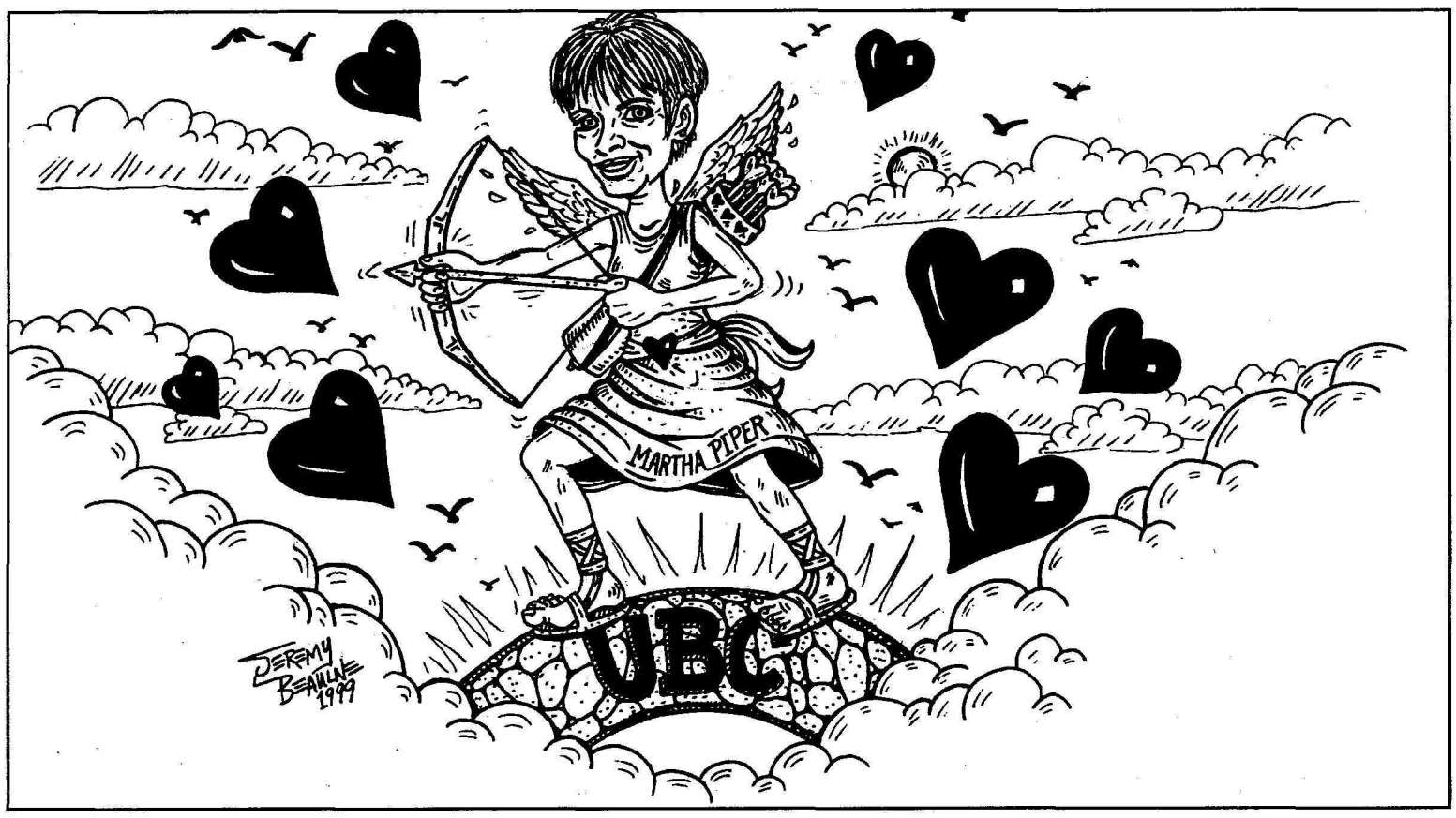


Love, Love, Love, Love Love, Love

You can feel it in the air, can't you? Floating on the breeze like pollen, like bumblebees, like beer bottles flung from Gage—love is in the air. With Valentine's Day again set to descend upon unsuspecting and veteran couples alike, we here at *the Ubyssey* find ourselves caught up in the spirit.

And who can't feel it? The *nouveau* Thunderbird Shop (or Thunderbird Shop Version 2.0) is overflowing with stuffed animals guaranteed to win the heart of any university Parking Patrol Officer. And as the post-AMS election blues subside, the lovin' vibe is back.

So with the heady atmosphere, *the Ubyssey* has prepared a list of our favorite things. Feel the love.

We Love:

Ample Parking

Nothing beats wheeling into the endless expanse of bright, shiny lots and easily cruising into the spot of your choice. The 30-minute stroll to classes only serves to accentuate UBC's natural beauty. Also the coyotes.

