

glue

THE OTTAWA STUDENT MAGAZINE

WINTER 2008

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glue Contents

WINTER 2007



GLUE

- 4 Contributors
- 5 Editor's letter

SPOTLIGHT

- 17 How safe is your campus?
- 20 Gram by gram
- 24 Baring it all
- 28 Breaking down barriers

TUNED IN

- 6 Spring into style
- 8 We're here, we're queer, we came to party
- 10 My fair lady
- 11 Pearls of Ottawa
- 12 Dropping down
- 14 Girls on wheels

TUNED IN

- 32 In his shoes
- 33 Chuckling the blues away
- 34 Two pink lines
- 36 Hold the sauce please
- 38 From riches to rags
- 40 A stolen identity
- 42 Retail insanity

COMMENT

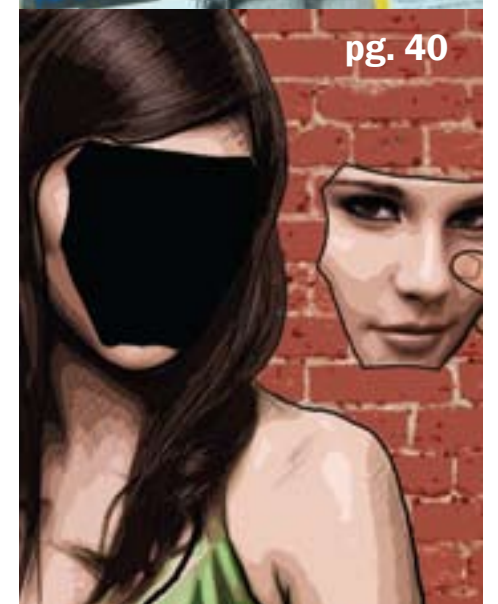
- 39 American nightmare

FACE OFF

- 44 Just friends

BREAKDOWN

- 46 Getting out of the red



glue Contributors



MANAGING EDITOR

Jocelyn Cooper, a second-year journalism student, was very excited to have the chance to work on Glue this year. Her favourite part was reading through all of the contributors' work and seeing the great story ideas they came up with.

"Everyone was really creative and we ended up with a fantastic issue," she says.



PHOTO EDITOR

The cover shoot was one of Julie Barney's favourite moments of Glue because the cover model was such a hit with the downtown crowds. "I was worried that we were going to get in trouble for having this nearly naked guy on the street," says Barney. "But everything ran smoothly and we had so many people participate in the shoot."



DESIGN EDITOR

Michela Rosano feels honoured to have been a part of this team. She thinks everyone worked so hard to make this issue the best Glue magazine has ever seen. She would like to thank Greg Wheeler, Mark Anderson and Ralph Plath for the amount of time and effort they put into the issue. "Everyone did an amazing job," she says.



ADVERTISING

Olivier's experience on Glue was incredibly fulfilling as he was able to bring a really strong team of advertising students together to sell and design more ads than has ever before been in Glue magazine.

He wishes to thank the entire team sincerely for working so hard in all aspects of the advertising side of Glue.

glue Editor's letter



A piece of cake

If you're anything like me, starting a project is easy—it's finishing it that's tough. When the staff and I started working on *Glue* last September, we thought it would be a piece of cake to pull a magazine together in three months. All we saw was the glorious finished product. We had no idea what we got ourselves into.

Looking back now, putting it all together was lots of fun. We had a great bunch of writers, photographers and editors as you'll soon find out. It wasn't as easy as we thought, but I'm happy to say our work is done and it's now your turn, reader. Before you roam the pages though, let me tell you what you missed.

Holding a stranger's clothes while he stripped down to nothing on Rideau Street—just so our photographers could get the perfect cover shot (I think it's safe to say they did) was just one moment.

Virtually everything went smoothly, but we certainly had our share of hurdles. With so many people working together there's bound to be some confusion. Throughout, we had to keep the ultimate goal in mind: to make this issue of *Glue* the best one yet.

Each contributor brought his or her own zest to the pages. It might seem like a jumbled mix of stories, but together they represent you—the Ottawa student, a unique and ambitious individual. You'll see what I mean if you check out *Hold the sauce please* (page 36) and *In his shoes* (page 32).

Glue is for you, for me and for us. This issue—and, in fact, every issue of *Glue*—represents all faces of the Ottawa student—the scholar, the socialite and the self-conscious.

Likewise, it's about the out-of-the-ordinary student too. Sam McGarry (*Two pink lines*, page 34) gives us a very honest and personal piece. Her story may not resonate with every Ottawa student or even many Ottawa students, but she does let you live a day in her shoes.

Usually, I'm not one to admit I was wrong. When I signed up for *Glue* however, I had a different picture in mind. No, it wasn't easy, but nothing this rewarding ever is. I hope you enjoy this issue of *Glue* as much as our team enjoyed working on getting it to you.

Erin Kristalyn

Winter 2008

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Glue is dedicated to reflecting the experiences of Ottawa's college and university students, on their campuses and in their city. Our magazine celebrates their interests and discoveries which all contribute to making student life unforgettable.

Glue is published twice per year by students in the journalism-print and advertising programs at Algonquin College.

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1385 Woodroffe Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K2G 1V8

www.gluemag.ca

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WORLD COFFEE ROASTED DAILY

photos by Michela Rosano, Julie Barney and Erin Kristalyn

photo by Julie Barney

SPRING INTO STYLE

A look at the **hot** new trends for the season by local fashion experts



ERICA WARK

In the middle of two of Canada's major fashion hot spots, Toronto and Montreal, some say Ottawa lacks intrigue in fashion and instead became famous for politics and its local hockey team, the Ottawa Senators.

Little does the rest of Canada know, Ottawa is full of fashion ideas and *Glue* magazine found 2008 spring must-haves by talking to the city's own fashion experts.

Ottawa's Richard Robinson Academy of Fashion Design sees students come from all over Ontario and Quebec to stitch their way into the fashion industry.

Throughout the year, students are challenged with various tasks in hopes of making the cut into the next year of the program.

"For one of our assignments this year, we were given three fabrics: denim, printed cotton and chiffon, and had to come up with a spring/summer outfit," Alana Amoyette, second-year student says.

"I really like flower prints in chiffon and I think draping things will be an inspiration to a lot of designers for their spring/summer

I don't think people really argue with you if you exude that what you're wearing is hot.

collections for 2008," she says.

As part of their course work, students must complete a five-piece spring collection that will be showcased in Richard Robinson's yearly fashion show in May.

Erin Jamieson, graduate of Richard Robinson and current teacher at the school, suggests that, "sequins, metallics, silk jersey and chiffon are going to be a popular choice here at the school for the students' spring collections."

She adds that shoppers should also focus on fit and quality and less on brands. "Save money on accessories like skinny belts and metallic clutches so you can splurge on the light weight dresses and tailored skirts," she says.

Mary-lynn Drovin, second-year student at the academy, is planning on using neutral colours and silk fabrics. "I really think 2008 will be a throw back to 1920s style with a modern feel," Drovin says. "That's where my inspiration is coming from when I design my col-

Angie Cleary, a second-year student at Richard Robinson Academy of Fashion Design, models a unique petal-covered bustier.

photo by Jenny Potter

lection for the spring fashion show."

Tori Leach, full-time model and Ottawa native, recently worked in Italy where she modeled for Milan's 2008 spring/summer fashion week.

"I had the opportunity to see and work with many great designers including DSquared and they had one thing in mind when designing this year's spring/summer collection: subtlety," Leach says.

"Yellows, whites, blacks and hints of hot pink were all the rage on the runways during Milan's fashion week," she says. "The dresses had a Jackie Kennedy feel to them but with a modern twist with subtle details and tailored fits."

Asia Dewar, manager of the local boutique Schad Blu on Sussex, says this spring is going to include lots of layering and bright, fun colours. "Black and white is on its way out as far as wardrobe is concerned," Dewar says. "We won't be seeing much more of the skinny jean but instead the higher waist, tailored look, with a wider leg."

Dewar also suggests geometric patterns and floral prints will be popular for spring. "Asymmetrical lines with pastels will be popular this summer," she says. "Hot pinks and yellows along with big, bold accessories to complement the outfit will be in as well."

Dewar's ultimate fashion advice is that it's not really about what you're wearing but how you wear it. "Confidence has a lot to do with it," she says. "I don't think people really argue with you if you exude that what you're wearing is hot."



Second-year student at Richard Robinson, Bianca Wabab prepares for spring's new fashions.

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photo by Jenny Potter

“We’re here, we’re queer, we came to party”

A group of **gay party-goers** take over the Ottawa bar scene

BRADLEY TURCOTTE

Imagine you are out on a Friday night, living it up at one of the ByWard Market’s many student-friendly joints. All of a sudden, dozens of people draped in white descend on the bar. Your bar has been taken over, a victim of Guerilla Gay Fare.

The first bars the group targeted were Tila Tequila, Suite 34 and the Cabin, but they’re just getting started.

The idea is hardly new, with similar groups existing in cities around the world. A group of gay individuals take over a straight establishment, mixing in with heteros. Participants are encouraged to dress in white for dramatic effect and the location is kept secret until the day before, ensuring the bar will be taken by surprise.

“They said ‘go home, we’re full fags.’ Then they turned around and saw dozens of other people coming so they had to let us in.”

Group founder and Carleton graduate Tim Campbell was inspired by an article in *Capital Xtra!* and some happenings at Pride’s Rainbow 8 party held at Capital City Music Hall.

“The staff was completely rude,” Campbell recalls. “They said, ‘this isn’t a gay bar. Put your shirts back on.’ So after that I was like, ‘this is wrong, we have to do something about this.’”

His complaint against Capital’s staff resulted in the employees being reprimanded,

but that wasn’t enough to satisfy Campbell.

The first covert operation was held at Tila Tequila on Sept. 14, and was considered a success by group organizers.

Algonquin museum studies student Josh Eisen has attended both takeovers and says the staff were less than welcoming.

“They said, ‘go home, we’re full fags.’ Then they turned around and saw dozens of other people coming so they had to let us in.”

The takeover of Oct. 12 found the staff at Suite 34 completely unprepared, with extra hands having to be coralled in.

Carleton student and acting public relations representative for the group, Andrew Stewart, says he expects the nights to flourish as more and more people see how much fun there is to be had.

“We had a really good turnout the first night,” he says. “We’re estimating there were about 200 people at the second night.”

However, it’s not all rainbows. Some people in the queer community ask how would we feel if 200 straight people came to one of our bars?

“I would be absolutely thrilled,” Stewart says. “It’s all about a positive energy. It’s about showing that straight and gay people can party together.”

And Campbell agrees with Stewart’s sentiments.

More than half of the attendees are students. Campbell opens an invitation to any GLBT student to come and join the group.

“It is the perfect venue for students, especially for students who may not be out of the closet yet or may not be comfortable with themselves,” because it is a straight venue Campbell explains. “They can show up and be themselves and be who they want to be.



Andrew Stewart, public relations rep for the group, says he expects more people will be participating in future takeovers.

They can make community contacts. They can appreciate the party for what it is.”

While prominent forms of activism have been born out of aggression, Campbell says aggression is the last thing fuelling the fire.

“It’s not about a form of aggression; it’s about saying we’re here, we’re queer, we came to party. We bring our money, we bring our love and spirit to party. Straight, gay, lesbian, or transgender, we’re all just here to have a good time,” Campbell says.

photo by Bradley Turcotte

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My fair lady?

Examining the connotation of the word 'lady' and what it means in today's society

SARAH KELFORD



It has been nearly a century since Nellie McClung fought to gain equal rights and recognition for women in society—for women to no longer be submissive to their male counterparts—but how far have we really come?

Suzanne Nourse, founder and director of the Protocol School of Ottawa, is an expert on what it takes to be a modern 'lady.'

Nourse says that while women have a tendency to mimic their male counterparts in order to fit in—laughing at inappropriate jokes, for example—

such behaviour obscures their intrinsic, lady-like qualities.

