Empty promises starting a point

WITH HIS ANNOUNCEMENT THIS WEEKEND OF a rollback of postsecondary tuition fees to 2001 levels, Liberal leader Kevin Taft provided yet another example in the ever-growing list of promises made by politicians that they have absolutely no intention of keeping.

The irony is that Taft doesn't believe that tuition rates are too high or that his plan is nothing more than an empty campaign promise—this isn't the first time he's made promises to the thousands of students in Alberta that have resulted in nothing but only as the Goods and Services Tax. In fact, I think Taft's plan is pretty solid—sure, tuition is still going to be too bloody high, but at least the arrow will be pointing down for once.

And it's a definite step up from the plans laid out by the Conservatives, which I can only assume were eaten by Premier Bil Stelmach's three-legged失效 baseen named Zeke, because it doesn't exist. To try alikens, the only move they've made to do anything with regard to the cost of postsecondary education was to freeze it for a couple of years. When they realized the issue, then decide that tuition increases should be tied to CPI (albeit almost everything else in the province. If that constitutes a plan, then a video of fail driving around in a riding lawnmower constitutes Internet fetish porn.

But as much as I respect the Liberal party for vocalizing their plans for postsecondary education and presenting the Conservatives with a challenge, the fact remains that Taft knows he's making promises that, no matter how much he wants to, he'll never be able to keep.

Stelmach has hanged his hope through his first 14 months in office with a plan not for the future—though there have been plenty of PR snafus—and lacks the natural charisma that allowed Ralph Klein to remain popular after drunkenly throwing money at the homeless, throwing a proposal at a Legislative page, taunting Belinda Stonach, and generally pissing off nine and a half of Canada's provinces (the other half voted for him).

But despite the missteps that he's made in his five years as premier, he'll still be going to lose this election. To do so, his party would have to lose a minimum of 20 seats, and even then, he'd probably form a minority government. It's just not going to happen.

And I think that, deep down, Kevin Taft knows it too. He knows that his party isn't going to win the election—yet they've used for four months of Stelmach doing his best impression of all those Stooges on 109 street for that to happen. And that gives him the liberty to announce these grandiose, empty promises that comprise the latter half of the twentieth century, is the time to be so affected.

Specifically, I focus on the historical changes occurring in the Soviet Union, and in particular on the epoch-making announcements of 6 February that indicate multiparty elections are to be held. This announcement, in sweeping stroke, effectively removes the limits, range, power, and scope of the greatest totalitarian regime the world has ever known.

As you may know, there's a Chinese proverb that says, "May you be cursed to live in interesting times." And if one is ever to be so cursed, then now is surely the most interesting of all the times that comprise the letter half of the twentieth century. It is the time to be so affected.

The end of the Cold War is night at last

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Letters from the archives

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Specifi...
Where there's smoke, there's bigots

CONAL PIERSE

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moking is something that's always seemed inherently bad to me—much like jump-kicking someone off of a motorcycle, while smoking. However, despite the undeniable consciest that they radiate, I'm not envious of my long-legged peers. Because though I sometimes get hit by the sniff, Monday night and throw up in SUB bathrooms, make rash and inappropriate statements in public places, and have no qualms about stranding a cow with my bare hands just to get a steak, I will never be as universally disliked as a smoker.

These days, it's completely fine to discriminate against another person simply because they happen to be a resident of flavour country. I know people who have refused to be involved with otherwise perfectly normal individuals solely because that person smoked, citing it as a critical character flaw that they just can't get past.

To think that it's simply an issue of the poor smell or taste of a smoker's mouth is silly because plenty of people have bad breath that we forgive them for—it's just a matter of mouthwash or powering through those first few minutes until your tongue becomes numb to the taste of beer and peanuts. It's more of a mental revolution to some warped concept of what a smoker is, as if getting tobacco between your lips suddenly makes you some kind of cross-eyed hunchback with a hook hand and peg-leg, rather than someone who has a problem that a little profuse and a stick of gum can fix.

People simply refuse to cut smokers any slack. Many times I've witnessed someone light up, only to be harassed for the act and forced to justify their choice of habit, yet I've never gotten more than a smile or an eye-roll for cracking a beer mid-day—hell, I've been encouraged and even threatened to partake in such behaviour. But were someone to offer a smoker a cigarette, they'd receive a look of disgust similar to if they'd offered a fat of fresh placenta sandwich (which I hear is a rich source of iron).

The current smoking bans already force them to venture outside in the harsh Alberta winters to satisfy their cravings, and still some people don't think this is enough.

They're furious about their poor, pink little lungs being exposed to the harsh kill-you-dead carcinogens in second-hand smoke in the short moments they're required to walk past a smoker who's hunched up near the doorway, slivering like the little match girl, and wonder why these lepers can't take their cancer-sticks elsewhere. But cruelly, these people are threatening your health about as much as the guy who can't hold his chili-cheese burrito fart in over the course of a ten-second elevator ride—those hazards should be nixed.

Everybody has bad habits, but when it's a tendency to spit when they talk or an inability to whisper, we by-and-large ignore their foibles—at least until they're no longer within earshot. Yet somehow, we can't just accept the fact that somebody smokes, outside, on their own time, and at their own risk—hell, they're only shortening their own sad, snotty lives anyway, so just live and let die.

If you want to continue to berate and haggle your smoker friends—or even complete strangers—under the guise that you only "care about their health and the health of others," that's all well and good, but don't be surprised when Johnny Cancer-Stick shows back about your grating harpy voice or loppedwalkalad.

Then again, a cigarette started the fire in the Black Dog, so maybe we should just drag them all out behind the shed and solve this problem once and for all.

I've got places to go and can't just 'take it easy,' so quit slow-riding the hallways

DAVID JOHNSTON

Ever get that weird self-conscious feeling when you're sprinting down a campus hallway like you shouldn't be going 45k per hour? It's odd. No matter why I'm running, I always feel like I ought not to be. It's times like these that I wish I had the means to forgive them for—it's just a matter of mouthwash or powering through those first few minutes until your tongue becomes numb to the taste of beer and peanuts. It's more of a mental revolution to some warped concept of what a smoker is, as if getting tobacco between your lips suddenly makes you some kind of cross-eyed hunchback with a hook hand and peg-leg, rather than someone who has a problem that a little profuse and a stick of gum can fix.

Again, normally this wouldn't be an issue, as I could just slip outside and do it. But with the snow runoff freezing the ground into an icy walkway, giving it all the traction of Teflon-coated ball bearings, I have no choice but to travel indoors.

I turn down into the main corridor, and it's "whoop, whoop! All hands to deck; we have an Amber Alert here! I can't be the only person in a hurry on campus—after all, we all have places to go, people to see, classes to skip—so why can't everyone, if not full-tint sprinting, at least move through the hallways at a light jog? We'd all get to our classes, meetings, or quiltro dissolved and have no qualms about strangling those of us in need. So stop, and think this is enough.

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Building an effective LRT (system) requires co-operation

This isn’t something the city can do alone, so it’s time for the outlying suburbs and the province to pitch in.

BRIAN GOULD

Thirty years ago this April, Edmonton kicked off the North American light rail renaissance, a movement that’s only gained strength across the continent as time progresses. Yet as the decades have spun by, our system has largely languished, confined to a rather pathetic single leg attached to a downtown subway with so much potential.

Finally, it seems like that potential may be realized. The current south LRT expansion is badly needed—and the city will require radically improved standards for integrating stations with adjacent land uses if we’re to ever reduce car dependency. But if we’re truly interested in doing this area together with stakeholders, we need a huge change in regional thinking.

First and foremost, a regional planning board is required in order to form a cohesive picture of what the ultimate LRT system will look like. While it may make sense to tack a stub on to the east side of the subway to make NAIT accessible in the short term, if the final destination is St. Albert—as current talk indicates—it would add ten minutes each way to student commutes. A line to Mill Woods and Beaumont makes more sense to branch from the other side instead. An extension to West Edmonton looks to be headed through downtown, but it could head along Whyte Avenue and out to Sherwood Park instead, hitting campus along the way.

The issue of how the system will be paid for also needs to be worked out before construction proceeds. If the City were to pick up the tab for construction but had no control over the way the LRT integrates with bedroom communities, I doubt any of the outlying suburbs would make a peep.

But if you were to suggest any kind of co-operation amongst the Edmonton Capital Region Alliance, there would be no end to the amount of resistance that would be raised. Though the 20-odd fiefdoms in the Greater Edmonton Area would disagree, they wouldn’t exist without the city or each other. Life is or not, we’re all part of the same big community and economy, and we need to start acting like it.

Ultimately, any useful and binding solution must be imposed from above—yet the provincial election campaigns have been suspiciously silent on this issue. In late 2007, a report commissioned by the government recommended a regional planning board with binding land-use planning powers.

Like it or not, we’re all part of the same big community and economy, and we need to start acting like it.

However, the recommendation is hardly revolutionary, and is the bare minimum to return some semblance of order to the region. As a result, it remains a mere suggestion—much like the oil royalty recommendations the Conservatives opted to pick and choose from.

Like the tar sands, this is an issue that requires attention immediately—but, unlike the tar sands, the opposition parties haven’t been any more vocal. Of the three main parties, none have properly addressed the Edmonton region.

The Liberal Party’s proposed “Big City Charter” would give Edmonton the voice it deserves in provincial responsibilities, but stops short of giving the city any influence over its immediate neighbours. The NDP has great plans to find green energy with increased royalties, but without regional planning powers, their plans to curb urban sprawl would likely fall flat.

It’s not especially surprising: while these parties could pick up seats in the province, they would risk alienating their suburban voters. Anti-regionalist rhetoric has reached the ultimate level for Alberta, comparable to how we reached in the disastrous NDP. Anything with even the slightest whiff of co-operation, let alone economic guidance, is immediately viewed in the worst possible terms in this province.

The NDP have budgeted a healthy surplus into their well-detailed campaign promises, but they’ve still considered that wacky southern Alberta province where the greatest service needed is the gas station and Wal-mart. It doesn’t take regional planning to build more sprawl, but it’s needed to build a proper city, as well as a proper transit system.

If we’re ever to move forward as a city and a province, we need to learn to work together. This isn’t some Soviet five-year plan—it’s just a group of leaders sitting down with a map and talking about how best to serve a prospering and growing region. Only in Alberta would that be a radical idea.
Blogging’s difficult when you’re so easily distracted— ooh, bunnies!

KELSEY TANASUK

Every so often, I’ll sit back and think about how clever I am. However, at times I find myself frustrated by the fact that so few people acknowledge my genius. You see, the problem is that most of my brilliance comes in short bursts. They’re often much too compact to be stretched into a full-sized Gateway article—just small, perfect gems of unfiltered intelligence. And, every so often, it dawns on me that it’s time I join my equals on the exalted platform for my clever thoughts— the Internet.