The New Thunderbird Shop

Need a wooden duck? A baby t-shirt? Classy shot glasses? Teddy bears? Well, the new T-Bird Shop (or as we like to call it, I Can't Believe It's Not Gastown ™) will serve your needs just dandy.

University Boulevard

Like sailing on silk, the road out is always a dream ride. The best rollercoaster in town involves sitting in the back of the 99 B-Line and throwing your hands in the air. Wheeee!

The First Pit Night of the Year

There's nothing like a drunken first-year student throwing up into the sink. Nothing!

Martha

Because how can you not?

Vanier and Totem cafeterias

The ever-entertaining battle to lay students low hits new and exciting heights year after year—from meat in the vegetarian dishes to plastic in the meat dishes, the rivalry continues unabated. *Bon Appetit!*

Think About All This, and you're sure to find parts of UBC that make your heart flutter. Be sure to write in and let us know—because there's always room for more love at UBC.❖

Letters

The Chrétien Top Ten

Ten reasons the Prime Minister, now 65 years old, can give to the media for not retiring in mid-term.

10. I don't trust that Paul Martin guy.

9. The federal trade mission is going to Maui in December.

8. I have promises to keep: dismantle free trade and rescind the GST.

7. What about the Y2K bug and armageddon?

6. Ted Hughes will exonerate me on the APECker head pepper thing.

5. Me and my APEC buddies are gonna "party like it's 1999."

4. Sheila Copps dancing the boogie with John Nunziata at the Liberal leadership convention.

3. Eddie G. says, "That's horse do-do. Don't eat it!"

2. Larry Flynt's got nothing on me, I think.

1. Who's gonna make me? Queen Elizabeth?

Elmer Wiens
UBC alumnus

Morishita not a hero figure

In response to "Ode to Morishita" (*Ubyssey* Feb 2) I was amazed that a "long term employee of the AMS" felt compelled to speak out on behalf of Scott Morishita; to sing his praises and label him "truly a hero."

The fact that anyone could misinterpret Scott's megalomania as any act of heroism is beyond me. During all my years as an AMS employee I have never seen an AMS executive work so hard on his own personal agenda with such an absolute disregard for the society as a whole and for the individuals he was elected to represent.

Scott's "one man war on injustice and corruption" was nothing but a rapacious strategy to elevate his status in the eyes of the few unfortunates who were misled by his self-serving intentions.

I am also saddened and disappointed by Anonymous' take on all previous AMS executive. To say that each year the AMS' elected government end their term(s) in office with their ideals abandoned and their integrity dissipated is to do a great disservice to the many students who have left the AMS to become outstanding participants in our community, in our schools, our hospitals and our businesses; many cited in our local newspapers for their initiatives, their community service and their entrepreneurial spirit. I was proud to work for those students and continue to be proud of the citizens they have become. Thank God Scott is the exception rather than the norm.

You were right about one thing Anonymous: Scott Morishita did have a colossal impact on the lives of AMS employees. Just not the impact you seem to think. The AMS is comprised of over *300* employees — 80% of them students. Ask them what they think of Scott's conduct during his term in office and I believe the majority of them will give you a different response. In fact, if you were to take a survey...oh, wait a minute...Scott tried that — without the consent of all of the executive. A survey in which Scott *demanded the mandatory participation* of the AMS full time staff. Ironically, that survey back-fired. So much so, I believe, that Scott refused to be present during the presentation of he results.

And now I hear that Scott did not win his re-election. This has renewed my faith in the democratic process. Scott should have been more careful on those he stepped on while in office. You forgot your own admonishment Scott — you were there to work for them...

Nancy Toogood,
ex-long-term AMS employee

CORRECTION

In "AMS elections derailed" (February 9, 1999, the Ubyssey) it was reported that the AMS ombudsperson had recommended overturning all the election results. In fact, he recommended overturning all the executive and board of governnors results. It was also reported that there was a motion before council to overturn all the executive results. In fact, the motion was only to overturn the presidential results.❖

feedback@ubyssey.bc.ca

Surviving Valentine's day

feedback@ubyssey.ca

by Klaudia Zapala

PERSPECTIVE

The time of the year is here. Romantically over-valued and conventionally dreaded, Valentine's Day must have been invented by some adventurous marketing experts and unceasing economists determined to experiment and exploit the general, unthinking and fad loving public.

There is very little reason for any holiday to occur in the middle of cold February when most of us are still trying to lose those Christmas calories and repair our bank accounts ripped apart by not-to-be-missed Boxing Day sales.