Part of the problem, says Nourse, is that modern women believe they can and should have it all: the super-job, the 2.8 children and the perfect marriage. These expectations are unrealistic, she maintains, and lead women to abandon their femininity in order to fit in with—and compete against—men.

"Women can have it all, but not at the same time," says Nourse. "The reality is we are different," making it difficult for men and women to work together successfully.

This is because social and business etiquette are two very different protocols, and issues between the sexes arise when the line becomes blurred.

Nourse says that when it comes to social etiquette, sex counts: it's all about gender superiority with men being dominant. Thus, it's the lady's role to be gracious, to concern herself with how others around her feel, and above all to ensure men don't feel uncomfortable in social situations.

However, not every woman is a lady, and not every woman wants to be a lady.

Emily Fardy is a 21-year-old commissionaire with the Corps of Commissionaires (Ottawa division)—not a traditional female role. "My family allowed me to speak my mind, act like one of the guys and be independent. I am polite and can be sophisticated, but am not a stereotypical lady in respect to me burping, swearing, being submissive or allowing others to make decisions for me," says Fardy.

Christabelle Sethna, a professor at University of Ottawa, is a strong-minded working woman who has researched the origins of the word "lady."

"The word 'lady' has race and class connotations," she says. "One hundred years ago 'lady' was a white, middle- or upper-class woman, and actions from that group were considered 'ladylike.'"

Sethna describes the term as implying individual restraint, extreme politeness, being genteel, aristocratic and feeling superior to others.

The word 'lady' does not define today's women, she says.

"I don't consider myself a lady, but I am a woman," says Fardy. "You need to be self-confident, know what you want in life, and go for it. Don't take shit from people, be sensitive to others and remember who you are."

Fardy, who hopes to get married and have children one day, wants to complete her goals and realize her dreams before settling down.

She has no interest in being a lady, however—not on Nourse's terms. "There is a time and place to be sophisticated and submissive," says Fardy. "But I'm not going to be a lady. It's not my style, and I don't really think I know how to be (one)."

The majority of modern women, in fact, may not be terribly 'lady-like,' but Nellie McClung would likely be well pleased with today's versions of female strength, power and femininity.



Sarah Cacciotti's horror-inspired artwork displayed at the Comic Book Shoppe.

Pearls of Ottawa

Struggling to pursue their dream jobs, young artists are the capital's hidden gems

MICHELA ROSANO

Buried deep in Ottawa's sea of stiff white collars, navy coloured suits and shiny black shoes are the city's cultural pearls.

They are the young independent artists of Ottawa, trying to make names for themselves in the capital, where most of the attention is focused on national art institutions.

Alex Pouliotte, a 22-year-old comic artist, began drawing seriously in the tenth grade and, after high school, decided to pursue a degree in art and design with a concentration in comics at the University of Quebec.

Although there aren't as many opportunities for independent artists like Pouliotte to get jobs, he doesn't let that deter him from pursuing his passion.

"I think a lot of talented people become discouraged because of how hard it is, and by settling for other careers give up (artistic) opportunities that could be really interesting," he says.

Being an artist is difficult, he acknowledges, "but not impossible." Many art-related job opportunities and funding possibilities lie within the federal govern-

ment working on contracts, he says. "It doesn't leave a lot of room for smaller independent artists. All the big contracts are always through the government."

Peter Honeywell, executive director of the Council for the Arts in Ottawa, says that although funding in Ottawa has improved, "we're still the lowest of the large Canadian cities." He says past councillors have overlooked funding Ottawa's local arts scene due to the presence of national institutions, like the National Art Gallery, catering to people who enjoy art.

Sarah Cacciotti, a 28-year-old pen and ink artist, left a well paying job to work in retail and pursue her art. She agrees that most jobs for local artists lie in the government or corporate world.

"In graphic design there might be (jobs), but it's doing corporate logos, branding a company—boring shit. With advertising, that could be cool, but again creativity is often limited," she says.

And why search for local artists when big name artists and their pieces are so easily accessible? Ottawans are just not

supportive of local talent.

Honeywell agrees that funding for local artists is important and thinks that much of the creativity in a city comes from the local artists connecting with the people. "Creativity happens in a community, it doesn't happen in the national institutions. They're not showing local artists' work. They're not giving the local community that opportunity to connect with the creative people in it," he says.

However, Ottawa officials have recently recognized the need for more money. After contributing \$1.5 million last year, city council has committed about \$1 million over the next three years to push Ottawa up from one of the worst funded, to an averagely funded large Canadian city.

For the independent artists—the shiny new pearls trying to crack through the hard shell of Ottawa's arts scene—Honeywell says they need to be committed to their practice and know how to develop the business side of their work if they want to succeed.

Dropping down

A lifestyle change brings challenges and rewards

JENNIFER MCINTOSH

It was in a tiny, poorly-lit room with a computer and a scale that calculated my weight and body fat percentage that I decided to change my life.

I was staring at the red flashing LED screen that read 189 lbs. in an Ottawa-area Good-life Fitness Centre with my trainer Whitney Vanderleest.

“We need to look at nutrition and the kind of foods that will help you lose weight,” said Vanderleest. “We’re not looking at a diet but rather a change of lifestyle that you’ll be able to live with.”

That’s when I knew I was out of my league.

I knew before I stepped in the gym that first day that the food I ate wasn’t good for me, but it was still a shock when I did the research. One beer is, on average, 180 calories

189

I decided to change my life.

and ice cream weighs in at 130 calories per pint. My trainer wanted me to drop down to 1,400 calories per day, which left little room for my favourite snacks.

“If you stick with foods that are high in protein like turkey and cheese, and eat more often, you’ll have fewer cravings,” said Vanderleest. She also said that on days when I wasn’t working out I should be drinking at least a litre and a half of water to flush out my system and keep cravings at bay.

“I never recommend that people go on a diet,” adds Madeline Edwards, a registered dietitian. “In order for people to lose weight, and more importantly keep it off, they must make changes that are sustainable in the long term. It is just as important to follow an



Working with personal trainer Whitney Vanderleest helped Jennifer McIntosh drop 24 lbs. over the past six months.

active lifestyle in addition to making healthy eating choices. One doesn’t work without the other.”

In our fast-paced society, many people don’t take frequent snack breaks so at the end of the day they end up pigging out.

According to Statistics Canada, obesity rates in this country have nearly doubled among adults and almost tripled among children over the past 25 years.

This is a problem because serious health risks are associated with obesity including high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease.

But once a person makes the decision to shed those pounds, there

are a variety of services available to help them. Exercise with healthy eating can help you to shed weight more quickly, can add energy and will help improve your overall health in other ways.

“The change has to be something you can live with,” says Vanderleest. “Otherwise once you’ve lost the weight, your old habits will come back and so will the weight.”

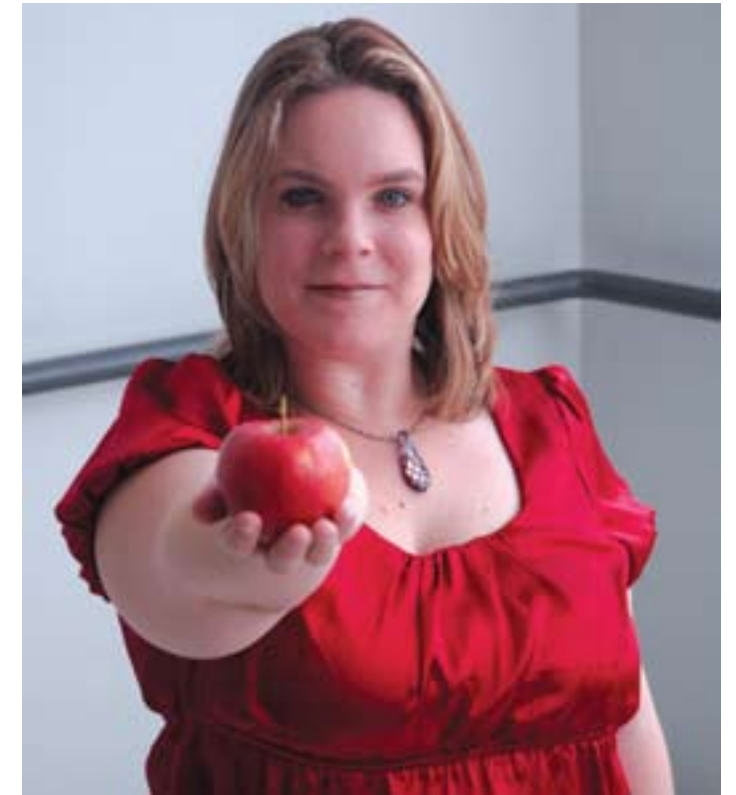
My own exercise program had to be tailored toward weight loss rather than muscle gain. It would mean months of cardio and spending three half hour sessions per week with my trainer.

“A lot of clients tell me that the one thing driving them to go to the gym is the fact that I’m here waiting for them,” says Vanderleest. “You simply don’t push yourself as hard as a trainer pushes you.”

People can choose from over 200 gyms and fitness centres in Ottawa, or simply choose their exercise regime through a DVD or instructional books. Whatever option they choose, nothing tastes as good as being thin feels. I still have a long way to go, but since June, that flashing LED now reads 165 lbs.

165

Nothing tastes as good as thin feels.



Jen McIntosh knows that healthy eating is an important part of a weightloss regime.

STAPLES
Got Sticky with Glue!

The Glue staff would like to thank Staples Business Depot for supplying the glue used for our “Sticky Situation” event to set a Guinness World Record for having the most people glued together at one time.

glue
The Ottawa Student Magazine

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photo by Jenny Potter

photo by Carolyn Vasquez

Girls on wheels

Roller derby league comes to Ottawa

JENNY POTTER

Walking into the James Patrick Sports Centre on Monday nights and past the game of poker at the canteen, you will find an arena full of women in roller skates, short shorts and fishnets screaming and pushing each other around.

This is the scene of the revival roller derby, a sport that Ottawa league founder Kelly McAlear says is as graceful as it is aggressive.

Since May, Kelly "Honey Bee" McAlear has been on a mission to revive a sport that died in the '70s. Along with discotheques, roller rinks disappeared, leaving a savage, skillful and often bloody sport with no place to play.

Derby dates back to the 1920s with a popularity that blanketed North America. The rough and tumble sport has two teams of fishnet clad women on roller skates chasing each other around a rink.

The goal is to block the opposing team and race around them to gain points. The sport itself is riddled with complex rules, but that hasn't deterred new leagues from popping up across Canada and the United States.

"There aren't a lot of contact sports for women," says McAlear. "I'm surprised it hasn't grown faster in Canada considering it's an indoor sport and you can play it all year round."

McAlear's crusade to bring derby to Ottawa started at the Babylon night club last May when she posted the city and lugged skates to the bar with hopes of recruiting enough women to form a team.

People showed up and tried skating around the club as McAlear handed out coupons to her roller derby 101 workshop. The workshop paved the way to form Ottawa's only team, the Bytowne Blackhearts.

With Monday night practices at a grungy floor hockey



The Bytowne Blackhearts roller derby team practices at the James Patrick Sports Centre every Monday.

arena, about 15 women gather in short shorts and tights, ready to race.

"It's strong women and a strong sport," says Patrice Brennan who has been skating with the Blackhearts since the summer.

Lauren Hart, aka Sister Disaster, says that there is a culture behind roller derby that attracts a certain type of girl.

"There's a kitsch element to it. A subculture," says volunteer coach Louise Jones. "It attracts women who are not afraid of contact sports."

McAlear says that there is an element of burlesque that attracts women.

"It has made me even more feminine, because I get my aggression out at the rink." Getting comfortable on skates is the first big step and racing around tight curves on a tile floor is bound to assure scrapes and bruises.

"It makes you powerful," says Hart. "I think the bruises are badges of honour. It means you did something and survived."