And so the cycle begins: I blow the dust off my computer’s power button, and it makes that creaking roar of a night because, naturally, it has to be perfect, and perfection takes time. Exhausted from my blog-naming efforts, I’ll generally retire to my coach and TV after this taxing process. The next post is a project that shouldn’t be attempted on the same night because, naturally, it has to be perfect, and perfection takes time.

The next time I sit down to blog, it can’t be scheduled, because genius strikes at random. It may be the next day or it might be as much as a week after the blog’s conception until I actually write anything— though it’s always worth the wait.

As my brilliance comes to me, I fill my blog with various thoughts, like Harry Potter endings I would have preferred, or the universal truth that, when used properly, side boob can solve any problem. And though most posts are in-depth and well-planned, some smaller gems also dot the landscape.

Eventually it will dawn on me that I haven’t received a comment on my blog since its inception—a realization that hits me like an obese hippopotamus to the forehead—and I’ll spend the next week or so surfing the web and visiting popular blogs in an effort to answer the one question that burns in my mind: ‘Why not me?’ I try to pinpoint what makes these other bloggers successful, though if I manage to figure it out, I immediately back off because I don’t want to be a copycat.

However, it’s only a matter of time before I get the itch again— because once Fergie has been buried under Moldy Peaches spree, I’ll decide that my playlist’s history in favour of a Download.)

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Elections need to kick it up a notch

People often come up to me in the street and say, "Mr Durst, our democratic system is flawed, and the level of participation by its citizenry troubles me—how would you go about fighting anxiety and disillusionment?" to which I reply, "I’m glad you asked, random stranger who bears the accusatory odds of guessing my name correctly; after nearly falling into a coma watching the Alberta Provincial Leaders Debate, I think I might have some ways to bring up the democratic process."

First of all, if the idle series have taught us anything, it’s that singing competitions will get people up listening and participating in droves, and that they’ll gladly pay the associated fees. Clearly, a sing-off is needed as a component of the debates, complete with annoying host and sarcastic palate. Another disconcerting trend is the song-off's seeming inevitability! By demonstrating that they’re the most sexy and most violent candidate at the table, the sexy part could be established with wet T-shirt contests and bikini walk-offs—keeping in mind that the party leaders are all male. Brian Mason may want to address issues like affordable housing, but I want to see how he addresses his own, fail-safe moves like head thrashing and karate kicks should also be considered for bonus style points when grading the debates. I have no idea why people are wired for bloodthirsty Albertans like me.

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With the provincial election approaching on Monday, we asked a panel of three distinguished political commentators and Dave Cournoyer for their thoughts. From how the election will affect students and the postsecondary world to big-picture issues like oil sands and the environment, our panellists open up the province and peer into its democratic underbelly to help you decide.

If we were to slice this province open on Monday, what would we see?

IAN URQUHART (IU): “I think the most interesting city is going to be Calgary. They’re saying maybe too often for the politics—like that wouldn’t really surprise me. It’s the city that’s been so different this time. So I think there is a lot of opportunity in Calgary. Calgary is going to be a lot more competitive than we’ve ever seen it before, and I think Edmonton will remain competitive. I think Edmonton has been the most competitive region in the province in terms of our party politics, and I expect it to be the same way.”

What about if we were to open up the head of an average U of A student—what are they looking for?

DAVE COURNOYER (DC): “For myself, as a student, I’m looking at affordability of education, I’m looking at affordable housing—those right now are my two key issues [...] and I only see the NDP and the Liberals talking about that right now. The Conservatives are talking about doing the same thing that they’ve been doing before. One of the points of their platform was to continue with CPI increases [...] so from a student perspective, those are the types of issues that would be on my mind, but I’m not sure any of the parties have really grappled an issue enough to really motivate people to come out on an issue basis.”

IU: “If the issues that Dave mentions—if the issues of tuition and affordable housing, those sorts of issues were uppermost in your mind, I think it would be impossible to vote Conservative. If those are the issues that really matter to you, and you were going to cast your ballots based on your position on those issues [...] there is just such a difference between the Liberal and New Democrat positions on those issues compared to the governing Tories, it’s impossible for me to see how someone who thought those were their key issues in the campaign could then say, ‘I’m going to vote Conservative because of it.’”

What party do you think has done the best job, platform-wise, of going after the student vote?

SAMANTHA POWER (SP): “From what I’ve heard of the political parties, platform-wise, a lot of them seem focused on institutional kind of reforms to the University, and not a huge amount on the student side of things. And when it is on the student side of things, it’s like grants and loans, which is nice, but not the fundamental problem of the actual affordability of education. So I’d like to see more in terms of actually reducing costs and supporting students from an undergraduate perspective.

Outside of the platform, I think the Liberals and the New Democrats have done a good job of mobilizing students in terms of getting them involved in the campaign. I see a ton of youth involved in campaigns.”

RAJ PANNU (RP): “I think the NDP on the tuition fee issue, on the public housing for students, and on student loans issues, I think they have taken some fairly specific, clear positions—if students look at them from up close, I think they’d find them attractive. Because [...] in a sense, students’ anxiety is mostly financial. Quality of education is an issue that none of the parties have really focused on, but on the affordability side, the NDP have offered three specifics, which are better than what we did than when I was leader and even in the last election, so they’ve quite focused, so that might be something that’ll attract some attention.”

IU: “I think they’ve gone the furthest in terms of those issues. The Liberals have gone in that direction somewhat as well. I think you make a really good point about the quality of teaching. You know, we’re hearing lots about hiring other professors in public-sector institutions, and when you say that, then a bell rings in my head and it says, ‘Well there’s been absolutely nothing said about faculty,’ and I don’t mean another research chair.”

RP: “It’s class size; it’s quality of contact and student-teacher relationships. You know, I left campus in ’96 fuming about those things—’it’s not a new problem. It’s a problem that was creeping up on us in the late ’80s and into the ’90s, I felt in ’96 very unhappy about what was happening to the quality of instruction and contact on campus. Classes have become too big, there’s not enough room in the libraries for students to go and study. Classrooms looking drafty and overcrowded. That’s an issue that simply isn’t getting attention and really needs to get attention.”

And that’s where the faculty comes in: teaching loads. Faculty are somehow lucky in that they can protect themselves against—for class size—how many hours they teach, but ask the sessionals, who now constitute 40 per cent of the instructional staff. And so it’s bundled onto their shoulders, and what happens when you overload people with teaching responsibilities? The quality of what you do is bound to go down. No fault of the instructors, who get paid less, have to work more, and have to cut corners somehow.”

The televised leadership debate was comprised of Ed Stelmach, Kevin Taft, Brian Mason, and Wildrose Alliance Leader Paul Hiltman. Meanwhile, George Read and his Green Party were excluded, despite fielding candidates in all but four ridings.

What should be the criteria be for inclusion in the televised debate?

IU: “The question of who gets to play is really an important one, and I don’t think necessarily I would go with, ‘If you can nominate candidates in all the constituencies or even most of the constituencies.’ But maybe we should be thinking about things like judging the appeal and the potential for that appeal to grow, and think of it as proportional representation systems, where parties that get five per cent of the popular vote in most PR systems will get some seats in the legislature. So you might see some other system in that way, that how you do in the popular vote in this election would shape whether your leaders get to participate in debate.”
And in some ways I think, given the way our electoral system works, small parties are dead before they're born. And this might be a way, too, that this would give people another reason to vote for today's fringe parties.

RP: "That begs a larger question that you have addressed a bit that, really, you've really done the challenge. You need to make the democratic process more open, more revitalized, and that includes because of the question of how we do encourage representation of different political positions and perspectives. And so if you open the door, I think the way to guarantee it would be to move to proportional representation. Changes in the electoral system allowing a kind of PR system—that's the real guarantee, in my view. Fully elected, and it's long overdue.

DO: "I think it shows just how fickle the people who make these decisions are. This time, the criteria was 'Do you have a seat in the legislature?' so all the parties who did have seats in the legislature were represented. You go back to 1997, both [NDP leader] Pam Barrett and [Social Credit leader] Randy Thomisson were in the debates, and neither of their parties had seats in the legislature from the previous election. So you only have to look back eleven years to see that the criteria was different, and there were two elections following that.

Thomisson was the leader of the [Alberta] Alliance, and they wouldn't allow him to the debates because he didn't have a seat in the legislature—he didn't have a seat in the Legislature in 1997 either."

SP: "I would say if you feel you could lead this province, you should be allowed in the debate, regardless of how many candidates you can run, regardless of how many candidates are in your party. And I know that that opens it up to maybe some crazy people, but it might also open up the debate, you know, because when I watched the debate, I didn't see people debating what's actually going on in this province, so opening it up might actually challenge some people to come out with more radical perspectives and actually challenge some people to come up with policy positions that challenge some actual results, so I say open it up."

RP: "If the intention really is to promote public debate on central issues, that is not just about the representation present, that is certainly one important issue, but who should be responsible for designing certain questions that have to be asked. I thought the media did a poor job of really confronting the leaders with key, critical questions, so the debate [I didn't find it very helpful."

DO: "You watch the debates that are going on in the United States, like the Republican debates and the Democratic debates, and they're so much more exciting than anything that went on last Thursday night, and you see a number of things. I mean I would how to see a leader's debate in Alberta where questions were submitted via YouTube. Have real people ask these questions—not to call reporters not "real" people—but have actual voters think of what these questions are in front of a live audience! Having a leader's debate in a sterile, neutral TV studio kills any sense of energy. Have you in front of 800 people, when are you really doing at that podium? I think you'll see a lot more engagement. You watch the Democratic debates, if the audience doesn't like what you're saying, they'll boo you. If they like what you're saying, they'll show up, we're okay, but it's unexciting.

Probably the most divisive—and most talked-about—issue in this election is that of the tar sands. Given all of the coverage that this issue receives, what do you think there are some misconceptions about Alberta's biggest resource?

BD: "There's a great quote that Larry King has that's going to give you a sense of the debate. [...]

SP: 'I was shocked at the lack of passion. You want to lead this province, you look like a robot—you don't have any emotion about what you're talking about."

RP: "The debates in which, if you want to learn something from them, I think, is between the Republican and Democratic presidential candidates. You don't actually see any emotion when you're talking about. When you have an hour and a half and four people shouting at each other, it's very difficult anywhere with that kind of format."

DO: "And not just in the leader's debate, but in forums and constituencies, there should be some sort of rule that if you're running, you have to show up. It's pathetic that Conservative MLA's don't show up. It happens all the time, it's a problem that leaders, but it doesn't matter, they don't show up. I don't know if there was just some sort of memo that was sent out, like, 'Don't show up, we're okay,' but it's unexciting."

"Philosophically speaking, what is the role of government if not to protect public interest, to define public interest and devise policies around it, to make sure that it's protected and enhanced and served by whatever decisions they make?"

—RAJ PANNI

What is the right pace of development?

RP: "Well, the tar sands is a huge economic reality in Alberta. So to talk about the Alberta economy you can't avoid talking about the central role of fossil fuel production in this province—where do we want to go? We've got to talk about why we're doing it. Why are we doing it at the rate at which we're doing it, expanding it? Because benefits from it is, and should we or should we not maximize the returns on it to Albertans in general? That's one big question.