Easter and Spring are already looming ahead, and most of us would gladly exercise some patience by waiting for those caramel eggs, fluffy bunnies, enticing aroma of pineapple ham and bring yellow of Forsythia's blossoms. Yet, with time travel still only in the realm of fantasy, there is no way of by-passing this most horrifying of holidays.

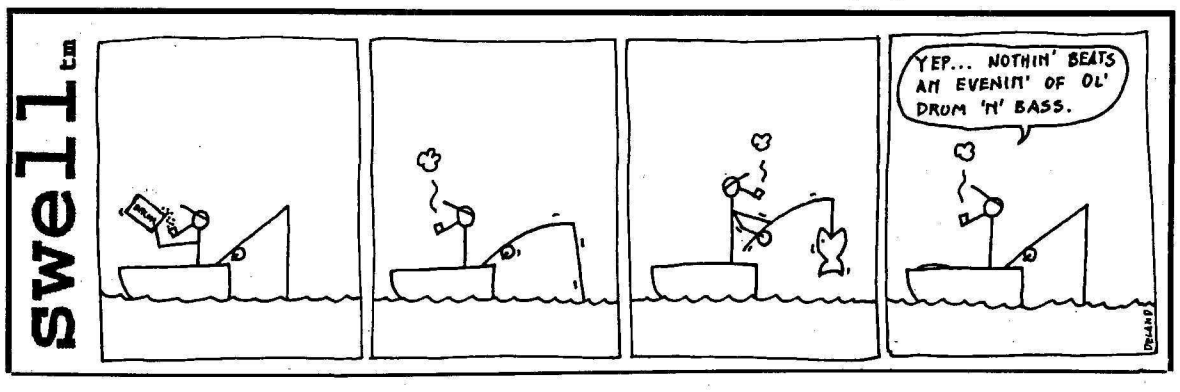
In fact, I don't know a single person, nor for that matter a couple, who enjoys and looks forward to celebrating Valentine's Day.

Valentine's Day is the day of mortification of all the single people in the world. While others seem to be celebrating their couplehood, the relationship challenged part of our population tries to convince their friends and coworkers that they too are having a romantic outing while in reality they draw up the curtains and unplug the phone to veggie out with an illegal copy of *Dirty Dancing* or *Sleepless in Seattle* pirated from TV from the last year's February nightmare. They will watch it plopped on their sofa with a mega size of ice cream and caramel popcorn firmly believing that they are the only ones in town who are spending this horrible night alone.

Those of us not quite so alone in this world fare no better. Think about those who just met or just started dating. They are tortured by uncertainty of every kind. Is it too early to propose a date on such a symbolic day? Would it be declaring too much, too soon? Is ignoring the day too cruel? Would she think he has someone else? Would he think she is uninterested?

Now, those already established in their couplehood can be subdivided into two major categories. To the first one belong all the attached individuals who seem to see the holiday for what it is — spending inducer artificially created guilt-

"valentine's" continued on page 16



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Opinion

THE UBYSSEY
PICK US UP
TUESDAY
AND
FRIDAY

'valentine's' continued from page 15

the person that is most likely to engage depressions and stress during other emotional state.

Some couples flatly refuse to participate in the celebrations. Me-and-call-them-sensible-or-cold. They resist the temptation to splurge on stale tasting ginger snapples, hideous cinnamon hearts, and little velvet boxes which when opened need a little bag of chocolate coins. Again big guess: lots of people. They, then, send a lame and tired group-grief attached on-line who think it would be cold and sentimental not to do anything special on Cupid's and the Devil's joint venture. They buy each other small, symbolic, yet highly suggestive tokens of mutual affection on which non-sprouts spend hardly more than the other in effect of which there is a huge cloud of disappointment forming over the relationship.

Other couples in turn chose to spend their year's savings, cash in their RRSP, phone in to increase their credit card limits, or blow the rest of their student loan to accommodate the outrageously expensive dinner and mandatory champagne bottle in a restaurant way out of their price range. But after all, it's only one night a year.

Some, more sensible couples, figured out long ago that cooking a lobster does not require more than dipping the poor crustacean in boiling water, so they stay home and squeeze their lemon supplies.

So how is one to celebrate couplehood without suffering? Of course, the days when carving initials on a tree trunk was politically correct are long gone.

The novel of a bitch of a Valentine's Day November birthrate, the Canadian government should declare a Valentine ban in get rid of our looming population crisis.

So how is one to celebrate couplehood without suffering? Of course, the days when carving initials on a tree trunk was politically correct are longgone. I suppose, it will have to do to just walk around the Seawall holding hands. More adventurous ones of us might splurge on random body pierces — eyebrows, ears, nipples, belly buttons and other strategetten body parts. A cute little tattoo can be romantic as well. However, I strongly advise against adorning your bodies with each other's names. What will you say to your next Valentine's Day date?◆

Klaudia Zapala is a student at education.

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