The Blackhearts are still building their skill set so they can make their debut with a bang. "They are a bit more afraid than they

need to be," says Jones. "Good teams are more about skills, and we are working on endurance, skills and strength."

As the only team in Ottawa, it might be a while for a league to be redeveloped in the city. "Right now we don't have another venue," says McAlear.

Despite the lack of play area, the retro aspect of the sport is allowing the Blackhearts to pick up new players almost every week. With a documentary just completed by Carleton Masters journalism students, and Ottawa's Guerilla magazine publishing Blackheart trading cards of the girls, it's no surprise the sport had sped back into the capital and the spotlight.

photo by Jenny Potter

glue event listings

babylon nightclub

Thursdays

Rock 'n Roll Pizza Party
w/ DJ's Luke Nuclear
and B-Rad

NO COVER

Sundays

Mod Club Dance Party
w/ DJ's Gaz and Emmett

NO COVER

Last Saturday Every Month

GRIND - Dancehall and
Southern Hip Hop

barrymore's

Thursdays

Retro 90s Night
w/ DJ's Cowboy
and Indian

NO COVER

Sundays

Retro 80s Night
w/ DJ's Ellen and JP

NO COVER

mercury lounge

Thursdays

Muyafrofunk
w/ Trevor Walker

Fridays

Elemental Soul
w/ DJs Lance Baptiste
and Jaxpratt

Saturdays

Life Boogie
w/ Trevor Walker



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How **safe** is your school?

A **Glue** reporter
takes a look
at **security**
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procedures
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campuses

HEATHER ROSE

Even after dark, the University of Ottawa's campus is buzzing with activity: students engaging in late-night swim meets and sporting events, heading out to the pubs or returning to residence from evening classes.

A person who doesn't belong, wandering the halls and trying all the doors, goes unnoticed by passersby, except for a few who stop to offer assistance or directions. It is well into the school year, and it should no longer be expected to see a lost freshman trying to find a lecture hall.

Late at night, many classrooms remain unlocked. Some have doors propped open and one even has a broken-off door knob, allowing entry to the auditorium-style space filled with vacant chairs.

Lately, Ottawa campuses haven't exactly been shining examples of safe haven, with several highly-publicized incidents of violence taking place since last September. A brutal sexual assault in the Steacie building at Carleton University, an assault at the University of Ottawa and a string of high school lockdowns are doing their part to keep the topic of school violence timely and fresh.

Factor in the infamous slaughters at Virginia Tech, Montreal's Dawson College shooting and the rape of two women at a York University residence, and it might seem there is a pandemic of school-related violence on hand.

In the wake of these horrific events, one might expect campus security to be tight. But how prepared is security at Ottawa's three largest campuses, and what are the policies designed to keep students safe?

Across town from the University of Ottawa, Carleton University employs 19 special constables and 22 student safety patrollers. According to Len Boudreault, director of Carleton's University Safety Department, some doors at Carleton are locked at night, but not all: it varies from building to building. He says this is due to student demand for 24-hour work labs.

Late-night access to the campus is partly blamed for the violent sexual assault of a female student who, in September, was working alone in a science lab in the Steacie building around midnight. According to Boudreault, Steacie security has remained largely unchanged.

"The security in the Steacie building is still the same," says Bou-



photos by Marcus Callaghan

Everyone has a swipe card, but they didn't really pay attention if you brought people in.

dreault. "Still locked up at the appointed hours, there's still building patrols going through it, there's still a Work After Hours program that's run by our department."

"There's still the availability of escorts," he adds, "should people wish to use them. Whether or not any internal departments have made any changes to their security protocols, I really don't know."

In fact, each of the city's three major campuses have seen sexual assaults in 2006: five attacks at Carleton University, one at the University of Ottawa, and one at Algonquin College during the three-month reporting period between October to December.

Both universities have about one security guard for every 1,000 students; Algonquin College has approximately one security guard for every 800 students.

"I don't think anybody that's running any security organization would say they don't need more (staff)," says Boudreault. "Every-

body's under the same stressors—trying to do more with less—but you need to face reality and sometimes you need to be creative in how you do your work."

The University of Ottawa is doing just this. Nathalie Jacob, coordinator of prevention programs, says the school is reviewing its Info-Crime program, the awareness campaign to inform students about security.

The Info-Crime program, according to former students, used to include a map of the campus in the Jock-Turcotte building, using pins to indicate where attacks and incidents had occurred on campus.

It has since been taken down.

"The map is part of our Info-Crime program review," writes Jacob in an e-mail. "Until we have finalized our review, we don't wish to put it back up to mislead students that would misinterpret the map or take the statistics out of context as it has occurred in the

the door once one person swipes their card. And because there are no turnstiles, students can easily enter through the exit doors when others come out.

Third-year criminology student Laura Moffatt lived in Glen-garry residence at Carleton during her first year, and says residence security was relatively relaxed there, too.

"Everyone has a swipe card, but they didn't really pay attention if you brought people in," says Moffatt. "I brought people in to visit me, they had suitcases, and (front desk) still didn't say anything."

Moffatt says this should have been caught.

"It was right next to the residence desk," she says. "So you'd think they would notice, but they would never stop you."

On one occasion, Moffatt forgot her swipe card in her room and was trying to get the front desk to let her in. She says the front desk did ask her for her name and room number, but she had no identification to prove who she was.

"I was asking them to let me in, but what happened was someone else opened the door with their swipe card, and they were like, 'there you go.'"

Algonquin College biotechnology students Cheryl Downing and Jessica Cyr say they feel security is doing their job both in the residence and on campus, even though residence can be easily accessed by strangers.

"I feel pretty safe here, inside ... I never worry about anything like that," says Cyr.

Downing agrees.

"It's pretty good. I always see the campus (security) running around in their car," says Downing. "I've walked around campus at 2 a.m. and there's always security around, so I feel pretty safe."

Both students say residence advisors make frequent rounds and usually act quickly if there is an incident or a fight.

"I witnessed one (fight) just about to start, but the RA ran in and broke it up right away," says Downing.

All three Ottawa campuses have either just reviewed their security procedures or are currently in the process of doing so.

Colin Bonang, leader of the Safety and Security Services team at Algonquin College, says they reviewed procedures following the incidents at Dawson College and Virginia Tech.

For example, Algonquin finished installing its Emergency Broadcast System in the spring of 2007. The

system, a \$400,000, three-phase project, made every telephone on campus, including those in classrooms, capable of sending and receiving text and voice messages, which in turn allow broadcasts to be made over speakers throughout the campus.

The University of Ottawa has upgraded its systems too, installing new emergency phones throughout the campus. Now, with the simple push of a button, students have immediate communication with Protection Services.

Carleton University, meanwhile, has posted its emergency situation protocols on its website, which was updated in May of last year.

In short, each time a security threat arises on a North American campus, Ottawa schools take a look at their own systems.

But is this enough? Instead of responding to tragic events elsewhere, could Ottawa's campus security services be looking to improve everyday?



Eric Kelly, drug user since he was a teenager.

photo by Ben Costen

GRAM

by gram

A *Glue* reporter gets a look at the life of a homeless drug addict while examining the city's crack problem

JOCELYN COOPER

The smell of damp wood and urine fills my nostrils as I walk into the back entrance of the Shepherds of Good Hope shelter on Murray Street. I climb the wide staircase in front of me to an open doorway that, considering the smell of breakfast food now also permeating the air, I assume leads to a kitchen.

A smiling but brisk woman darts out from around the corner and sends me up another flight of stairs to the reception and office area, where I am to meet with Rob Eady, senior manager of public relations and the fundraising team for the shelter.

As soon as I step into the odourless air of the upstairs office, I instinctively feel more comfortable, and mentally scold myself for being so prissy.

The receptionist distractedly gestures for me to sit down as she talks on the phone, which rings again as soon as it's hung up.

I wait only a few moments before Rob appears.

"Is it 10 already?" he asks, a bit out of breath.

"Yup," I answer stupidly, feeling more and more naïve for interrupting these busy people's lives for a magazine article about crack heads written by an upper-middle class student. But he smiles, invites me into his office and offers me literature about the shelter.

The Shepherds of Good Hope is a homeless shelter whose mandate is to treat all people with equal kindness, respect and

compassion. Formed in 1983 as an emergency shelter at St. Brigid's Church, Shepherds has developed to include several programs, one of which is the Hope Recovery shelter—a refuge for those under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

"It's basically a safe, dry—well not so much dry, but out of the elements place—for people under the influence," says Eady. "Instead of being intoxicated on a park bench somewhere, they have a bed where they can come down and recover."

Hope Recovery also accepts those individuals who have been barred from other shelters for bad or uncontrollable behaviour.

"Instead of going to jail, they come here," Eady explains. "They can stay as long as they want. Some stay a couple of days and actually get into treatment, but there's no pressure on them."

Hope Recovery is just one of many outreach programs trying to battle the increase of hard drug use in Canada, and more specifically, the problem of crack in Ottawa. Homeless people in particular are abusing the drug due to its prevalence in the downtown area where there is an abundance of shelters.

"It's cheap to purchase and readily available, and homeless people are victimized as a result," says Ottawa Police Staff Sergeant Paul Johnston. "They aggressively panhandle and use the money to purchase crack-cocaine. It's extremely addictive."

The problem is reflected in the tenants at Hope Recovery.

“Usually the people that we get are high on crack or cocaine,” says Eady. “Some are on crystal meth, heroine, morphine, different opiates—we’ve had a wide variety of different drugs—but for the most part it’s crack.”

According to the most recent Canadian Addiction Survey conducted in 2005 by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, cocaine or crack-cocaine is the third most widely used drug in Canada after marijuana and hallucinogens.

From 1994 to 2004, the number of Canadians who had used cocaine and/or crack had nearly tripled from 3.8 per cent to 10.6 per cent.

What is most alarming is that according to the latest study provided by Statistics Canada, illicit drug use is most common with those aged 15-24. Over 30 per cent of individuals in this age group reported having used drugs in 2002, the year the study was conducted.

**“I’ve got HIV,
he says point
blank. “I’ve lost
my life to it.”**

But Joanne MacGregor, manager of the drop-in centre at Operation Go Home, a program that reaches out to kids on the street, believes statistics on drug use, particularly regarding youth, are often skewed, and the real numbers may be much higher.

“It’s funny, we did a survey just to see where our kids are at,” she says. “We had an outside organization do it and asked them about their family history, mental health issues, addiction issues they’re going through, and one of the questions was ‘do you do drugs?’ Well, we did 50 surveys and I believe 40 out of the 50 said no. Now, I know the list of 50 people who took the survey and I know full well that they’re doing something.”

She says that Operation Go Home provides support to kids aged 16-25 through a “face-to-face, immediate approach” so they have a chance to get to know and trust the staff.

They go to the drop-in to access the breakfast program or computers there and eventually start talking to the staff about the serious problems in their lives. MacGregor identifies drug addiction as one of the biggest issues, and Operation Go Home acts as a filter, by streamlining the kids into different programs that can help them.

“They’ll come to the drop-in, talk to us and we’ll say, ‘give this guy a call, or ‘I know somebody who works here, he’s awesome!’” says MacGregor. “It gives us a chance to get to know them a little more personally and also hook them up with the services that are more specific to their needs.”

She estimates that about 95 per cent of the youth that visit the drop-in have drug problems, and lists crack, marijuana and ecstasy as the most commonly used substances.

“With my kids, there’s definitely a significant amount of them doing crack,” she says. “There’s no doubt about it. I can see the burns on their lips, the strung-out look on their faces—you just get to recognize it.”

And according to MacGregor, they know where and how easy it is to get it. She says the kids refer to the area around Shepherds and Centre 454, a shelter next to Shepherds, as “Crackton.” Because there are so many dealers around there, they know it’s where you go to get crack in Ottawa.