The second question, of course, is the ecological and environmental impact. Very little attention is being paid to that, as a matter of fact. Those huge tailing ponds—I haven't heard anyone talk about the tailing ponds. And so I don't know how that is not an issue that's up for discussion here. Just the other day, aboriginal communities got together and said: 'Stop it. Stop this project. We can't survive.' And where is that?"

What is the magic number 20 per cent?"
different objectives and trying to create a good livelihood, which means more than just a big paycheck for some people. After all, what is the point of it all if it means good job opportunities, good educational opportunities, good life chances, all these sorts of things. And when you look at what’s happened in this province since the mid-1990s, we have what we called laissez-faire that’s more extreme than what the Canadian government in the 1890s was prepared to tolerate when it came to the Klondike gold rush, and the government then was more interventionist in terms of trying to manage what was taking place up there for that gold rush than we have been for this black-gold rush that’s been going on.

“We have lived here a version of laissez-faire that’s more extreme than what the Canadian government in the 1890s was prepared to tolerate when it came to the Klondike gold rush, and the government then was more interventionist in terms of trying to manage what was taking place up there for that gold rush than we have been for this black-gold rush that’s been going on.”

—Ian Urquhart

about. "Well, we need to evaluate the situation," but I’m not sure how much more we need to evaluate—we know what’s going on up there, and I think it’s time for someone to say, "This needs to stop, this needs to slow down," besides Peter Lougheed and Premier. One other misconception that I’ve heard is that if we stop it or if we slow it down, the United States will hate us—and there may be some elements of truth to that—but first of all, it’s a problem that we’re depopulating our own province for the export to another country? That needs to be evaluated. And secondly, if we are doing that, we need to start to investigate this some of the agreements. It’s because of this moral issue that the United States and Canada, and anti-free trade, doesn’t like what’s going on up there. But I think it’s the time for us to get beyond these new ideas out there.

RP: "And companies plan. These are huge corporations, big entities—these are bigger than most governments in this world—and they plan. Why is it wrong for the government—democratically elected—to simply be given the responsibility of doing any planning? If they’re not about the public interest, if they’re not about the public good, what else are they about? That’s a philosophical question, what is the role of government in the national interest of the country? If you don’t stand up for that, then you don’t have policy, you don’t have a government that has a role to play. The role of government is to ensure that people have a voice in the process, and that’s what we’re doing. We’re trying to ensure that people have a voice in the process, and that’s what we’re doing. We’re trying to ensure that people have a voice in the process, and that’s what we’re doing."

All major parties—including the Conservatives—have talked about change. Do you think we’re going to see meaningful change in this election? It’s hard to say if the same party stays in power. RP: "Being in power for 37 years creates certain kinds of difficulties. How do you do your party? Political parties vary much live on their reputation—what they’ve done so far, and what they will do in the future. But if you’re in power for 37 years, it’s difficult to expect much change because in order

"No one’s talking about the possibility of formulating new changes. That doesn’t mean that we’re not thinking about how to do things better. Those are signs that others are changing their minds, and that’s really crucial to how we’ve made our lives in the past. If we don’t embrace change and we don’t see the need for change ourselves, it’s going to be forced on us from outside.”

RP: "To rephrase your question if I may, other than saying what kind of meaningful change is likely to happen in this election, [we should ask] ‘What kind of legislation is likely to see that type of meaningful change?’ That’s an important question, that Congress has passed to respect federal vehicles and using ‘dirty’ oil versus ‘cleaner’ oil. Those are signs that others outside are changing their minds, and that’s really crucial to how we’ve made our lives in the past. If we don’t embrace change and we don’t see the need for change ourselves, it’s going to be forced on us from outside.”

SP: "I think there is the possibility for change—even a minority government. But what I’m hoping comes out of this election is a stronger presence of civil society, from Albertans themselves. I think there are some missing pieces in progressive movements in Alberta—there’s not a lot of radical voices being taken by Albertans as it is, and I’m hoping that maybe after this election, regardless of the results, Albertans might be a little bit more willing to say, ‘No one’s talking about what’s happening, what we need to hear, what I need to hear, and that’s the reason for this government to change. A lot of people have been talking about how it’s just been an incredibly interesting election campaign, yet it’s crucial to how we’ve made our lives in the past. If we don’t embrace change and we don’t see the need for change ourselves, it’s going to be forced on us from outside.”

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READ OUR PANEL DISCUSSION ON THIS YEAR’S SU ELECTIONS IN TUESDAY’S ISSUE

THE GATEWAY — volume Xviii number 30

FEATURE
Students’ Union Employment Opportunities

TERMS OF OFFICE: MAY 1, 2008 TO APRIL 30, 2009 (IN MOST CASES)
APPLICATION DEADLINE: FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 2008, 5:00 PM NO EXCEPTIONS
SUBMIT APPLICATION, COVER LETTER, RESUMES AND 3 REFERENCES (NAME & PHONE NUMBERS) TO 2-900 SUB, HUB, CAB, ETLC INFO BOOTHS OR ONLINE AT WWW.SU.UALBERTA.CA.

Important instructions
• Please submit only single sided documents. We thank everyone who applies; however, ONLY shortlisted applicants will be notified.
• Please be available for the noted interview time.
• Applicants must be undergraduate students and have paid full Students’ Union fees.
• Positions are subject to Council ratification and signing of employment contract.

Why not work on campus in a position that fits your class schedule? As an associate vice president you will gain valuable experience in volunteer management, budgeting and project management. All associate vice presidents are required to be in the office a minimum of 20 hours/week and are paid $1300/month.

ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT ACADEMIC
Reports to the VP Academic. Assist and report on various academic issues – coordinating projects related to academic affairs. Represent the VP Academic and serve as the resource person for COFA, the ARC, GFCSC and student reps on University committees.
Remuneration: $1300/month
For further information contact the VP Academic Bobby Samuel: at 492-4236. Interviews scheduled for Wednesday, March 26, starting at 5:00 pm.

ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT EXTERNAL
Reports to the VP External. Assist with organization of on and off-campus events designed to introduce members of the community and prospective students to the Students’ Union and the U of A.
Remuneration: $1300/month
For further information contact the VP External Steven Dollansky: 492-4236. Interviews scheduled for Wednesday, March 26, starting at 5:00 pm.

ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT STUDENT LIFE
Reports to the VP Student Life. Assist with the programming, events and the volunteer management components of the Student Life portfolio as well as other duties.
Remuneration: $1300/month
For further information contact the VP Student Life Chris Le: 492-4236. Interviews scheduled for Wednesday, April 2, starting at 5:00 pm.

CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER
Reports to Students’ Council and oversees all electoral logistics. Must be familiar with election process and bylaws. Excellent project management skills are required to succeed in this position.
Remuneration: $6667.50 honoraria
For further information contact Catherine van de Braak: cs@su.ualberta.ca Interviews scheduled for Wednesday, March 26, starting at 5:00 pm.

Passionate about giving back to the campus community? Looking for invaluable work experience? Apply to be a service director with the Students’ Union. You will supervise staff and volunteers, oversee a budget, market the service and ensure the overall smooth running of the service. All service director positions are 30 hours per week and report to the Senior Manager of Student Services.

ECOS (ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATION OFFICE OF STUDENTS) DIRECTOR
The Director of ECOS is responsible for researching, developing and implementing environmental programs for the Students’ Union and students on campus.
Remuneration: $1536/month
Interviews scheduled for Wednesday, March 26, starting at 7:00 pm.

OMBUDSERVICE (2)
(Term of Employment: May 1, 2008 – August 31, 2009)
The OmbudService is a joint U of A and SU service. The service is an advocate for fairness and due process and is responsible for information and referral on University policy, and protocols related to the academic and personal well-being of all students.
Remuneration: $1558/month
Interviews scheduled for Friday, March 28, starting at 4:30 pm.

SAFEWALK DIRECTOR
The SafeWalk Director is responsible for the overall operation of the SafeWalk program, including working with other units on campus to improve and promote safety on campus. This is an excellent opportunity to develop volunteer management and administrative skills.
Remuneration: $1590/month
Interviews scheduled for Thursday, March 27, starting at 7:00 pm.

STUDENT DISTRESS CENTRE DIRECTOR
In conjunction with the Distress Line, the SDC Director offers peer counseling, crisis intervention and information/referral services to the campus community. Applicants must have at least one year of comparable peer-counseling experience.
Remuneration: $1590/month
Interviews scheduled for Wednesday, March 26, starting at 4:30 pm.

STUDENT GROUP SERVICES DIRECTOR
The Student Group Services Director is responsible for organizing and providing support to a diverse array of over 300 student groups on campus, including group registration, risk management, training and granting.
Remuneration: $1536/month
Interviews scheduled for Thursday, March 27 starting at 4:30 pm.

For further information contact the Manager of Student Services at 492-4236

FULL JOB DESCRIPTIONS AVAILABLE AT WWW.SU.UALBERTA.CA/JOBS
Volunteer Opportunities
Boards & Committees

TERMS OF OFFICE: MAY 1 2008 TO APRIL 30, 2009 (IN MOST CASES)
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Important instructions
• Please submit only single sided documents. We thank everyone who applies, however ONLY shortlisted applicants will be notified.
• Please be available for the noted interview time.
• Applicants must be undergraduate students and have paid full Students' Union fees.
• Positions are subject to Council ratification and signing of employment contract.

STUDENTS' UNION BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

ACADEMIC RELATIONS GROUP
• Participate in activities raising student awareness of academic issues
• Assists and advises the Vice President Academic on academic issues.
• Participates in workshops & seminars to improve teaching on campus
For further information contact the VP Academic Bobby Samuel: 492-4236.
Interviews scheduled for Monday, April 7, after 5:00 pm.

CAMPAIGN PLANNING AND ACTION COMMITTEE
• Assists and advises the Vice President External
• Is actively involved in planning and implementing SU campus campaigns and events
For further information contact the VP External Steven Dollansky: 492-4236.
Interviews scheduled for Thursday, April 10, after 5:00 pm.

STUDENT LIFE PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
• Makes recommendations regarding SU entertainment, planning & implementation
• Plans and implements WOW & Anti-Freeze
• Assists and advises the Vice-President Student Life
For further information contact VP Student Life Chris Le: 492-4236
Interviews scheduled for Thursday, April 11, after 5:00 pm.

STUDENT LIFE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
• Provides input on non-academic issues on campus
• Provides input on Student Services issues
• Plans and implements WOW & Anti-Freeze
• Assists and advises the Vice-President Student Life
For further information contact VP Student Life Chris Le: 492-4236
Interviews scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, after 5:00 pm.

AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE
• Selects annual SU award winners
• Involved in numerous aspects of planning annual awards night
For further information contact the Executive Assistant Catherine van de Braak: 492-4241
Interviews scheduled for Wednesday, April 2 after 5:00 pm.

STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

COMMITTEE ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
• Requires one undergraduate student
• To recommend policy and serve as the focal point for consideration of policy issues in the University community
MEETS: At the call of the Chair
Interviews scheduled for Monday, April 7, after 5:00 pm.

ONECARD ADVISORY COMMITTEE
• Requires one undergraduate student to provide feedback and guidance on all aspects of the current and future ONEcard operations
MEETS: At the call of the Chair
For further information on Standing Committees contact the VP Academic Bobby Samuel at 492-4236.
Interviews scheduled for Monday, April 7, after 5:00 pm.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA SENATE
• Requires three undergraduate students appointed by the Students' Union
• The Senate's responsibility is to inquire into any matter that may enhance the image of the University and act as a link between the University and the public. The Senate may also authorize the conferring of Honorary Degrees.
MEETS: Four times yearly
For further information contact the VP External Steven Dollansky at 492-4236.
Interviews scheduled for Monday, April 7, after 5:00 pm.

FACULTY BASED INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY STEERING COMMITTEE
• Requires four undergraduate students appointed by the Students' Union
• Successful candidates should have an interest and basic knowledge of information/communication technology and/or campus computing environments.
For further information contact the VP Academic Bobby Samuel at 492-4236
Interviews scheduled for Monday, April 7, after 5:00 pm.
Engineers get on the right side with new symposium

Event aims to dispel the myths of engineers and show the analytical side of the technical field

SEAN STEELS
News Writer

The Faculty of Engineering is looking to expand awareness of lesser-known and more artistic facets of the engineering discipline with an event called Exploring the "Right" Side of Engineering on 28 February.

Kelsey Chegus, a student in the faculty, explained that the event, which will be held from 11am–1pm in the ITEC solarium, will feature a speech by Larry Staples, former president of the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists, and Geophysicists of Alberta (APEGGA), as well as smaller group discussions led by professors and professionals in the field.

"The format of the event is going to be a guest presentation for about 20 minutes by Mr Staples. He is going to talk about the importance of right-brained thinking in engineering practice," Chegus said.

The idea for the event started as a discussion between Chegus and Roger Toogood, an engineering professor, on ethics and morals in the field.

"I wanted to talk to him about an article that was in the APEGGA about ethics and the discussion kind of snowballed from there about the different sides of engineering," Chegus explained. "We decided to come up with a way to celebrate and honour the people that are in the engineering field."

"We really struggled throughout my degree with the culture of engineering and hearing stories about industry and Alberta, in particular, being very oil- and gas-focused."

KELSEY CHEGUS
ENGINEERING STUDENT

Integral to celebrating the people who make up the field, Chegus said, is showcasing them as well-rounded, not just engineers. Many of the professionals and professors chosen to help with group discussions are those with a background in arts or music.

A main focus of the event will be to challenge the commonly held misconception that engineers are insensitive human calculators.

"I've really struggled throughout my degree with the culture of engineering and hearing stories about industry and Alberta, in particular, being very oil- and gas-focused."

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Poli Sci prof heads to New York NGO

Knight will lead the newly formed Global Centre for Responsibility to Protect

JEN HUYGEN
News Staff

This June, University of Alberta professor Andy Knight will be relocating his office from the eleventh floor of the Tory Building to a spacious suite on Fifth Avenue in New York City to begin his tenure as executive director of the new Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.

Knight, a professor of international relations in the Department of Political Science and the director of the Peace and Post Conflict Studies Certificate Programme, was named to the position on 14 February and will officially begin his role on 1 June, 2008.

In his role as executive director, Knight will be responsible for collaborating with the international community to develop strategies for advocacy, prevention, and intervention relating to mass atrocities.

"This Centre was designed to try to help the United Nations and the UN Secretary-General's office identify conflicts before they actually become conflicts," Knight said. "And if they do happen to break out into conflicts, then also identify rapid reaction capabilities of the United Nations to handle these situations [...] and try to quell the conflicts and stop the possibility of mass atrocities.

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**Skid Row still lapping North America**

At least bassist Rachel Bolan is—while not touring with the band, he’s speeding around a race track

**music preview**

**Skid Row**

With Art of Dying and Kixs

Friday, 29 February at 8pm

Edmonton Music Events Centre

JONN KMECH

Art & Entertainment Staff

Hair metal screamed and drag racing go together like Mickey Dole and drag shoes. However, few people actually get to live the experience of kickstarting the hearts of 18,000 screaming fans in an arena and also blazing past the finish line in a dragster. But Rachel Bolan, bassist for veteran hard rock act Skid Row, is both a seasoned rocker and racer. His passion for driving started around the same time as his passion for music, and it hasn’t slowed—even after being on the road for two decades.

“My older brother was into racing,” he always took me to drag races and rock car races when I lived in New Jersey when I was a kid,” the bass-back Bolan explains over the phone. “I became a Dale Earnhardt fan through him and got into NASCAR, which I still love. It’s cool now because I know a lot of the drivers.”

Born James Southworth, Bolaun released Skid Row in 1986 with current guitarist Drew “The Snake” Sabo. The band was one of the last metal artists to find success in the mainstream music market, as their self-titled debut went multi-platinum, and the followup Skive to the Gride was also a major hit in the US.

Following some internal skirmishes that led to several lineup shuffles, the departure of singer Sebastian Bach, a hiatus period, and a number of drummer changes that Bolan describes as “very Spinital-Tap-ish,” the band has settled into a relatively stable lineup in the past few years, albeit with fewer personnel changes of ‘80s hair. The group has toured with some of the biggest names in rock, including Aerosmith, Guns N’ Roses, Tesla, and a certain group of face painted rock stars that Bolan describes as very influential.

“Doing the KISS tour—nothing has to be said about that, growing up as a KISS fan,” Bolan notes enthusiasm. “[Gene Simmons] was one of my biggest influences. I mean, I didn’t even know what the bass was [growing up], but I wanted to play with the guy that spit blood. We did, I think, 130 shows with them, and I must have watched them in the majority of those shows. It was great.”

Unlike KISS, Skid Row remains an active band, releasing a new album, Revolutions Per Minute, in 2006. The group continues to tour and is writing a new album at the moment, and despite Bolan’s continual involvement with the band, he finds time to act as a producer, and is also currently writing a book based on his experiences on the road, containing his memos and stories about the numerous rock stars he’s met and celebrities he’s almost partied with.

“Doing the KISS tour—nothing has to be said about that, growing up as a KISS fan,” Bolan notes. “My older brother was into racing,” he always took me to drag races and rock car races when I lived in New Jersey when I was a kid,” the bass-back Bolan explains over the phone. “I became a Dale Earnhardt fan through him and got into NASCAR, which I still love. It’s cool now because I know a lot of the drivers.”

**Two decades of skidding out**

Skid Row’s self-titled debut went quintuple platinum and had three hit singles, the success was bittersweet: they’d wasted their publishing royalties rights to Jon Bon Jovi’s Underground Music Company. But Jovi, along with songwriter Richie Sambora, got most of that cash, though Sambora gave it back after a very public dispute. Bon Jovi did not.

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In 1989, the band’s then-vocalist, Sebastian Bach, was hardly criticized for donning a shirt that read “AIDS kills fags dead” during a concert. A fan had tossed it onstage, and Bach put it on without looking. He later apologized and made a large donation to an AIDS charity.

In 1996, Bach was fired, and a few months later, so was drummer Rob Affuso. Though Skid Row never officially split, the remaining members ventured on under the name Ozone Monday for a while, eventually reforming Skid Row in 1999 with new members. Bach went on to play in a few other bands and debiit in Broadway theatre, playing Alfie Koff in a stage production of Rocky Horror Picture Show and Jesus in Jesus Christ Superstar. He was fired from the latter for his dashboard antics.

Bach would later become an avid advocate for the men’s rights movement. Although Bach’s gone on record saying he’d welcome a chance to go back on the road without having to worry about being fired for flaming his pants.

“While Skid Row’s self-titled debut went quintuple platinum and had three hit singles, the success was bittersweet: they’d wasted their publishing royalties rights to Jon Bon Jovi’s Underground Music Company. But Jovi, along with songwriter Richie Sambora, got most of that cash, though Sambora gave it back after a very public dispute. Bon Jovi did not.”

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Semi-Pro a slam dunk for Ferrell

The funnyman lets his team handle the plot and scores baskets of laughs.

**film review**

**Semi-Pro**

Directed by Kent Alterman
Starring Will Ferrell, Andre Benjamin, Woody Harrelson, and David Koechner

SEAN STEELS
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Oh, Will Ferrell. Your satiny voice slithers through our ears, like the exotic love-child of a jaguar and a box of silkens q-tips. Or at least that's the impression we're supposed to get of Jackie Moon, the character you play in your newest film, *Semi-Pro*.

Unfortunately, for those not of this opinion, the first ten minutes of the movie might be a little jarring. Jackie Moon isn't just a local basketball star—he's also the owner and coach of the semi-professional basketball team on which he plays. And not to squander any talent, he's also the singer and writer of '70s one hit wonder "Love Me Sexy."

But typecast though he may be, Ferrell still manages to keep his jokes fresh and funny while romping through the afro-crazy antics of '70s basketball culture. Of course, Jackie Moon isn't all that different from Ferrell's recent characters. He has all the bizarreness and bouffant of Ricky Bobby from *Talladega Nights*, all the salacious jokes of Anchorman's Ron Burgundy, and all the athletic prowess of Chazz Michael Michaels from * Blades of Glory.*

But typecast though he may be, Ferrell still manages to keep his jokes fresh and funny while romping through the afro-crazy antics of '70s basketball culture. The movie has a solid helping of his comedic stylings from start to finish without indulging in the comic's previous successes too closely.

The movie's biggest surprise is the performance from the rest of the cast—Ferrell doesn't rely heavily on his set of B-list characters. Standards like David Koechner, Rob Huey, and Will Arnett make steady appearances throughout the film, but the majority of attention is focused on Ferrell and Benjamin. In fact, by *Semi-Pro*’s halfway point, the majority of plot and development are focused on Harrellson, leaving Ferrell to sling jokes comfortably from the sidelines. By putting Harrellson and Benjamin in charge of carrying the sense of the movie, Ferrell's free to take care of the nonsense.

With Ferrell on the sidelines, the team handles the plot and scores baskets of laughs comfortably with mediocrity and flashy halftime shows until they find out the ABA will soon be absorbed into the NBA. While this opens up a door of opportunity for the players, only select teams will be allowed to advance.

Predictably, these teams are to be selected based on performance, and only the top four will proceed to NBA glory. Fierce competition ensues, and the new guy Monix (Woody Harrelson), a talented but angler-fatigued veteran, is brought in to help the team bring home the championship—or at least fourth place.

As far as sports film go, *Semi-Pro* is a throwback spoof. It is the hilarity that ensues from Jackie Moon's efforts to keep the team in accordance with ABA regulations and meet the ridiculous attendance numbers demanded of the league underdogs are enough to make you forget you were even watching a competition.
Cancer Bats have fellow Canuck friends help Hail Destroyer

This Toronto-dwelling four-piece may not drink like you’d expect, but they’ve got the best of Canada’s hardcore scene behind them

musicpreview

Cancer Bats

With guests
Friday, 29 February at 9pm
Avenue Skate Park (9030 108 Avenue)

CANADIAN MOJO
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Liam Cormier of Cancer Bats is brimming with enthusiasm on the first day of their cross-Canada tour.