“It’s kind of a scary place,” she says. “If we could get everyone in the city to just go over there—experience what it’s really like—we wouldn’t have so many problems with drugs.”

I’m in Rob’s office for less than a minute before he throws his jacket back on.

“Alright, let’s go see who’s around,” he says.

My heart pounds in my chest as he leads me back downstairs. I tug at my earlobe—purposely bare for the first time in years due to the guilt I felt at wearing jewellery to interview a homeless person.

“So it’s a drug addict specifically that you wanted to talk to?” Rob asks, interrupting my thoughts as we walk out the doors.

I nod grimly, thinking it’s a long shot, but as we cross the street I stop thinking altogether.

A group of people—some young enough to be in high school—are gathered outside another branch of the shelter. It’s a gloomy morning and

curls of cigarette smoke and frozen breath drift between their rotten teeth into the air.

I passed by them on my way in earlier and had tried my best to ignore them.

Now, as we approach, they greet Rob like a friend and I’m ashamed of myself.

He explains what I want to the man closest to us, who obligingly hurries away to find an addict willing to talk to me.

As we wait, I can’t help staring at an older woman who is crawling around to my right, her face inches from the sidewalk. I write her off, ignorantly assuming she’s just crazy.

But Rob catches me looking and tells me in a low voice that she’s looking for crack. My eyes widen and I can’t look away.

“She’s in rough shape,” he says as we both watch her—a shell of a person—at the mercy of a few white crystals.

Since the cancellation of the crack pipe program last year, which allowed users free access to all the tools needed to smoke crack, MacGregor says the city of Ottawa is receiving a lot of backlash. She is among those who feel it’s a shame the program was cancelled.

“It alienates people and lets them know that we don’t give a crap about their addiction—that’s really what it boils down to,” she says. “As far as I know, no social service agencies were contacted. It was just ‘we’re cancelling the program, get rid of everything you have, you’re not getting any more free stuff from us and we’re closing all the outlets down.’”

She believes the decision was made based on how the downtown community feels.

“The argument is that it’s encouraging crack use, that it’s not stopping it in the downtown area,” says MacGregor. “Community members are feeling uncomfortable because people are throwing their stuff everywhere, plus they’ve got a bunch of people who are

among Ottawa’s homeless, and one that isn’t going away.

The man who set off to find me an interviewee returns with another man in tow. My first reaction is that he’s made a mistake. His dark-haired companion looks so normal.

Carrying a mug and folded blanket from inside the shelter, he approaches us, smiles at Rob and introduces himself to me as Eric.

The three of us move to a nearby stoop and Eric settles the blanket down on the cold concrete for me to sit on. I suddenly have a flashback to my trip downtown earlier that morning, when a man in a suit shoved me out of the way as he got off the bus.

We sit, and up-close I can see the bags under Eric’s eyes, the lines on his face and the way his hand shakes as he holds his mug.



Left: Ken Sinclair has been on the streets since 1988. He is addicted to crack-cocaine and marijuana and also suffers from schizophrenia. Right: Joanne MacGregor, manager of the drop-in at Operation Go Home, an outreach centre for homeless youth in Ottawa, sees the effects of crack on the city’s youth every day.

addicted to crack walking around their neighbourhood.”

Johnston explains the catalyst for stopping the program was a video recorded by a downtown business owner that showed people sharing crack pipes.

“Sharing was readily admitted,” he says. “The city therefore didn’t have any proof that the program was eliminating the spread of HIV and Hepatitis C.”

MacGregor, however, still favours the harm reduction model. Operation Go Home continues to offer a needle exchange for those whose injection drugs, and she feels it’s a way to keep tabs on how they’re doing. “It gives me a chance to do a bit of informal counselling. It helps me keep these kids in check. I mean, yeah, they’re still doing injection drugs, but at least they’re coming in once a week. They’re alive, they’re surviving – I’m okay with that.”

Nevertheless, it’s crack that continues to be the biggest problem

I get my recorder out and we begin.

“I use everything from crack-cocaine to smack,” he tells me. “And from what I’ve seen, crack is the most common around here.”

The 37-year-old has been using since he “was a child.”

“It was at least my teenage years and for the same reason you start anything. I saw a bunch of adults sitting around smoking marijuana and I just joined the program.”

He explains why he feels the downtown area has become such a breeding ground for drugs. Because most addicts’ lives are affected by poverty in the first place, and there are so many shelters in the area, it’s just a natural neighbourhood for them to live.

“All available systems for impoverished people are here,” he says. “They’ll come in for a bite to eat and pick up a fix at the same time.”

And how has Eric’s need for a fix affected his life?

“I’ve got HIV,” he says point blank. “I’ve lost my life to it.”



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I am online now.

Baring it all

People expose their whole lives on facebook, but the popular social network might not be as safe as you think

▼ The Wall

ERIN KRISTALYN

After spending a year on Facebook, Justine Chapman deactivated her account. The Carleton University history student got creeped out. She thought it was weird that people could see the parties she was attending, pictures of her and who she was talking to. But the final straw came when her friend's boyfriend's friend found her by browsing the site, thought they looked alike and asked to borrow her ID. Chapman is now Facebook-free and says she won't sign back on again.

She's one of a very few, however. Facebook is the most visited website in Canada, according to Alexa Internet, Inc., a company that provides information and data on Web traffic. Not only that, but from January to August, 2007, the number of Canadian users on the site grew by five times to over 3.5 million.

Like Chapman, Carlisle Adams isn't among the rising number

of users on the site, and says he won't be any time soon. The member of the Privacy Commissioner's Office External Committee and professor in the School of Information Technology and Engineering at the University of Ottawa says, "I find it scary, so I don't have a Facebook account. I'm not on it. Everything that I hear about it sounds pretty scary to me."

It's the issue of privacy on the site that has some concerned. In fact, Adams sees four areas in particular that Facebook users should be aware of: the risk of becoming victim to identity theft, physical danger, lack of control over one's own content, and the long-term implications of uploading to the site.

He warns that users should be aware of divulging too much personal information on their accounts. "People put enough information out there, including their name, address, phone number, birth

photo by Miranda Grigor

Justine Chapman, Carleton University history student deleted her Facebook account after a year because she did not feel her privacy was protected. Chapman said she also prefers calling her friends, rather than writing on their facebook wall or messaging them.

Photos of you added by others
 photo 1 of 1 back to photos of you Previous Next



From the album: "Facebook" by Glue

In this photo: Justine Chapman (photos remove tag)

date," he says. "It's enough information that somebody could take that information and become that person in some other context."

According to the Privacy Commissioner's Office, thousands of people are victim to identity theft each year, and putting personal information on the Web—a public domain—makes an identity thief's job that much easier.

Michael Geist, Canadian Research Chair of Internet and E-commerce law at the University of Ottawa, says that although people use Facebook as a means to provide an enormous amount of their personal information online, there is some good news. "There are a lot of choices to be made for individuals about the kind of privacy protection they want for their particular information, like who can access it and what's displayed."

But Adams isn't so sure, and says that refining your privacy settings may not be enough. He suggests that further studies should probe deeper into Facebook's security. "When you set your preferences, how does the system actually enforce that?" he asks. "My guess is that people can read that stuff if they want to because virtually all

software has bugs."

Facebook's privacy policy even states that "no security measures are perfect or impenetrable" and that users post content on the site at their own risk.

And regardless of the available privacy options, this only applies to those who actually adjust them from the default settings. "The problem is that according to Facebook—and this was a comment by a Facebook representative just last week at a conference I was at—between 70 and 80 per cent of Facebook users never change the default settings," says Geist.

When a new account is created and the user joins a network, the privacy settings are defaulted at a low setting. So initially, anyone in the user's network can see his or her entire profile.

Catherine Dwyer has been conducting research on social networking Websites, in particular Facebook and MySpace, as part of her doctoral dissertation at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. She says you can never know what level of privacy information has online. "You're just guessing in terms of setting some of this stuff," Dwyer

says. Ultimately though, experts say that some safety measures are better than none.

Adams says that Facebook users also place themselves in jeopardy by putting their schedules—school, work and social—on their profiles.

Pamela Cole, human kinetics student at the University of Ottawa, doesn't post her class schedule online, but does confirm event invitations and sometimes creates her own. She says all her friends use this feature to keep in touch.

"If you're having an event, it's a fast, easy way to get the word out," she says. "It's easy access to details like when and where. People use it as an invitation, an electronic RSVP."

However useful it may be, Facebook users take a physical risk when they do this, especially if their privacy settings are wide open. "As soon as you put that information there, somebody reading that knows when you're going to be where," Adams says. "If they know your whereabouts, then they know when and where you are vulnerable."

Cole can see how posting your schedules can go beyond just letting friends know what party you'll be at. "One time I over-

heard a guy saying he found a girl with the exact same class schedule as his (by searching Facebook), and was now looking for her in class," she says.

This comes back to how the site's infrastructure contributes to one's level of privacy. Kiyoshi Martinez, University of Illinois graduate, created the Students for Facebook Privacy group on the site after the company introduced the News Feed in the fall of 2006.

This feature, a list of news stories about users' friends' activities on the site, is displayed when a user logs in to Facebook. For example, when users upload new photo albums, their friends receive an update on their News Feeds.

Martinez and his roommate, Jeremy Pelzer, thought this feature was "ridiculous" and invasive. "If you're doing something, to have it broadcast to all your friends, even if it's something innocuous, it takes away from the fun of (Facebook)," says Pelzer.

After many similar groups and petitions by users popped up, people are now able to opt out of the News Feed feature if they choose, reducing their risk of feeling violated.

While physical danger is a risk on Facebook, lack of control over dissemination of your information is another, and one that many are becoming more aware of.

Content from Facebook accounts is now being used by police and reporters when crimes are committed and when someone dies. Personal photos are being taken from the site and printed in newspapers, and wall postings are being used to cultivate suspects and sources.

Users can never be completely sure of where their information goes when it's uploaded to the Internet, but Adams warns that it could be taken by other users or even Facebook itself.

Dwyer says the policies of websites can be very complicated. "I don't think anybody understands privacy policies except maybe the privacy officer," she says.

This is true of any privacy policy, says Adams, but people should still read the Facebook policy carefully.

"If you look at the privacy policy of Facebook, they essentially say that they own

whatever you enter," he says. "So the information—pictures, a blog—all the stuff you put on your entry is actually owned by them rather than by you."

Pelzer, co-creator of the Students for Facebook Privacy group, says most just assume that Facebook's policy is fair. "I think they just have assumptions like, 'well if my friends are on it and they're not complaining about it then it's going to be safe and protective of me also.'"

Dwyer says she has some theories as to why Facebook users trust the site. Because

Most people when they're 18 or 20 are not thinking about what their life will be like when they're 40.

users don't create screen names it seems more authentic than MySpace, and it gives them reassurance. "They have made privacy more of an issue too," Dwyer says.

But what does privacy even mean?

"I think it's very poorly defined," says Dwyer. "You have to really think about the many different scenarios and go through them yourself logically before you can get a sense of what your own expectations of privacy are."

Despite individual definitions of privacy, every user should really be concerned with the long-term implications Facebook actions could have on their future. "All that information might come back to haunt them because nobody has any idea, as far as I'm aware, how long any of this information might be retained," Adams says.

In fact, according to the site's privacy policy, when a user updates information, Facebook keeps "a backup copy of the prior version for a reasonable period of time to enable reversion to the prior version of that information."

Even after a user removes content from their profile, it's impossible to determine

who's already taken the information. Of course, the concern of some now is whether potential employers are viewing Facebook accounts.

"I do know two people who actually took down their Facebook as they were heading out on the job market specifically because of that," says Dwyer. "I think there will be some extreme cases, before it'll settle in to being standard practice. There will probably be more tolerance as time goes on."

Adam Fairbairn, 19, has watched his friend experience this problem first-hand. Last fall, several employees were fired from Ottawa Farm Boy grocery stores after the company saw their postings on the Facebook group I Got Farmboy'd. Fairbairn says his friend Devon Bourgeois was fired from the chain after making an implicit remark about stealing food while at work.