"The sun is shining. I’m hoping the snow is going to melt while we drive out across the country," he says. "The fact that we are playing a skate park is going to be rad, too. I’ll get to skate in the afternoon, so it is like the perfect day."

The band will be in town previewing their latest album, Hail Destroyer, which is set to be released on March 22. Judging by the title track recently released on the band’s MySpace, fans of explosive hardcore rock are sure to be pleased by the band’s growing intensity—something Cormier attributes to their improving technical skills.

“We definitely wanted to step up when it came time to write the second record,” he says. “I guess we wanted to outdo ourselves. Since the first record came out, all of us have become better players, [...] and we wanted to really push that.

“And there’s just me yelling a lot more," he adds. "My voice has gotten a lot stronger and more intense, so when it came time to writing new stuff, it ended up being a lot screamier.”

Hail Destroyer is a result of newly-seasoned musicians pushing themselves and exerting complete autonomy over their career path. More confident than ever, when it came time to record, they felt like they could go it alone without the outside influence of a producer.

“I don’t think we need a producer at this point; we are pretty much all seasoned musicians pushing them¬selves and exerting complete autonomy over their career path. More confident than ever, when it came time to record, they felt like they could go it alone without the outside influence of a producer," he explained. "It was awesome [...] because everyone was getting their own input on what we wanted and what we wanted to improve on from the last record and where we saw this album going. It was like a big open forum.”

The forum that was created involved guest spots from the likes of Billy Talent and Alexisonfire, whom Liam speaks of like family. He’s clearly appreciative of his Canadian counterparts, Cancer Bats have carved out a comfortable niche for themselves outside of mainstream commercial success.

“People who listen to us are dedicated to listening to Pantera since they were little kids,” Cormier says. “They don’t really give a shit what’s on the radio.”

It’s natural to assume that a band of the hardcore persuasion would carry that intensity to their personal lives, but Liam lives the hard-rocking life of the kind that they do just for the sheer joy of the music.

“This is the kind of music we love playing. And what makes us want to move around and, like, get crazy.”

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The Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (AHFMR) Media Fellowship Program gives one undergraduate or graduate university student at an Alberta university the chance to help a local media outlet communicate science and health news to the public. Preference will be given to students who have a strong biomedical science background.

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A few Vantage Points too many

Pete 'Travis' many-eyed approach to his film is promising but poorly executed

film review

Vantage Point
Now Playing
Directed by Pete Travis
Starring Dennis Quaid, Matthew Fox, Forest Whitaker, William Hurt, and Sigourney Weaver

CANDACE MCOY
Arts & Entertainment Writer

In Pete Travis' directoral debut, the US president gets shot at a fictional terrorist summit in Spain. Following the two bullets in his chest is a series of explosions, leaving the arena looking like a war zone country and opening what should be an blood-pumping political romp with a bang.

Travis adopts a "stop-rewind-replay" approach to the film: we're shown the assassination sequence from different people's perspectives, which lets us examine that dynamic perspective, but the intrigue is reasoned, noble, controlled, and a placebo for the present-day regime. Travis' many-eyed approach to his film is promising but poorly executed.

By the third "rewind," the audience I was in collectively groaned, as what could have been a fresh perspective instead more redundance.

The problem is that when you're designing a film that chooses style over substance, it ought to be visually dazzling, provocative, and original; Vantage Point is rather shallow and mundane. By the third "rewind," the audience I was in collectively groaned, as what could have been a fresh perspective was instead more redundance.

Sigourney Weaver was initially a big draw as the controlled, calculating television producer covering the summit. Her vantage point is a layered and dynamic perspective, but the intrigue is gone with the introduction of Dennis Quaid as a tired and unsympathetic Secret Service agent.

He's on his first day back after taking a bullet for the president in a prior assassination attempt, and while that irony's rather amusing, it's not the laugh-out-loud spectacle that doubles agent Kent Taylor (Matthew Fox)'s eastern European accent is.

Even the naïve sincerity of tourist Forrest Whitaker seems misplaced in this attempted blockbuster. The gems of this film's acting lie with the Spanish-speaking actors, particularly Ricardo Núñez, who offers a glimpse of sincerity and earnestness otherwise missing from the film. But although their emotion is palpable, we never know why any of them are motivated to kill the president.

Given the lack of international approval for George W Bush, perhaps writer Barry Levy felt the desire to assassinate the president is ubiquitous. But creating a back story for the terrorists would have provided a necessary complexity. The film rather acts as a punchline for the present-day regime by providing us with a president that is reasoned, noble, controlled, and a cogent communicator.

Oh, how the world may have been different if William Hurt was president.

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MIKE KENDRICK
Design & Production Editor

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The Trews are pirates—experts at salliesing the rolling seas of rock’s history. Name an authority on the genre—the Rolling Stones, AC/DC, Tom Petty—and you’ll find that the musical riches cornucopia by them and others have been plundered by this gang of marauding Mainstremers. On their latest voyage into the studio, they brought those thrills and chills measures with them, bravely integrating rock’s past, and with its present on No Time For Later. Of course, any band with such a record that’s simultaneously derivative and confused. Luckily, The Trews have their own trademark: thick hooks and able grooves, which then give way to irresistible melodies. The album storms in with Kronofly yet undeniably danceable grooves, which then give way to sweet lamentations on lost love that, while generic, have just as much verve. As a result, No Time For Later feels breezy and light. Although the weight of each song rests on catchy riffs, little surprises pop up on nearly every track. A Mandatory Hit organ lurks in the background of “I’ll Tradin’ the Rain,” scraping bagpipes rash in on the heels of a stamping drum in on "Can’t Stop Laughing," a leaping slide carries “Ooohs & Aahs,” mimicking the “carry on” sentiment of the chorus, and, perhaps the most unusual yet pleasing quirk of the whole album, a good-time-saloon piano opens “Paranoid Freak.” Seemingly ripped from a western, this throwback to when you could tell the good guys from the bad guys by the colour of their hair has proven to be the perfect counterpart to the song’s theme of “The Century of fear of everything.” Songs like “Paranoid Freak” and “Gun Control” are ripe with frustration, making The Trews’ third studio album their most political yet. However, exactly what statement they’re trying to make by putting assless chaps on the cover remains elusive. Several tracks use synthesized organs, but it comes off far from church-like and much more stufn. The seduction of Hot Chip is two-fold: they appeal to your emotions with the more romantic, slower ballad tracks and beckon to your primal side with the big-beating, pulse-chasing club-bangers. “Wisters” reminds you that love is a battlefield with clever lyrics like, “It’s me versus you in love / We’ll tag teams, double up, hit you in the sweet spot / The gloves are off.” Their songs like “Witches” and “The Dark” ooze comfortability between slow jams and more upbeat dance tracks and between loving, living and lustful moves. Hot Chip promises to bring the dance floor to a sweaty boil, while also allowing enough breaks with the slower tracks to catch your breath—and maybe someone’s eye.

Their music works best when the word “electric” is placed before everything: electric guitar, electric violin, electric percussion—and pretty electric vocals, to be honest. The group effortlessly manages to use their own instruments as tools which is good because the lyrics fall squarely into the “not quite as clever as they’re like you to think” category. Each of the electronic tracks on the album is very listenable and enjoyable, which is a feat unto itself. Zox shines most, however, in songs like “Goodbye” and “The Wait (part II),” when they slow down, strip away the electric guitars and synths, and just make music that sounds distinctly theirs. They’ll probably do a lot better with the vocals, but as a testament to their craft, they’ve emerged into a genre niche like this one, but perhaps they’re happy appealing to the violinophile market. God knows we’re passionate enough.
When the Bears take to the ice in Clare Drake Arena on Friday night against the Manitoba Bisons in the first game of the Canada West playoff series, they’ll be surrounded by the evidence of Alberta’s legacy.

The Bears (21-5-2 in the regular season) have won six of the past seven Canada West championships (46 overall) and two of the last three national titles (twelve of those in all). Most of those banners are on display in the Drake, reminding the current Bears squad of what they’re playing for—and what standards they’re trying to live up to, just as they take on Manitoba (11-13-2).

“Anytime you step on the ice here, you’ve just got to look up and you see the banners that wrap all the way around the rink,” this year’s Alberta left winger Eric Hunter said.

“I think when you come into the playoffs and step onto the ice, you’re not just playing for yourself; you’re playing for someone else,” Eisler added. “It’s always challenging when you’re playing someone that you don’t really know, that you’ve never faced before. It’s added pressure, but that’s also added motivation. You see all the flags up there and you think ‘Am I good enough’?”

The Bears could need all the extra boosts that they can get this week as they face the Bisons. In many ways, the Herd is an unknown quantity when they face the Bisons. In many ways, they’re trying to live up to—as they say—they’re trying to live up to St. John’s and their respective national championships, and though they’re both gunning for CIS gold after finishing at the top of Canada West, the two teams are split between two pools in both cases, chances are good that the two teams will face each other in the final.

Alberta head coach Terry Eisler thinks that Manitoba’s recent success against UBC is a better indication of how the game will go. “They’ve seen UBC a few times in the regular season this year, and when they met the Bears a few weeks ago, it was 4-4,” Eisler said. “We saw that Manitoba just came out of a good series, and we know they’re playing as good as they can.”

“We’ve had two weeks off, and we’re just ready to get going and start playing,” Hunter added. “All we know is what our team is going to do, and we’re going to play our game.”

In the end, the opponents don’t matter to them; what it comes down to is what the Pandas and Bears can bring to the court, both mentally and physically.

“We’ve trained for almost eight months now, and I think the big thing is that they do a really good job of preparing themselves and keeping themselves in shape,” Eisler said.

“We’ve had two weeks off, and we’re just ready to get going and start playing.”

NOT QUITE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH

The Bears will be relying on their top lines, including Tim Krymusa (white) to score like this against the Bisons this weekend.

Bears and Pandas try for matching golds at nationals

Bears and Pandas try for matching golds at nationals

Both of Alberta’s volleyball teams are looking for the country’s highest honours as they take on familiar foes at CIS championships.

Alberta’s men’s and women’s volleyball teams are on the other side of the country this weekend, competing in their respective national championships, and though they’re both gunning for CIS gold after finishing at the top of Canada West, the two teams have different agendas.

The defending national champion Pandas finished the regular season 14-0 and in fifth spot, but took down higher-placed teams like UBC and Manitoba on their way to their second straight Canada West title.

The Bears, on the other hand, went 18-3 in the regular season, never letting go of their number-one spot on the national rankings. But instead of going into Laval this weekend as reigning champions like the Pandas are doing at the University of New Brunswick, the Bears will be looking to prove themselves. The Bears have made the gold-medal match in each of the past four years, but have lost in three of them, including a heartbreaking 3-2 game to Winnipeg last season.