"I believe it was totally wrong," says Fairbairn, who worked at Farm Boy at the time and is now the administrator of the

group. "It was right of free speech. They should've been talked to about it, but it's a personal group."

Because news stories were written about his actions on Facebook, Bourgeois will carry the stigma of his postings with him. Future employers or girlfriends can just google his name and find his posts.

Adams says most people he talks to aren't thinking long-term when they post something on their profile. "Most people when they're 18 or 20 are not thinking about what their life will be like when they're 40," he says. "It just seems like forever away, so they just don't give it any consideration. But 40 comes pretty quickly."

Pelzer agrees. "I'm just waiting for the time in about 2050, when all these presidential candidates have pictures of them from today doing keg stands, doing all sort of illicit activity," he says.

While users aren't likely to deactivate their profiles anytime soon, awareness and education is key. "You just have to figure out a way to use it so that you're comfortable with it and will be comfortable with it as time goes on," Dwyer says.



Kayla Lefebvre, a pre-service fire education and training student at Algonquin College helps drain some water in a practical class.



Shirley Graves, has been taking care of her family farm for the last 25 years.



Lyndsay Wallis, a building construction technician student at Algonquin College helps build a shed with her classmates.

Breaking down barriers

More and more females are overcoming gender stereotypes and pursuing careers in what used to be ‘male-dominated’ fields

JULIE BARNEY

With her muddy work boots, slush pants and baseball cap on, Shirley Graves looks like she is prepared to face a major downpour, but there isn't a cloud in the sky. The mother of two is decked out in her protective gear because she is on her way to the family barn to do her morning chores and tend to 60-odd sheep.

Having grown up on a farm just outside of Smiths Falls, Graves

wanted to continue the farming lifestyle she had grown to love over the years by establishing a farm near Ottawa. Over 25 years ago, Graves and her husband, Robert, purchased some land and an 1860 farmhouse near Stittsville.

There was lots of work to be done when they first purchased their home, so the couple split up the tasks. Robert was in charge of the home renovations and Shirley with the reconstruction of the

photo by Julie Barney

barn and making the farm operational.

“The men in the area were not used to working with women, so when I phoned to order fertilizer, or I would phone to get bailing done for hay, they were very uncomfortable,” says Graves. “It didn't really bother me because I was fairly confident in my knowledge base, but it really bothered them because they weren't used to dealing with women.”

Equity and diversity in the workforce has changed significantly since Graves first decided to run her own farm. Over the last 25 years, statistics have shown there has been a significant increase in women who have chosen career paths in fields that were once dominated by men—notably in the police and fire services, trades and agriculture.

Tess Porter, who resigned as a police officer and is now a full-time professor in the police foundations program at Algonquin College, wanted to be a police officer since she was a young girl.

“Because it was so male-dominated at the time, people said, ‘You don't want to do that, there are safety issues, you're a female,’” says Porter. “So it was sort of frowned upon and my family said it wasn't

photos by Elm Kristalyn

a good idea.”

Despite the discouragement, the desire to enter the policing field came to her again, so she went to school part-time for advanced police sciences at Algonquin College to enhance her knowledge in the area of policing.

“I knew that there was a huge [hiring] competition back then in the '90s and there weren't that many women, so you had to be competitive,” says Porter.

Pete Thompson, coordinator of police foundations at Algonquin College, can attest to Porter's experience. When he first joined the RCMP in 1976, the force had just started to integrate women into their training program and it was the first time they were training men and women together. Since then, the RCMP has hired more women and the force is now comprised of more than 18 per cent female police officers.

The RCMP is hiring 2,000 people each year for the next five years to fill positions in new national security sections created since Sept. 11 and many of these positions will be available to females.

Thompson says he has seen a natural evolution of women enter-

ing the police foundations program in recent years.

“I think it is just a changing demographic and women are now looking more outside of traditional roles and becoming aware of different industries in Canada,” says Thompson.

Aside from employment in Canadian police forces, data from the 1996 and 2001 Census of Canada show that women in the Ottawa region are slowly venturing into non-traditional jobs.

In 2001, the Ottawa Fire Services implemented a new physical ability testing that would enable them to hire firefighters who are physically capable to do the job. The test, which was designed to attract more women to the service, would be free of gender bias.

As a result, the number of women working for the Ottawa Fire Services has increased, with 41 women working today in various departments within the Ottawa Professional Firefighters Association and approximately 38 volunteer female firefighters, out of 628 volunteers, that currently service the rural areas.

Kayla Lefebvre, a pre-service fire education and training student at Algonquin College, is one of the increasing number of women who is looking for a career in the fire service.

Before entering the program, Lefebvre got to experience first hand what it's like to work in the service by volunteering with the Phelps Volunteer Fire Brigade in North Bay and through a co-op placement at the North Bay Fire Department.

Although the younger men at the North Bay Fire Department treated her as part of the team, it wasn't always easy being a female amongst all the men.

“The older guys didn't want to talk to me, they asked me why I was here,” she says.

“They told me that you have to be strong to do this job and it's hard work, but eventually they started seeing that I could do most of the stuff, so they started treating me better.”

Dianna McAleer, a professor in the Police & Public Safety Institute at Algonquin College, also sees some of the biases within the fire services. She says the 2-3 women who enter the pre-service fire education and training program each year, feel like they have to be “super women” because they have to prove themselves.

“Fire fighting is definitely a brotherhood, even more so than policing, for the older firefighters,” says McAleer. “It takes a strong woman to break in, I mean mentally strong. You just have so much more work to do than the men to get recognized and respected.”

Lefebvre agrees. “It seems like I work just as hard as the guys, but you have to just push yourself a little more.”

Lyndsay Wallis, a building construction technician student at Algonquin College, offers a perspective from another field. According to data from the 1996 and 2001 Census, the number of women working in construction related fields in the Ottawa region rose

84 per cent between 1996 and 2001. But Wallis, who would like to work in renovation, home design and building construction, says she still felt she had to prove herself to skeptical male colleagues, when she first started working at Home Depot in the lumber and building materials department.

“I had to show the guys how good I worked because when they would see a woman coming in and working on the floor, they're like, ‘if a girl is working, I really don't have to work as hard,’” says Wallis.

Comparison between sexes seems to be a common thread among women in male-dominated fields.

Thompson says one of the things he notices with the women in the police foundations program is how they are always comparing themselves to the men.

“For a lot of the girls here, when I coach them, I say, ‘Look in the mirror, that police force is interested in you. They are interested in you because of who you are and the way you think.’”

Porter says she tells her female students they have to be confident in themselves.

“Not everybody is going to be warm to you,” she says. “They are going to question you and your abilities all the time. You have to be able to say to yourself ‘I'm confident, I know what I'm doing, I'm qualified, I

passed all the testing,’ and that's how you have to think of it in any sort of male-oriented field—doesn't matter what it is.”

She adds, “don't dwell on that gender issue as much because a lot of times, when people talk to you, they don't really see gender, they see a police officer.”

One of the hurdles many females have to face when applying for positions is being able to compete with men on all levels, especially physical strength.

In 2001, the Ottawa Fire Services modified their physical testing, to what they felt would be fairer for males, females and visible minorities.

Barbara Yeo, a human resources consultant for Fire Services says strength is one of the problems female applicants have when performing the physical testing.

“If you've got a woman who is about 120 pounds and adding an extra 75 pounds of extra weight to her frame, to mimic what you are wearing in a day to day fire, such as your bunker gear and your air pack, sometimes it is a strength issue,” says Yeo.

“Having said that, we've got female firefighters on the force now that are not that big and they can handle it quite well.”

McAleer adds that they do not relax standards or requirements for women trying to get into the fire service, because deaths could be the result.

Applicants who are looking for a career in the RCMP must also perform a physical ability test, where they must run an obstacle course and demonstrate physical strength.

It takes a strong woman to break in, I mean mentally strong. You just have so much more work to do than the men to get recognized and respected.



Police foundations students, Corrine Perrier, left and Ashleigh Craig, far right, are joined by police officers, middle, Cst. Isabelle Coady and Cst. Lori Fahay, who teach part-time at Algonquin College, when they are not working for the Ottawa Police Service. The students were participating in mock situations in one of their practical classes, where they had to demonstrate what they would do in difficult situations.

Acting Cpl. Marie-Josée Tardif, who is a recruiter for the RCMP, says females typically do well on the obstacle course, but have a harder time in the strength section.

Tardif trains every month, with applicants, most of them women, who are having difficulties passing the test.

“They are not disqualified if they do not pass the PARE (physical ability test) the first time,” says Tardif. “What I do is train with them and send them home with a list of exercises to do and then they come back a month or two down the road and they try it again. It gives them a way to gauge their progress and what they need to improve.”

Porter says although some people have the impression they lower the physical standards for women in the police force, it's false because that would be a liability for the service.

“If you see an officer, it doesn't matter if they are male or female, black or white; they all passed the same qualifications, because every year a police officer has to pass their qualifications in their fire arms and defensive tactics,” says Porter. “Those two components you have to pass.”

Another barrier women face when they consider careers that require physical strength, is the long-term effect daily tasks will have on their ability to perform during the latter part of their careers, as they enter their forties and fifties.

Graves, who is now in her fifties and has been taking care of her family farm for 25 years, believes there are some careers that

women are not able to do as they get older because they don't have the same physical strength or agility as they used to.

“I think that there are very few jobs in this world that a woman can't do,” said Graves. “I think we are all born equal, but as you get older, there is no question that your strength diminishes quicker than a man's.”

“The disadvantage of being a woman in agriculture is that there is an age that you don't have the physical strength to do the work that is required to be successful in the job.”

Wallis, as well wonders if she will be able to work in the building construction field when she is older because there are so few women who are in their 40s or 50s, who are still working in that field.

“I work with a lot of ladies who are contractors that got out of the field just because it was hard on their bodies,” says Wallis. “I guess it depends on how you take care of your body.” Wallis says it wouldn't shock her if, 20 years from now, she wasn't working in her field of study.

But that doesn't mean women should steer clear of physically demanding jobs.

Porter, who entered the police service despite discouragement, says it is very important for young girls to believe in themselves and their career choices.

“If you feel that you have it, you should go for it,” says Porter. “Don't let anybody stop you; you are just as good as the next person or even better.”

In his shoes

Brian Eng proves that nursing isn't just for women

CINDY ORTI



photo by Cindy Orti

As Brian Eng walks into class, he sits down, takes out his pen and binder, and patiently waits for the day's lecture to begin. He looks around. To his left, a group of female students discuss what they're going to wear to next week's nursing pub. To his right, one girl is telling another how she hates the colour of her nail polish. Behind him, a girl wonders whether the ends of her hair are split, and in front of him is his female professor standing in a room of about 150 other female students scattered in the lecture hall at the University of Ottawa. In one corner, barely detectable in the sea of women, another male also waits patiently. He and Eng are among the few men in the third-year nursing class.

I've seen a lot of negativity — even just joking negativity from a lot of people our age.

Our modern society has taken a keen interest into the sociologic and economic issues of women that enter male-dominated professions. In fact, we are so devoted to the subject that academic, statistical and economic studies on women in male-dominated areas are a dime a dozen.

But what happens when a walking Y

chromosome finds his way into nursing, a field that is typically seen as a woman's line of work? Brian Eng, 23, offers some insight into the world of nursing from a man's point of view.

Like many other students who choose to go into nursing, Eng says he entered the profession because he loves health and medicare. "I've just always loved the idea of healthcare and to me this was the most fitting way into the system."

He says being able to provide the help and support patients need is part of who he is.

Eng thinks men don't give nursing much consideration because of the negative stigma associated with the profession.

"I've seen a lot of negativity," he says. "Even just joking negativity from a lot of people our age. Maybe it's because they have the wrong idea of what nurses do. I don't know. Maybe there isn't enough public education on that, but I think correcting some of those negative ideas would probably improve the male-to-female ratio in nursing."