“Obviously when you don’t win a championship when you’re that close, it’s something that you think about all the time,” Bears head coach Terry Danyluk said. “It’s something that exists for sure, and I think they’ll love to have another opportunity at that game.”

The most important thing is that we don’t look too far ahead. In order to get the chance to do that, they have to get by round one and round two.

“Though there will be teams at both tournaments from across the country, the Bears and Pandas will each see a lot of familiar faces across the ice. Half of the eight teams playing in Laval this weekend are from this conference, while the Pandas pool of one of three Canada West teams competing for the women’s trophy. Though Canada West teams are split between two pools in both cases, chances are good that both Alberta teams will face one or more of their conference rivals.

“It’s nice playing someone that you’ve played before and seeing some familiar faces,” Pandas head coach Laurie Eisler said. “It’s always challenging when you’re playing someone that you don’t really know because then you’re having to make adjustments on the fly, but I think we’re good at that too.”

In addition to their fellow Western teams, Alberta’s athletes will match up against teams they’ve seen in previous championships. The Pandas’ first game, for instance, will be against Saint Mary’s—they met last year in the first round as well.

“In either scenario, you just make the best of it. If you haven’t got your team prepared to the time you’ve been skating for, you haven’t got a chance,” Eisler said. “We’ll just have to make adjustments on the fly, and we’re going to play well and play really well under pressure, and then the challenge is for [the other team] to be able to match that.”

In the end, the opponents don’t matter to them; what it comes down to is what the Pandas and Bears can bring to the court, both mentally and physically.

“We’ve just got to work hard and come focused and ready to play,” Bears defensiveman Harlan Anderson said. “We’ve just got to work hard and come focused and ready to play.”

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Both of Alberta’s volleyball teams are looking for the country’s highest honours as they take on familiar foes at CIS championships.
Hoops Pandas just one win away from nationals

Alberta squad wants a Canada West banner, but its ultimate goal is to silence critics by earning spot at the CIS championships again

ROBIN COLLUM
Sports Editor

There's only one win standing between the Pandas basketball team and a spot at nationals, but the teams guarding those games have all beaten Alberta in the regular season this year. The Pandas will be in Vancouver for the Canada West Final Four, and they are up against a conference power—against Simon Fraser, UBC, and Regina.

The Pandas, who finished the regular season 17–5, will be facing UBC in their first game on Friday night. It was at the T-Birds' hands that Alberta suffered their worst loss of the season on January 1, falling 86–49 on the road. But the Pandas are determined to put a better showing this time.

"Every team lays an egg every year, and that was ours, and it's not going to happen again," fourth-year Panda forward Trish Ariss said. "UBC needs to be looking over their shoulders because we're coming for them, and we aren't going to play the way we played against them last time. I'm really excited because I know we are just as good as them."

"It will be a totally different game," forward Kristin Jarock agreed. "I think we learned a lot from that game, and I think [UBC] is going to be a good one."

Alberta head coach Scott Edwards is optimistic about his team's chances as well, but he isn't taking UBC lightly. "They've got three outstanding fifth-year players who aren't going to settle for not getting to nationals," Ariss said. "It's always good to have a little something to keep you going, and it's not one person that a team is looking to shut down; it's everybody that's going to have to shut down.

"The games we've lost this year have all been ones where we've shot the ball poorly—ineffective shooting and being weak as a team. As is usually the case when they're playing well, the Pandas were able to distribute their scoring between several players. Each night had nine players putting points on the board. "Deliberate" is to call it 'scoring by committee', and that's one of our strengths," Ariss said. "We're harder to stop when everybody's scoring, and it's not one person that a team is looking to shut down; it's everybody that they're going to have to shut down in order to beat us."

"UBC needs to be looking over their shoulders because we're coming for them, and we aren't going to play the way we played against them last time."

TRISH ARISS
PANDAS FORWARD

On the other hand, on both Friday and Saturday of the series, the Pandas had trouble keeping their drive up through 40 minutes. They remedied that on Sunday, and also remedied themselves that, in order to win, it's essential they shoot and rebound successfully.

"The games we've lost this year have all been ones where we've shot the ball poorly—in the 20s—so we can't have another game like that in the Canada West Finals, or we're not going to make it through to Saskatchewan," Edwards said. "[Pandas need] to play the way we did on Sunday—just tough," Jarock agreed. "We didn't let anybody push us around, we set the tempo, we were the first on loose balls, and that was the deciding factor. We finally played a fourth quarter and scored."

If the Pandas can win on Friday night, their most likely opponent in the gold medal game will be SFU, the team that beat them in last year's CIS final. The Clan, who went 12–1 in the regular season and didn't once relinquish their position at the top of the CIS rankings, also prevailed against the Pandas in Edmonton, though by a narrower 75–73 margin.

"We're going to go out and beat UBC, and I think the entire country is expecting SFU to beat Regina, but who knows in that game," Ariss said. "It doesn't really matter to us who we play because we're going to give it our best in the gold medal match, but if it's SFU, all the better because we want another shot at them anyway."

The Pandas' silver-medal win last year surprised a lot of people—like this year, they finished the regular season in the fourth spot on the national top-ten list—and many on the Alberta squad feel that they're still a force to be reckoned with. "It doesn't really matter to us who we play because we're going to give it our best in the gold medal match, but if it's SFU, all the better because we want another shot at them anyway."

"Every one of the teams we're going up against are ones who beat us in conference play, so I certainly think we've got the underdogs," Edwards said. "But it's always good to have a little something that you're working towards to get yourself fired up to play."

The top three teams at the end of the weekend will head to Saskatchewan to represent Canada West at nationals.

Tip-Top Shape Forward Kristin Jarock and her fellow Pandas are going to focus on shooting and rebounding this weekend in the CIS championships again.
Bears’ man of Steele gets Canada West recognition

Player of the Year has led Alberta team to Calgary for conference Final Four

ROBIN COLLUM
Sports Editor

The Bears basketball team is headed to the Canada West Final Four, and they have Alex Steele to thank for it. The efforts of the fifth-year Bears guard, who was just named conference MVP, have helped the Bears get within one win of a spot in the national championships.

Alberta earned the wild card spot into the Final Four after finishing the regular season 16-6 and beating the Saskatchewan Huskies in the first round of the playoffs before losing to Calgary this past weekend. They’ll play the Brandon Bobcats (20-2 in the regular season) on Friday night, and the winner of the game will advance to nationals as well play for conference gold on Saturday.

The biggest the Bears were able to clinch in the national top tier this season was ninth, in the second week of January, while Brandon finished the year in second place. That said, the Bears are one of only three Canada West teams to have been in the Van in conference play this year.

Alberta beat Brandon 86-93 in Edmonton on 17 November (Victoria prevailed against Brandon earlier this term, while Regina was able to take a game away from them in their divisional playoffs this past weekend). The Bears also managed to beat them in pre-season play, and lead coach Don Horwood—who was named 2008 Canada West Coach of the Year—feels confident going into the weekend.

"Obviously we feel that we have a chance to beat Brandon; we’ve beaten them twice this year. This is a different scenario, so we know it’s going to be tough, but, hey, two winners Friday might go to nationals,” Horwood said. "If somebody said in September, 'You’re going so be playing in that game,’ that’s all you could hope for. And that’s where we are.”

It’s unlikely that many people outside the Bears organization would have made such a prediction at the beginning of the year. They haven’t advanced past the quarter-finals of the Canada West playoffs since 2001, and they’ve been overshadowed by big-name teams like Calgary and Brandon in Canada West this year despite beating both them and UBC—the fourth in steals, and sixth in assists. In their Canada West competition, how hard to beat them.” Horwood said.

"Last weekend, Calgary killed us in the boards. They were getting second and third shots, and we were having to find them, and they were making their free throws. As long as a team keeps doing that to you, it’s pretty hard to beat them.”

Alberta’s single best weapon against their Canada West competition, however, will continue to be Steele. The guard has been the nucleus of the team’s scoring this year, propelling Alberta through injuries and slumps—efforts for which he was recognized by this week’s award.

Steele was fifth in Canada West Scor- ing, second in free throw percentage, fourth in steals, and sixth in assists. In January against Trinity Western, he scored a career-high 46 points.

"It feels good, but a trip to nationals would feel even better,” Steele said. "I’ve worked hard over the years, and to have something like this now is kind of special. In that respect, it’s great. But going to nationals—I’ve never been there—is the most important thing.”

"It’s well-deserved,” Horwood said of the award. "In September, I’ve worked hard over the years, and to have something like this now is kind of special. In that respect, it’s great. But going to nationals—I’ve never been there—is the most important thing.”

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The Bears will play Brandon on Friday at 3pm, and then will advance to either the bronze medal game at 7pm or the gold medal match at 7pm at the Jack Simpson Gym in Calgary. For those not interested in jumping on a Greyhound to catch the games, they’ll be webcast on www.nuvu.ca/streaming.

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Monday's NHL trade deadline moves bore the pants off us

With so much money—not to mention playoff hopes—on the line, you'd think that the NHL trading frenzy that precedes the deadline would be really exciting. This year, however, big deals were few and far between.

Mike Kendrick

I didn't expect much out of this year's trade season, and looking at the results of Tuesday's trading block madness, it would seem that the league lived up to my expectations perfectly.

While I anticipated that Toronto would make a few big moves after finally canning their former buffoon of a GM, John Ferguson Jr, all they really ended up with was a few extra draft picks at the expense of liquidating their roster's draft talent. Credit to the franchise for looking towards the future, but it's not much of a vote of confidence towards an aging Mats Sundin, who's pledged his loyalty to the Leafs for the few years he's got left in his tank.

Further in the trade season, Alberta's teams only managed a combined two moves. Calgary hardly needs the extra defence they grabbed for a third-round pick, and Dick Tamnstrom might as well have gone to waiters for the impact he's left with the Oil this year. Yet poor Rollie the Goalie finds himself stuffed into the endless vacation of second-string goaltenders that's been previously occupied by such superstars as Ty Conklin and Jussi Markkanen. And don't tell me that the Flames are really going to rely on Cuy when Mikka Kiprusoff breaks his hip in the Western Conference finals. If he wasn't good enough for anything more than third on the 2002 Olympic team, I can't see that much has changed for the better since then.

All in all, I'm less than impressed with the 2008 trades. Where past years have delivered an exciting market of superstars as Ty Conklin and the injured Sidney Crosby, and their potential play cog to be especially lethal now. If Hossa re-signs with Pittsburgh after this season, the Penguins will get even more out of this deal.

As it is, both teams benefited from this trade—Atlanta secured their future, and Pittsburgh gained even more offensive firepower for their 2008 playoff run.