Eng also mentions that it's not necessarily that males don't enter nursing, but rather they tend to use it as a launching pad to get into other areas of healthcare. "There's a lot more males in certain areas of nursing — ICU, emergency — those type of places where there's a lot of action," he says.

Still, Eng says he believes it will take some time before the profession is no longer viewed as a women's profession.

"I think it's become more of an option for a lot of guys. It will take some time to be viewed as a profession that isn't associated with just females, but at least it's starting to look a little better for males," said Eng.

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Chuckling the blues away

Sufferers of depression get some comic relief

JENNY POTTER

Depression can be funny, suicide comical, overdosing hilarious and electroshock therapy guaranteed to make you chuckle.

Grim material for most of us, but on stage Heather Bruce has people rolling in the aisles with laughter as she jokes about depression and makes light of how the mental illness crippled her life.

Last year, Bruce jumped at an opportunity to join the Ottawa chapter of Stand-Up for Mental Health, a comedy program designed to give confidence to those with mental illness—and also to educate the public.

"If you can laugh at it, then maybe it is not meant to be hidden away," says Bruce.

Started by David Granirer in Vancou-

visits into punch lines.

"It is a way for people to talk about their issue in a socially acceptable situation," says stand-up comic Sonja Cronkhite.

Audience members have even approached the comics after the performance with their own stories and experiences.

"You are breaking the stereotype of what someone with a mental illness looks and sounds like," says Bruce.

Stand-up comic Simon Perkins agrees, and says it gives a point of entry into a conversation about mental illness.

Since the first troop graced the stages of Absolute Comedy club, Cronkhite says there is a high demand for the program to run again in Ottawa. Working as a program coordinator

at Psychiatric Survivors of Ottawa, she says she gets calls every week from the public.

Fundraising has even started among the comics to bring Granirer back to Ottawa and offer a free program. "We should be heading in a direction that is recovery focused, not just diagnosis," says Perkins. "One that promotes hope and not illness."

Performing gives many people confidence and helps them realize that they can turn their experience into something powerful. Cronkhite says that makes a positive change by making people laugh.

"Once you hear laughing, you want to hear that sound again and again," says Bruce. "It is powerful because people are laughing with you, not at you."

I think people with mental health issues have so much experience and material to draw from. The neurotic stuff becomes your strength in comedy.

ver, B.C., Stand-Up for Mental Health has spread laughter and awareness across the nation. While teaching stand-up comedy at Langara College, Granirer realized that the students who excelled were those who had suffered from a mental illness. Seeing an opportunity, he combined his counselling expertise and sense of humour to get those with mental illness up on stage and joking about their experiences.

"I think people with mental health issues have so much experience and material to draw from," says Granirer. "The neurotic stuff becomes your strength in comedy."

Most people who take his courses have battled mental illness their whole lives. Whether they have bipolar disorder, a learning disability, depression or schizophrenia, Granirer helps them turn a life of hospital

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Two pink lines

SAM MCGARRY

I'm still not really sure why I took the test. I'm often late, and I always use condoms. There was nothing to make me think that I might be pregnant. Nothing but a tiny, almost imperceptible twitch in the back of my mind.

The two little pink lines appeared immediately. Still, I was in denial—they tell you to wait three minutes to let the results show up. Maybe, if I waited three minutes, that terrifying second pink stripe would disappear. It didn't.

And then I fell apart.

Mind spinning. Can't get my breath. Pacing the length of the small, dark apartment. Crying. Yelling. Punching the walls until my knuckles swelled and bled.

I've never wanted children. Quite the opposite, actually. For financial reasons, I've always had to live with other people and I've always looked forward to a time when I'd be able to live alone, to have some real solitude. I've never wanted to get married, never wanted a family. I intended to spend my days toiling away at some poorly edited low-budget publication. After work, I would go home to my tiny, oddly decorated one bedroom apartment. I would eat Kraft Dinner out of the pot while drinking cheap wine and read-

ing books on anthropology or astrophysics. On weekends I would sew clothes, paint and write impassioned blog entries that would be avidly pored over by a worldwide audience of six to eight people. I would sing old jazz standards loudly while vacuuming, smoke joints on the balcony, practice yoga in my underpants. I would do as I pleased, picking up and moving on whenever I felt like it. That was the plan.

Up until the instant the results of the test appeared, I knew without question that if it were positive, I would get an abortion. I wouldn't tell my boyfriend, I wouldn't tell my friends, I wouldn't tell my family. I would just quietly make myself an appointment and go.

But as soon as those two damnable lines showed up, everything changed. It was no longer just the theoretical question for which I already had a theoretical answer. It was a real decision with real options. I couldn't just mindlessly follow the path I had always assumed I would take. I would have to really think about it and make a choice.

I called my boyfriend and told him that I needed him to come over right away. I didn't know what to expect. On the one hand, I

was sure he wouldn't want to have a child with a girl he had only been dating for a couple months. On the other, he's Catholic, and I thought he might consider abortion an indefensible sin. Either way, I was certain his reaction would be negative.

Mitch showed up less than 10 minutes after I called. I sat him down on the couch in my cramped, dingy living room. I looked into his worried face, and was overcome with guilt and remorse. I knew I hadn't done anything wrong. But still, here was this man who had been so good to me, who I had become so attached to in such a short time, sitting across from me, anxiously waiting to hear what was wrong and how he could help. And there I was, about to drop a huge bomb.

I began to stutter. I started with "Oh God, I don't even know how to say this..." and then a couple of versions of "I wish I didn't have to tell you this..."

Finally, I just blurted it out.

"I'm pregnant."

He didn't say anything. He looked at me for a moment, and then pulled me into his lap, wrapping his arms around me. And I cried. I cried like I have never cried in front of another human being before, the kind of crying that makes your whole body shake and leaves your face all swollen and red, covered with saltwater and snot.

Mitch waited for the outright sobbing to dwindle into a sniveling whimper before he spoke.

"Have you decided what you want to do?" he asked quietly. I hadn't.

"This is totally up to you," he told me. "Whatever you decide to do, I'll support you."

That was the last thing I expected to hear, and I have never been so pleased to be wrong.

It took me almost a week to get past the initial phase of alternating between irrational disbelief and sheer panic.

As that subsided, I began to weigh the options.

Every logical thought opposed the idea of having the baby. What the hell would I do with a baby? The idea of spending the next couple of years as a slave to the bodily functions of some tiny, crying person depressed the crap out of me.

The pregnancy itself is miserable—the puking, the dizziness, the hormone-induced rages and crying fits and the fact that you can't drink. As for the actual birthing, I can't think of anything more horrifying and disgusting. And don't bother telling me how beautiful and natural it is—I've already been told that by every sugarcoated, mealy-mouthed pregnancy-related publication I've had the misfortune of picking up.

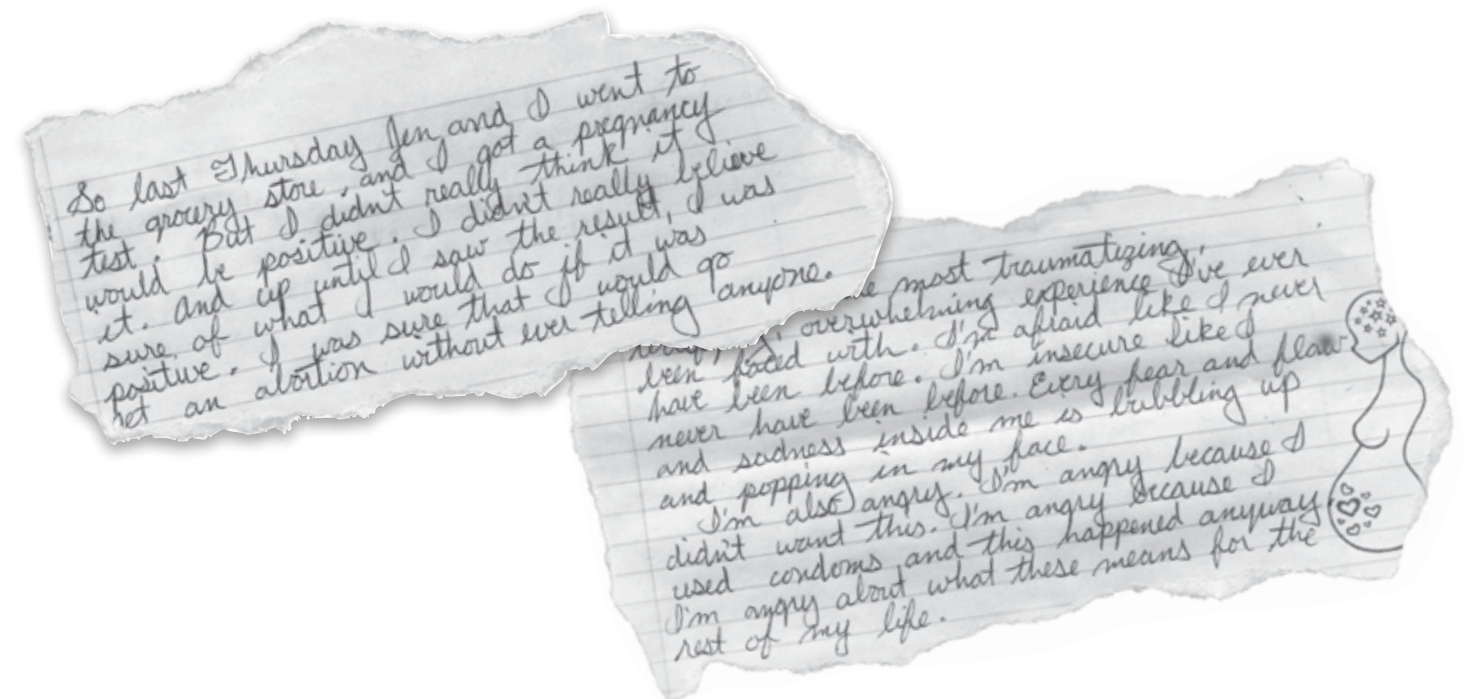
The freewheeling, lone wolf lifestyle I had planned for myself would certainly be out of the question. I would never be able to do anything on a whim—every outing, every undertaking would require careful planning.

The freewheeling, lone wolf lifestyle I had planned for myself would certainly be out of the question. I would have to live in a decent neighbourhood, have a decent job. I would have to run a stable household with rules and discipline. I would never be able to do anything on a whim—every outing, every undertaking would require careful planning. And I would have to keep it up for at least 18 years.

But every once in a while, my mind would take a break from its spinning, and for just a moment, I would be calm. And in these quiet moments, I would feel something, some strange pang of affection for this tiny creature growing in my abdomen. It wasn't enough to make me want to have children, but it was enough to convince me not to have an abortion.

And so the decision was made—I'm having a baby.

Wish me luck.



Hold the sauce please

AMA SECHERE



A night out with friends doesn't mean you have to drink alcohol or use drugs to have fun. Some know how to just say no.

photo by Michela Pisanò

Some youth don't need the drinks or drugs

How many of us start our Sunday mornings with a hangover and a conversation beginning, "Man, I was so wasted last night?"

Since their 19th birthdays—some even before then—students have given in to curiosity. However, it seems more and more teenagers are abandoning the party lifestyle as they mature into adulthood.

Samy Osman, a 24-year-old aspiring actor, is one of them. He is a socially active youth choosing to live a sober lifestyle in an intoxicated society.

"I go out a lot and I hang out with a lot of people. Most of them drink but it doesn't stop me from hanging out with them," says Osman.

He has never used drugs and his only experience with alcohol was when he was dared to drink a strongly mixed drink. "After two hours I felt fine, like I never drank at

all," says Osman. "It was nothing."

For Osman, being Muslim meant his sobriety began for religious reasons, but became something more.

"I follow a religious influence and a moral choice, but I think it's more than that. You see what alcohol does to people."