Nick Frost

As they approached the 2008 version of the NHL's trade deadline, the Montreal Canadiens saw a mere four points out of first place in the extremely close Eastern Conference race. GM Bob Gainey had stated that he was ready to lead the team to anything more than a first-round exit this year. Yet poor Rollie the Goalie finds himself stuffed into the endless vacation of second-string goaltenders that's been previously occupied by such superstars as Ty Conklin and the injured Sidney Crosby, and their potential play cog to be especially lethal now. If Hossa re-signs with Pittsburgh after this season, the Penguins will get even more out of this deal.

As it is, both teams benefited from this trade—Atlanta secured their future, and Pittsburgh gained even more offensive firepower for their 2008 playoff run.

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FABservatory on 20 February to watch the lunar eclipse. The turnout was massive, and we had clear skies for the entire event. Also visible that night were many satellites, Mars, Saturn, and adorable little kids excited about astronomy. It couldn't have been better. If you like to get up super early, you have the opportunity to see three very different planets this week. Head outside around 6:45am and look towards the southeast. The bright planet higher in the southeast is Jupiter, the largest gas giant. The other two planets much lower in the sky and to the left of Jupiter are Mercury (higher) and Venus (lower). You'll know they're planets because they don't twinkle like the stars do. Oh, and the FABservatory is going to be open every Thursday (weather-permitting) from 8-9pm starting next week. FABservatory is a weekly feature that covers the goings-on in the night skies, the galaxy, and sometimes even Kati's personal life.
Edmonton—Strathcona candidates battle for Pannu’s seat

With former New Democrat leader Raj Pannu leaving political life, the race to take over his riding is on.

JONATHAN TWIES
News Staff

Last Wednesday, the candidates for the provincial riding of Edmonton—Strathcona participated in a debate hosted by the Student's Union at the Myer Horwitz Theater. Progressive Conservative TJ Keil, Liberal Tim Vant, and the New Democrats' Rachel Notley attended the all-candidates forum in hopes of winning the NDP stronghold of former Leader Raj Pannu. The candidates discussed the various measures of change their party would enact in the legislature.

“The most pressing issue in this election is the need to effect change. That’s what people need,” Vant said. “We can talk, but without actually being able to act, it won’t happen.”

Notley further specified the type of change she believes the province needs.

“It’s important you don’t just say we care for change’s sake, but you vote for substantial change. Two years ago, the Liberals and the Conservatives together gave corporate Alberta a $370-million tax cut. In so doing, they didn’t put $760 million in children’s education. They didn’t put $400 million into public education. They didn’t put $100 million into student housing. Those kinds of decisions are made every day in Alberta, and we need to have a better way of making decisions,” she said.

Keil, the Conservative hopeful, drew upon his youth as a strength in representing the University's voting.

“As part of the new generation of young Progressive Conservative leadership, I intend to be that change that everyone’s looking for,” he said. "I’m not here for the last 37 years, I’m here for the next 37 years.

Postsecondary education was one of the most talked-about topics during the debate.

“A very important part of [the post-secondary] discussion relates to the people who are already university right now,” Notley said. “Costs are far beyond what they can afford.”

The NDP's proposition, Notley explained, would roll back tuition to 1999 levels—a reduction of 20 per cent—while Vant outlined the Liberal promise of a rollback 2001 levels, marking an average drop of $100. Keil, on the other hand, reiterated the PC strategy to reduce interest on student loans to the prime level.

All three of the candidates also emphasized environmental concerns, with Keil standing by his government's current plan.

“Included in the climate change plan are energy efficiency and green energy production,” he said. “Through technological development, [...] our greenhouse gas emissions will go down.”

Notley stressed the importance of targeted action for environmental protection and supported halting tarsands development until its impact has been comprehensively reviewed.

“We face a tremendous challenge in Alberta,” she said. “We must address the issue of the environment. We can’t wait twelve years. We can’t wait five years. It has to be done now.”

Vant repeatedly expressed his confidence in the comprehensiveness of his party’s plans in addressing not just climate change, but affordable housing and other social issues.

“The Alberta Liberal Party is like a bird with a left wing and a right wing. We need both to be able to fly down the road,” Vant said, with both arms outstretched. “This plan is seven years of good. I think it will see this province through a lot of good times and a lot of hard times, but always keep people flying.”

Although the candidates held differing opinions on a number of issues, they all agreed on the importance of democratic participation.

“There has never been a more exciting time to live in this province,” Keil explained. “We have immense opportunity standing right in the face to ensure long term prosperity.”

“Voting is the best way to do that,” Vant added. “Having these discussions and hearing critical thought is of huge importance so that we don’t make mistakes we’ve made in the past.”

“It’s important to get as many people as possible out to vote, so when the results come in, we know it’s actually something all Albertans wanted,” Notley said. “We should be able to raise the standard for everyone in the province, not just a privileged few.”

Actually, watching the Oscars. They were pretty good. [On Stewart’s success:] he just wasn’t that good, but the Oscars were good.

“Laundry.” [Why couldn’t you watch the Oscars between loading and unloading the machines?] or were you doing laundry by hand?] “Why would anybody want to watch the Oscars?” [You’re dodging the question:] “I was also doing homework.”

“I stopped playing the Oscars to play Rockband. [What songs?]: ‘Every time by Pearl Jam.’

As you may be aware, this year’s Oscars were the lowest-rated in TV history. What were you doing on Sunday that was so important that you couldn’t find time to watch the Oscars?

STREETERS
Compiled and photographed by Steve Smith and Koleyi Tanosik

Andrew Ruse
Business 6
at UWO, in Edmonton for Reading Week

Jocan Wilson
Engineering IV

Frederic Norberg
Computer Engineering Masters

Steven Tarasi
Agriculture PhD

TARASTIEGLITZ

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON SUNDAY THAT WAS SO IMPORTANT THAT YOU COULDN’T FIND TIME TO WATCH THE OSCARS?

‘Laundry.’ [Why couldn’t you watch the Oscars between loading and unloading the machines?] ‘Or were you doing laundry by hand?’ ‘Why would anybody want to watch the Oscars?’ ‘You’re dodging the question.’ ‘I was also doing homework.’

‘I stopped playing the Oscars to play Rockband. [What songs?]: ‘Everytime by Pearl Jam.’

‘I believe I was at church.’ ‘At all day.’

‘Teaching in the morning and attending a service in the evening.’ ‘What about the afternoon?’ ‘I was doing homework.’
Hil, I'm Dave Cournoyer, thief of domain names and ladies' hearts alike. After inventing the U-Pass, I realized the potential existed to get ridiculous amounts of poon on the weekends. What initiatives have you planned to increase your sex appeal?

Don't strain yourselves.

I would tend to agree somewhat. Maybe 80/20 OK or so, 70/30 on a good day.

Well, I can touch my elbows behind my back if you'd like. That pretty much satisfies the requirements of the VPS portfolio, does it not?

Three words: First-year lister girls.

Well, I think it's important to continue advocating at the federal level. We can achieve this by joining CASA, furthermore. Working with more local advocacy groups such as CAS and the EAS - which I invented and use to get poon, Dave - we can better students' lives externally. Because, I mean, when it comes down to it, that's what it's all about: doing stuff externally.

Oh. Oh shit. I'm running a for Opsfi, right?

A Uhh... pool tables in the powerplant?

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PSE and the environment key issues for Edmonton-Riverton candidates

Katharine Zahn

Monday night saw the Students' Union host their second and final all-candidates' forum at the Devonwood Lounge, focusing on the environment and sustainability. Candidates from the riding of Edmonton-Riverton fielded questions from the moderator, before taking queries from many of the audience members.

The event, held at the University of Alberta, runs from the North Saskatchewan River south to Whitemud Drive, east to 63 Street, and has five candidates: NDP hopeful Erica Bulpin, Wendy Andrews of the Progressive Conservatives, Cameron Wakefield of the Alberta Green Party, Wildrose Alliance member Kyle Van Hauwaert, and incumbent Liberal Ted Taft.

While all of the candidates have various backgrounds and political leanings, the two major issues that were brought up throughout the evening were postsecondary education and the environment.

"Our plan is to freeze tuition fees at 1999 levels, and we're also investing $100 million on building affordable housing for students," Bulpin explained during her opening statement.

However, not all candidates offered such specifics.

"I would work to achieve the highest-quality, accessible, affordable education system, with a balance of focusing operations and research," Andrews said.

Wakefield, who's currently a Science student at the University of Alberta, stressed the importance of environmental issues and the presence of the Green Party, even though they have yet to send an MLA to the Legislature.

"My presence here on this stage means that [environmental issues] will be part of the election debate, and that's truly important for us," he explained.

During his opening comments, Liberal leader Ted Taft focused on the need for a change of government in Alberta.

"The same party has governed Alberta since before I was an undergraduate. That's too much too late," Taft said. "The current party is out of gas, out of ideas, and needs to be replaced so we can have a new beginning."

Van Hauwaert echoed these sentiments about the PCs, adding that all of the other parties are throwing a lot of money around and trying to buy votes.

"We politicians right now are chasing dollars at all kinds of things. That's what we're presenting with the Wildrose Alliance party. During the moderator Q&A, candidates fielded questions ranging from what they thought the biggest issues facing their constituencies are to the overall state of the environment in the province.

One pointed question was how each candidate would respond if a mass atrocity crimes happened in places like Rwanda, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or in Kenya, in Sierra Leone and Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, Darfur right on up to the working of the International Criminal Court.

Centres will investigate mass atrocity crimes

Katharine Zahn

The Global Centre has been endorsed up a number of doors for students and faculty at the University of Alberta. Knight will be undertaking a two-year leave of absence and sabbatical from the University of Alberta during his work with the Centre.

"In a sense, for me, it's an advance ment of my own personal research interests to be involved in something like this," Knight noted. "Also, I think it opens up a lot of doors and opportunities to work with the international community, to work with the Secretary-General's office, to work with members of the United Nations, ambassadors in New York, the list goes on."

"I'm hoping that this will be very good for the University as well. I hope it's very good for our graduate and PhD students who are working in this area [...], and for faculty members who have worked with me in the past on these types of issues," he said. "I hope I might be able to open up some doors for them to be somehow engaged beyond Edmonton, beyond Alberta, beyond Canada on these kinds of issues."

"Knights will be undertaking a two-year leave of absence and sabbatical from the University of Alberta during his work with the Centre."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The Centre will operate separate from the UN, Knight explained, so as to separate some of the research activities from the workings of the office of the Secretary-General.

"It's an arm's length from the UN because of the nature of some of the action," Knight said. "For example, there could be a watch-list, in which case we are sort of identifying countries which have refused to protect their own people."
Prez hopefuls aim for holistic approach to student politics

Jill Madison
B.A., M.A(dventure)

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THE PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENTS’ Union is responsible for representing students within the University as well as the community at large. They guide the overall policy and operational direction of the SU during their term in office.

Compiled by Cody Civiero

1 As SU president, how would you help students to combat rising tuition fees?

Dustin Miller: For five years, I’ve been attending the University. Our Students’ Union has been operating as a student government, both within the executive and within the minds of the students. The Student’s Union is an organization that requires the full interaction of three parts: a voice, a body, and a head. Our Students’ Union has been ensured a voice by the hard work of the Students’ Union of previous generations. Not only is the Students’ Union a legally required organization on campus, but it serves such as our secretaries on the Board of Governors and the open paths of communication we enjoy with all levels of government today ensure that our voice is heard.