According to Mothers Against Drunk Driving, an estimated 1,224 to 1,500 deaths are due to alcohol or drug related crashes in Canada each year.

"I can see how (drinking) can be fun, but I can see how it can be negative. It screws with your head. I'm the type of person who likes to know he's in control," says Osman.

He is still into the club scene, and when others see his refusal to drink it gives them a new view on sobriety.

"A lot of people see me as a role model. A friend of mine who has been through depression and troubles with alcohol sees me as the ideal person," says Osman. "I did well in school, I got a good job—I'm doing well."

Like Osman, software engineer Yohannes Tadesse, 22, has led a life mostly of sobriety. He stayed completely sober during high school in order to concentrate on his studies, only

drinking for the first time on graduation night.

"Drinking was a mix of curiosity and keeping a promise to my friends," says Tadesse. "I never had that curiosity about drugs. I never felt the need to do them. The reason for that is I felt I could still have fun without doing drugs."

1,224 to 1,500 deaths are due to alcohol or drug related crashes each year

Finally, Osman gives us an insightful perspective on this sober social revolution that may give us a new start to our Sunday morning conversations.


"Alcohol has been taken out of all aspects of our lives that require concentration ... but in our social lives we feel like we need it. Why don't we think our social lives deserve just as much concentration?"

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From riches to rags

Why a former CEO now calls the Mission home

JENNIFER MCINTOSH

Unlike most 63-year-olds who plan their retirement or play with their grandkids, Murray Victor "Vic" Blake spends his days trying to figure out where his next meal is going to come from.

Blake was president and CEO of Can Corp., a mortgage brokering company, in the '80s. He was wealthy, living in a six room mansion, and driving around in his Cadillac. Now he lives at 35 Waller St., better known to some as the Mission.

"It is very strange to be panhandling for nickels, dimes and quarters when I used to make \$500,000 a year," says Blake.

Blake's company got into trouble in the early '90s when another employee started embezzling funds. The Financial Services Commission of Ontario shut down the company. The Commission alleged that mortgages were being written for homes at a higher value than they were worth.

After the loss of his company, Blake tried to get his mortgage brokers license renewed so that he could continue in his career, but says that because of an altercation with a police officer his reputation was impugned.

"It is very strange to be panhandling for nickels, dimes and quarters when I used to make \$500,000 a year."

"He signed false affidavits, one for a search warrant for the house that accused me of being part of a murder conspiracy and that Can Corp. had been a money laundering front for Pablo Escobar," said Blake.

Without being able to do a job that he loved, Blake began to founder. After about two years of working various sales jobs he decided to go on the Ontario Disability Support Program.

"I had lost everything," says Blake. "Now I have anxiety, depression, diabetes, high blood pressure and heart problems."

Blake is also a recovering alcoholic and addict. He is a member of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. He has been clean for about 29 years and although he doesn't go to meetings anymore, he still keeps in contact with the many people he sponsored.

"Sponsorship is sharing your success in recovery with someone who is new," said Blake. "It's mostly about being a good friend and listening."

After his parents died, Blake moved into their condo and relied



Murray Victor "Vic" Blake was president and CEO of Can Corp., mortgage brokering company, but is now one of Canada's 9,010 homeless.

heavily on friends and family to help him find supplementary work because the money he got from ODSP simply wasn't enough.

After the loss of an Internet company for professional poker players, Blake didn't have enough to make his condo fee payments and ended up living with a young woman who he had met through NA.

"It was very difficult for me because it was an active crack house," he says. "They used to call me 'grandpa homie.'"

Blake is now one of the 9,010 homeless in Canada and is on a waiting list for social housing. The waiting list is very long and the number of applicants has gone up almost 24 per cent since 2004.

Blake describes his first few days at the Mission as very scary. "The place is always exploding into violence," he says. "They would go outside with these black leather gloves on and you knew there was going to be a fight."

The Mission has a capacity to provide shelter for 225 men each night and provides services to reintegrate these men into society.

In the future, Blake says he wants to concentrate on getting housing, and figures that once he gets his life sorted out, he'll try to put some of his experiences on paper, in the form of a book of memoirs.

"I've seen the world from the upper echelons of power to the lowest. I had a lot of experiences in my life I think people would want to read about."

photo by Jennifer McIntosh

American nightmare

Forget reaching for the stars, average is the new supernova

MATT JAY

There's an ethos that runs through the core of North American culture which holds aloft the notion anyone can be a millionaire, anyone can be the star of the show. You could call it the American Dream, but Canadians play by these rules too. Fame and fortune are held up as the pillars of success and anything less is deemed a failure.

Canadians can surely identify with this mantra. One need only look at the success of shows like Canadian Idol or The Apprentice to see how the Dream is alive and well north of the 49th parallel. We gravitate to stardom, swarm to riches.

It need not be this way. Surely those who have endured the Canadian public education system understand well the premium placed on ability and effort.

But many lives have been wasted putting untold effort into dreams which hardly have a hope of success due to a lack of ability.

Those of us who pour hours of time and countless dollars into the pit of post-secondary education should know this well.

There is no silver lining beyond graduation day. Your job will be the same as my job, the same as his job and the same as her job.

We now pay money we don't have for jobs our parents walked into with a high school diploma.

Is this cause for despair? Is there no way out? Will we run like hamsters on the wheel of life, racing for a distant goal forever out of reach?

No, my friends, this is not the end. There is life after OSAP. Embrace your inner slacker: expect less.

Those who dream of rental town homes in reasonably crime free neighbourhoods are the happy. Those who pine for a slightly used Honda Civic are truly content.

The road to happiness is paved in silver, because it looks nice and is reasonably priced. It may tarnish a little, but a little Silvo



Jay feels that we should expect less in life, stop pursuing the American Dream and put in as little effort as we need to.

goes a long way.

Let the fools spend hours and hours of time in the library, frantically memorizing facts and figures they will forget the moment the exam is over.

Let the deluded suck up to the boss, always with the hope that a moment of managerial clarity will propel them into the corporate stratosphere.

Let us be mediocre.

Let us be proud.

Let us do enough to get by.

Let us leave the moment our shift is over. Let us live life.

A family only needs the bills paid; a man

or woman only needs enough to get through to the next payday.

The doctor needs the mechanic when his car breaks, a plumber when the toilet backs up and an electrician when the lights go out.

The mechanic has OHIP.

The plumber charges overtime on weekends.

The electrician is his or her own boss.

We don't all need to be journeymen, but a little effort goes a long way and leaves lots of time for daydreaming when the day is done.

You're not a millionaire, you're not an idol: but mediocrity is zen.

Let the Revolution of the Average begin.

photo by Julie Barney

A stolen identity

Every year, thousands of Canadians have their identities stolen without even knowing it: until they have to deal with the consequences

KATIE McHALE



What if there was another “you”? Using hijacked personal information someone has opened accounts, racked up debts and left a trail of financial ruin—leaving you to deal with the fallout.

Almost 8,000 Canadians were victims of identity theft in 2006, according to PhoneBusters, the Canadian anti-fraud call centre that collects complaints from fraud victims. Since 2004, there have been over 30,000 victims in Canada and more than \$40 million lost.

Wallet theft and dumpster diving are common tactics for thieves. “When trash is on the curb and in plain sight, you don’t need a warrant for that,” said Brent MacLean, a Toronto security consultant and identity theft expert.

Shredding all papers containing sensitive information is wise. Keeping important documents like birth certificates in a safe place and not in your wallet is also important.

MacLean said changing passwords regularly is a good idea and so is checking your credit report a few times a year to make sure the cards listed are yours and the limits and balances on them are correct. Credit monitoring services like creditalert.com will notify you of changes to your credit file so you can put a stop to fraudulent activity quickly.

Be careful to whom you divulge information and never be shy about asking questions. “Be politely assertive and just ask, ‘Why do you need this information?’ and they need to tell you,” said MacLean. “Only two [parties] by law can ask for your social insurance

number—internal revenue for tax purposes and your employer. Nobody else.”

You may be a victim if: creditors call you to deny or approve credit that you have no knowledge of, you have not received expected bank statements in the mail (indicating your mailing address has been changed or the documents were stolen), or agencies call to collect money on an account you didn’t open.

There is no single target group for thieves, however MacLean said people who are not computer savvy are at risk of falling for Internet scams like phishing.

“Phishing is not like other Internet attacks—the attacks are not targeted to your computer, they are targeted to you, the user of that computer,” said Mohammad Mannan, a computer security Ph.D. student at Carleton University. Phishing occurs most commonly via instant messages and e-mails. The message will look like it is from a legitimate company and urge you to log in to your account to update information. It will usually contain

a link leading to a spoof website of a company or bank that looks virtually identical to their real site. Users may be fooled into logging in and entering sensitive data; meanwhile thieves have intercepted the information.

Do not rely on software to identify a fake page. “The best defence is your common sense,” Mannan said. “If someone asks you to reveal information [online] you should treat it as a hostile e-mail. Don’t act on something that someone else has asked you to act on.”

MacLean said that any time a personal transaction occurs over

Any time a personal transaction occurs over the Internet there should be a picture of a lock somewhere on the page or an “https” in the URL to signify it is a secured session.

the Internet there should be a picture of a lock somewhere on the page or an “https” in the URL to signify it is a secured session.

“If you don’t see that lock or you don’t see a secured session then you want to think twice before giving information,” he said.

Any messages or links suspected to be scams, or from unknown sources, should be deleted and not opened, as they could contain viruses for spying. “When you really go to your bank website and do your online banking, it will capture your account number,” Mannan explained.

Phishing can occur all over the Internet so discretion is key. “It is not limited to fake e-mail,” Mannan said. “It’s everywhere.”

Once personal information is in the hands of thieves it can lead to a broad spectrum of criminal activity, according to Melanie Minos of the Canadian Bankers Association. It is not restricted to financial crimes like credit card or student loans fraud. Thieves can commit more serious crimes and use another’s identity to mask their own.

PhoneBusters advises victims to contact the two major credit bureaus (Equifax and TransUnion) and place fraud alerts on their files to prevent more credit being extended in their name. They should also file a police report and alert PhoneBusters about their case.

“People don’t think they’re going to be a victim so the best way to reduce victimization is to just stay informed and be very careful,” said MacLean. “Don’t be paranoid, but you can be neurotic in a very healthy way. To repair the identity can take years, but [stealing it] can only take minutes.”

HOW TO STOP IT FROM HAPPENING TO YOU:

- 1 Give out no more than the minimum personal information.
- 2 Be especially careful with your SIN.
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Illustration by Paul Grant

Retail insanity

Customers aren't always right

KERRISON MELCHER

Not too many students have had a telephone thrown at their head, but Ashley Hunter has. The public administration and business administration student at the University of Ottawa, who has worked in a few retail jobs, had that experience during her employment at Bell World.

"One day this gentleman came into the store and he was unhappy with his phone. He launched it from the entrance of the store, across the desk and hit me with it," says Hunter.

And she's not the only student that has had to deal with the stress of school and a part-time job.

Long hours, small wages, unpleasant customers and demanding bosses all affect the sanity of students today—not to mention their school work.

What does Jenny Loughran, a linguistics student at the University of Ottawa, say about working in retail?

"Don't." But if you have to, Loughran advises to "just make sure you lay down the law and you're like 'I'm a student, I can only work this many hours, during my exams I can work less,' and before you get into it, set that precedent."



Jessica Lucci, who has worked in retail for over two years, can attest to the challenges of dealing with the public.

Loughran, who worked part-time in retail for part of her post-secondary education says the only thing she liked about her jobs was the employee discount.

For hours at a time, retail workers are stuck behind counters, racks and registers. On their feet for all but 15 to 20 minutes of break time, customer service workers are often faced with impatient, annoying and sometimes downright irate clients.

"The hours are so, so long," says Hunter. "And you're on your feet usually for so, so long and a lot of the time there's a lot of pressure to accomplish sales goals."

Hunter says if she absolutely had to, she would work another retail job, but that she would prefer to work as a cashier rather than a sales associate.

"When you're a sales associate in a cloth-

"One day this gentleman came into the store and he was unhappy with his phone. He launched it from the entrance of the store, across the desk and hit me with it."

ing store, you get paid and then half your money ends up going back to the company because you have to buy clothes," she says. "I'd try and get something that didn't involve me having to get the product all the time."

Caitlin Zywtoko, an office administration student finishing her first year at Algonquin College, was once unlucky enough to get a particularly unforgiving, uncooperative customer.

"When I worked at Suzy Shier, there was a customer that didn't like the return policy," says Zywtoko.

The customer began to argue with her and her manager, saying they should call the police because she was going to start a fist-fight if they didn't return her money.

"I think she was joking," says Zywtoko, "but she was still being really aggressive."

On the bright side, retail experience is a painful blessing that gives you the inspiration needed to stay in school and work so that after you graduate you'll have a job you actually like to work hard at.



Just Friends

downright doable

SARAH KELFORD

Sarah Kelford says it's easy for guys and girls to be pals.



The majority of my friends are male and I haven't slept with any of them.

Not because I'm not attracted to them or they aren't attracted to me, but because I hold their friendship in high regard. I understand drunken nights happen and 'what ifs' are explored, but when it comes down to it, men and women can have genuine friendships without the complication of sex.

Not only would it be wrong to say that men and women can't be just friends, it is ignorant to imply that men are only attracted to women, and women are only attracted to men.

"Frankly, I think it's silly," says Christabelle Sethna, women's studies professor at the University of Ottawa. "Not everybody is heterosexually attracted."

Rob Nettleton, a 19-year-old professional writing student at Algonquin College, agrees.

As a gay man, Nettleton deals with stereotypes daily, but for him friendship is more than just the anatomy of a person.

"I believe that true friendships involve people with a genuine interest, investment and concern for the well being of others," says Nettleton. "Some men and women aren't able to accept that a guy and a girl are just friends, and gossip starts flourishing. From a gay perspective, it's just the same way—except me being friends with a straight male, or another gay male. Does it mean I'm attracted to them? Does it mean I want to have a relationship with them? No, it simply means that I have befriended them, and that we're simply just friends."

Sethna also notes that saying men and women cannot be friends is holding complete disregard for genuine friendships.

I, for example, currently live with a guy I've known for eight years. My roommate, Andrew Sernoskie, is one of my best friends. We know everything about each other and the difference in gender has never been an issue.

"Hooking up never crossed my mind because we are such good friends," says Sernoskie. "Some people you become friends with for the friendship, not to sleep with them."

photo by Miranda Grigor

faceoff

He and my boyfriend get along great, and it's not a problem for my boyfriend that I live with a guy. They both understand the importance of platonic mix-gendered relationships. "I am just as comfortable around my female friends as I am around my guy friends," says Sernoskie. "It has nothing to do with being the opposite sex, it just has to do with being platonic friends with a genuine friendship."

He points out that the only difference between same-sex friendships and opposite-

part of the equation.

One thing that makes a platonic friendship so difficult is the ongoing tension, especially if one is attracted to the other and is afraid to express it.

According to Hunt, it is stereotypically harder for men to control their sexual impulses. However, Amy Hammett, 19, believes it's the other way around.

"It would be harder for a woman to keep that attraction to herself because I think nowadays it is becoming more socially ac-

or altogether absurd?

CAROLYNA VASQUEZ

sex friendships is that girls tend to be more honest and blunt with their advice.

Living with a girl is the same as living with a guy, he says. "Other than female products in the bathroom, there isn't much difference."

Friendships shouldn't be based on gender. Friendships should be based on trust, honesty and respect for one another—male or female.

And when it really comes down to it, I wouldn't trade my friendships for the world—or an orgasm.

Being just friends with a member of the opposite sex takes a lot of caution. It takes care and realistic judgment of one's ability to avoid temptation. But, if a girl or guy just wants to be friends and one of you has sexual feeling for the other, is it possible to be pals?

I don't think so!

When men and women interact at work, school and other social settings, it's easy to become close friends. However, having a platonic relationship is difficult because of the inevitable sexual attraction at least one will feel for the other—not to mention the media constantly showing us that the notion of "friends with benefits" is becoming the norm of our generation.

Jane Hunt, student counsellor at Algonquin College, defines a platonic friendship as two people who have a relationship in which physical and sexual attraction isn't

ceptable to express such feelings," says Hammett, an ethics, society and women's studies student at the University of Ottawa.

However, expressing such feelings could lead to compromising the friendship if the feeling isn't reciprocated.

"Feelings of rejection, resentment and awkwardness could lead to ongoing tension within the relationship and ultimately damage the friendship," says Hunt.

Josh Peters, 19, says that even when relationships start out as innocent friendships, sexual attraction evolves over time.

"I don't think you can always stay platonic—it's possible, but it's just as easy to evolve out of that," says Peters, an English student at the University of Ottawa.

The other problem with platonic friendship is actually finding someone who doesn't want to jump into bed with you. "It's hard to find two people who have respect for each other and see each other as people," says Hammett. "Friendship is based on trust, and if the person is seeing you with hidden intentions, then it's not called a platonic friendship."

Aretha Heenan, a history and English student at University of Ottawa, believes same-sex friends just work better than opposite-sex friends.

"Girls click better with girls and boys click better with boys, because they have similar interests and have more in common," says Heenan.

Peters, Hammett and Heenan all agree that they have had some sort of sexual attraction to a friend of the opposite sex.

In my opinion, the media, through shows like the Real World, has done an excellent job illustrating that so-called friends with benefits are becoming the new norm, and due to this confusion there's a fuzzy line between true friends and bed-buddies.

Let's be honest. Platonic friendship between the sexes is a scam.

Carolyna Vasquez thinks it's hard to be just friends if one person has feelings for the other.



faceoff

Amanda Saffioti gets the low-down on student debt from a credit counsellor who offers her two cents for getting out of the RED



As a professional credit counsellor, Parisian offers quick tips for students who are finding themselves deep in debt:

- Limit your use of **credit cards**. Think of it as cash, so when you pay for something with your credit card, you can **pay it off right away**.
- Never pay the minimum. Almost half your payment could end up being **interest**. If you only pay the minimum, your **debt will keep accumulating**.
- Be **wary of offers** like 'Don't pay until 2012' for two reasons: it actually hurts your credit score, since the bureau looks at it as **outstanding debt**; and they're often **extremely high interest**.
- Limit the amount of **student loan** you get. Don't take more than your annual income.
- You can apply for **interest relief** if you haven't found a job or can't make payments, but stay on top of reapplying.

"Get a free 67's blanket when you sign up for a Mastercard." That phrase still makes me cringe. It was that "free" blanket that landed me \$800 in debt.

Sound familiar? Even if it doesn't, you've probably had your share of deals with the devil. For some students though, debt is a little more serious than a spontaneous shopping spree every now and then.

Adam Downey, a 21-year-old psychology student at the University of Ottawa, knows how it feels to be weighed down by debt. Now in his third year, Downey already feels the pressures of paying back his student loan.

"With credit cards, it's more of a self control thing," says Downey. "But a student loan is a necessity for me. Without it, I couldn't go to school."

Downey believes the problem with student debt is also the fault of the system, not just the student. He referred to some of his friends as "living proof" of the damage of interest, and who have accumulated over \$50,000 debt in just four years.

"It separates the well-off from the poor who have to spend ten years of their lives paying back—which is ridiculous," he says.

When students find themselves thousands in the hole, Monique Parisian, manager of the Ottawa branch of Credit Counselling Services of Eastern Ontario, suggests credit counselling. "We do all sorts of management counselling," says Parisian, "from people who don't know how to budget to debt management programs for people who don't want to go bankrupt."

The counsellors will do a thorough assessment of your debt and income and try to get you on a clear path out of the red.

"The problem is, schools don't spend a lot of time teaching students how to deal with credit," says Parisian, adding when they get into college or university, they get offered all types of loans and credit cards but don't know how to budget properly.

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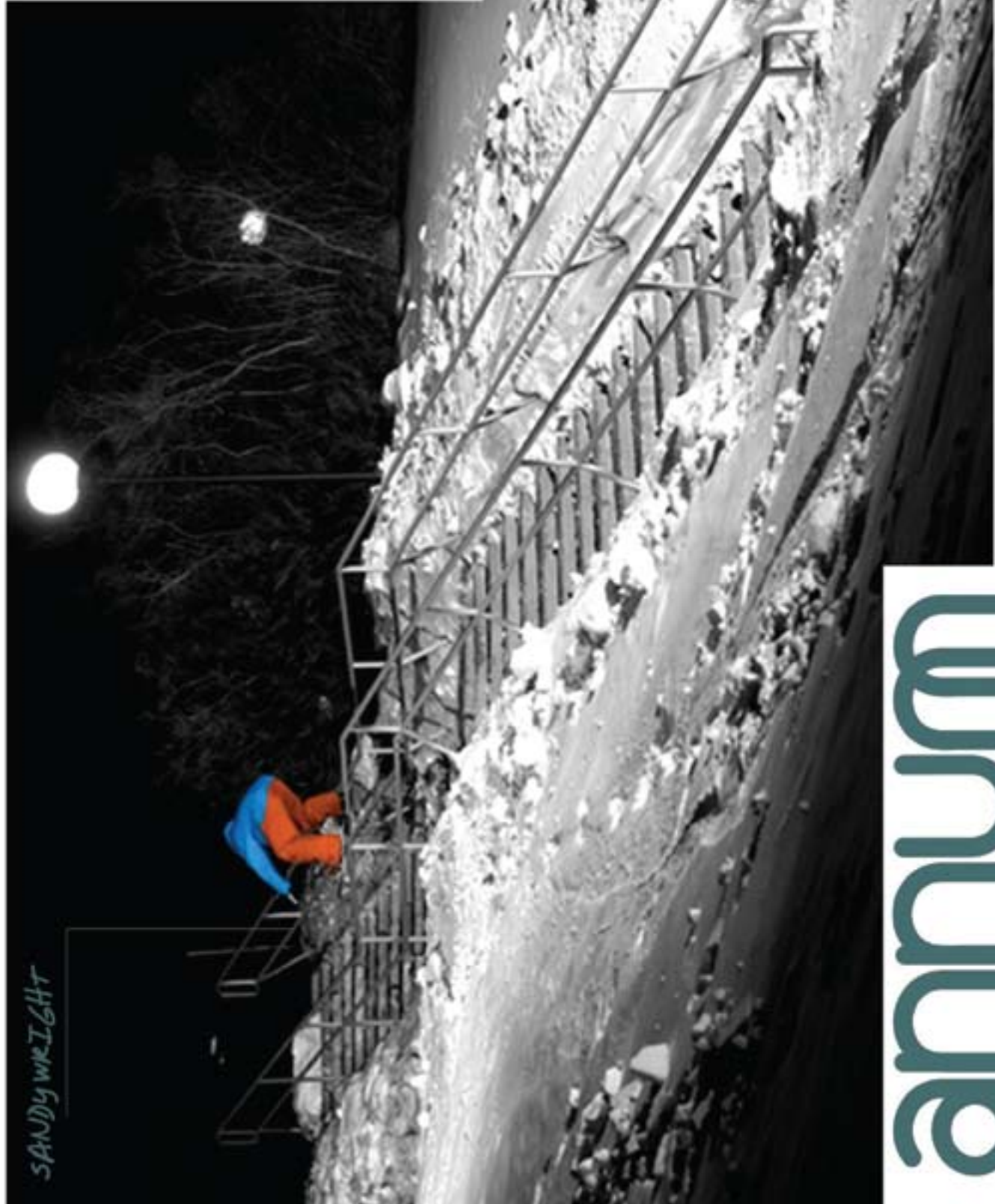
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