However, the demands of that voice don’t need to be listened to if that voice isn’t supported by a united student body, and that is the largest problem our campus faces today. When our executives represent an absent body, their demands are reduced to appeals, and the government and the Board of Governors don’t need to implement any of these ideas because the demands remain empty.

The third and most important aspect is the head: the Students’ Union Executive. This is an area where our Students’ Union could really use some strengthening. The Students’ Union Executive is responsible for ensuring that the voice of the students is heard, for representing the student body and leading them to success on those issues. As Students’ Union president, I will be the leader with the vision to unite the voice and body of our Students’ Union to effectively reform tuition policy in Alberta.

Janelle Morin: Affordability is a major issue for students, not just with tuition, but also with rising rent costs for students and with academic resource costs. We need to employ strategic advocacy to ensure that we are using our partnerships to effectively lobby the government and the University. We need to ensure that we are lobbying at all levels—with the provincial government but also at the federal and municipal levels. We also need to ensure that we aren’t compromising our quality of education through this affordability.

Bobby Samuel: To combat tuition increases is to address the affordability of the postsecondary education. Tuition is the largest single cost that undergraduates will encounter during their postsecondary education, and it makes sense, in order to address affordability, to reduce tuition. I feel that education is a public good worthy of investment from the government of Alberta, and it stimulates the economy and creates a stronger Alberta. However, we also have to realize that, as it stands right now, we’ve seen tuition increases occur for the last 17 years, and one of the things that I really want to do is allocate a certain percentage of that tuition increase in need-based bursaries. I think if we were to restore funding to these bursaries—which have been under-funded in recent years—that it would increase the affordability of education and therefore minimize the impact that a tuition increase would have.

Shelton Tibbo: Tuition actually hasn’t gone up. If you look at your Beartracks and look at your tax receipts, from 2004 to now it’s gone up $10. So, I’m not sure where we are getting the impression that tuition is rising from, but it is still important to advocate for lower tuition. At the same time, we have to understand why it is being raised, which is a more important question to ask.

2 Besides tuition, what is the most important issue currently affecting students, and how would you address it?

Miller: The most important issue that the campus faces is communiqués from the students. We see examples of that in the Powerplant and the recent developments with the Lister Hall Students’ Association. As a result of the absence of community on campus, many students are disinterested in some of the services we are providing.

The Powerplant is a great example of this: in the quality of the service and the quality of the food degraded over the course of the Powerplant’s lifetime, students became incredibly disinterested in using that facility, and with an absence of community on campus, there’s no motivation for students to be actively engaging with the facilities of the Students’ Union. I bring up the recent developments with LHSA because I think that Lister is a good example of community for the campus. They have a lot of incredibly interactive programs that the students there are interested in and participate in, and as such, when they need to rally around a cause, they have proven themselves to be equal to the task. When Residence Services decided to take their voting procedures away from them, they stood up against that decision. We need to find a way to expand on the community of Lister Hall so that the rest of the campus has that kind of unity, and as a result, we’re going to see services like the Powerplant be more successful in the future.

“We need to employ strategic advocacy to ensure that we are using our partnerships to effectively lobby the government and the University.”

JANELLE MORIN

“I’d say that the primary issue for students now is the Students’ Union itself and how we don’t actually portray our ideas or what we do.”

SHELTON TIBBO
Morin: There are two important issues facing students: one is the general cost of an education, not just the tuition cost. That includes rent increases, that includes general retail if you are a student member of Alberta, that includes academic material costs, and we need to employ strategic advocacy to meet these needs. That advocacy has to be focused at all levels of government and has to be a consistent message put forward by the Students’ Union, but also works to ensure goals that are mutually beneficial with our partners and allies. The second most important thing that our students are facing is a disengagement from their education and in their extra-curricular activities.

Samuel: The second-largest issue facing undergraduates at the University of Alberta is the quality of postsecondary education. As it stands right now, we’re seeing jurisdictions in other nations such as the United Kingdom and Australia outline key performance indicators and outline minimums in terms of the quality, especially with emphasis on teaching at the university. Alberta’s university has two purposes—research and teaching—we are research-intensive and teaching-intensive. One of the things that I want to do is to restore that balance and ensure that teaching is weighted equally with research, and one of my plans is to offer financial incentives for professors to take teaching seminars so that they are able to get the education that they need so that undergraduates are able to get the quality of education that they need.

Tibbo: I’d say that the primary issue for students now is the Students’ Union itself and how we don’t actually portray our ideas or what we do. The students will see candidates during election time, and then that’s it. That’s the primary reason why students don’t vote. They have no idea what we do and they think that we’re useless seats to be filled, which I think we need to convey that it is not.

3 What qualifications enable you to be an effective student advocate?

Miller: The one-word answer to that is “leadership.” I have an aggressive and diversified campaign developed to help unite our student body. That campaign is going to require encouraging students to choose activism as a way to enhance their university experience and as a means of supporting their Students’ Union. First and foremost, I want to hold a series of rallies for every month when students aren’t writing finals. This allows myself, as an advocate and actually advocating student groups on campus. As it stands, the Students’ Union doesn’t offer enough space, and by making it a bookable space, and by making it a bookable venue for student initiatives, we also need to ensure that the University is shoulders to share the financial responsibility. For example, the Students’ Union is currently providing a good example is our Student Group Services, which is providing less monetary and spatial support than it needs to be providing and, in that way, where we have an excellent opportunity to work with the University to pursue a more environmentally sustainable campus.

Samuel: One of the services that has a large amount of untapped potential is student groups. Student groups contribute a lot to facilitating student life. Most of the students whom I come into regular contact with are involved with one or more student groups. I think there is a large amount of untapped potential there in order to revitalize student life on campus and engage students on our campus in terms of making campus a lot more fun. By engaging through student groups, we can create a vibrant life, and I feel that we can offer student groups more support through opening up the advocacy, marketing, and accounting departments to get the infrastructure and support that they need in order to accomplish their goals. The second thing will be to actually increase the amount of funds that we give to student groups through granting process and removing those restrictions so that student groups are able to have the freedom to spend that money in order to accomplish their goals.

Tibbo: Even though I haven’t been involved in the Students’ Union or other political organization, I know there are a lot of things in the University that are very inappropriate. For example, a friend of mine’s mom died, and she usually paid $50 for deferred exams, which, to me, is absolutely disgusting in terms of qualifications, I think that we just need good morals, and a good sense of right and wrong, and I think I have that.

4 Are there any specific SU services or business that you think are underperforming and need to be reformed in some way?

Miller: Personally, I believe that the Powerplace is underperforming and it is underperforming due to the lack of proper management. As I said before, the degradation of the quality of service and the quality of the food that was there made it a place that wasn’t appealing to go to. I like the direction that the Students’ Union has taken the Powerplace in, now that students are unimpressed in using it as a bar; I would like to see that it becomes more accessible as a study space for students and especially as a space that would be available to everyone. The Students’ Union has a large amount of untapped potential. In terms of qualifications, I think that we just need good morals, and a good sense of right and wrong, and I think I have that.

Tibbo: That’s a tough one. I’ve never really experienced that before. I think I’d follow the movie 28 Weeks Later and just run from the zombies and blast them with shotguns.

When our executives represent an absent body, their demands are not supported by the government and the Board of Governors. The second-largest issue facing students now is the Students’ Union itself and how we don’t actually portray our ideas or what we do. The students will see candidates during election time, and then that’s it. That’s the primary reason why students don’t vote. They have no idea what we do and they think that we’re useless seats to be filled, which I think we need to convey that it is not.

(photo courtesy of Pete Yee)

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Quality of instruction the focus for VP (Academic)

The two-candidate race for this vice-president position sees Bryant Lukes make a second run for the job against opponent John Braga.
Matt Trodden: The first thing that I see is that obviously has to be addressed, that it seems to be the biggest concern on everyone's minds all the time. However, it needs to be addressed in a different way. Obviously, the Board of Governors always knows that we don't want tuition to go up, so we say over and over again to them, "tution can't go up," isn't quite working. What we need to see happen is for us to show them a benefit or basically showing them advocating to the provincial government that we need more funding. Because they are trying to run a successful university, obviously, and with the decrease in funding coming from the provincial government and offer no maintenance costs that are high, and it's starting to show that we need to basically find the money from somewhere. The money always seems to come from somewhere, fees that is. We need to get started somewhere. In this direction of trying to find a successful way to lobby the provincial government into giving us more money.

2. How will you ensure that the student voice is heard at the provincial and national level?

Beverly Eastham: Presenting students as being professional and well-informed, just not a group of people that are trying to change what the government is doing but working with the government, is very important. So presenting ourselves as being professionals and working with the government, getting out into the rural community, and engaging the province is very important.

Matt Trodden: It's imperative that we deal with the provincial government in a respectful way. We can't just come at them, guns blazing. But we can't run away, like I said, with the University. We've already established a pretty good relationship between the invoce and the administration, especially with President Samarasekera. We need to continue to foster that relationship and go towards the provincial government with a combined force that isn't just 25,000 undergrads, but staff and the alumni. We've got a huge alumni base, and we need to make sure that they're on board with us too. Because when you start getting into the hundreds of thousands of people, and we're all on board with a saddle it becomes a lot easier to get the provincial government's attention. It's the same with the federal government. It's the same with the municipal government. I don't think we should regroup back to joining the federal university lobbying groups because of the high costs involved that they put on us by being members. But I think that we can definitely go into the provincial and start to have a provincial dialogue on postsecondary issues. If the Provence knows that students have concerns and students are being involved in actively talking about their concerns, we'll do a whole lot better.

3. Student involvement is important in addressing the concerns surrounding the University. How do you plan on effectively communicating with students?

Beverly Eastham: I'm really hoping to try and use CFW, the Campus Planning and Action Committee, this year to involve students, to get out and talk to students, to actually consult with students and ask them what their issues are, and to let them know that they have a voice in what we're telling the federal and provincial government and the municipal government as well.

Matt Trodden: Largely, we deal with a pretty apathetic population. One big thing I want to focus on for getting people involved is to do the upcoming provincial election. This is our chance to send the provincial government a message that we see a change and we are a coalition and bonded unit that is willing to stand together and do something. The only way this can be done is obviously [ ] through communication.

But how do we do that? I think the "Roll 'Em Back, Ralph" campaign is a great example of how to get people involved. It was something the free is happening, and posters, emails were sent out, and different events were originated. This trend needs to continue. There's no reason we shouldn't have a "Rock the Vote," "Vote or Die," or some sort of campaign to get people really fired up about the provincial election and get them informed on what benefits are out there for them with the different parties.

I just feel see that happening right now, I mean, there's one poster downstairs that I've seen that outlines that there's going to be a forum and that we don't want tuition to go up. But what are the parties offering? Who's giving what? I know someone who's got a more subtle way to compare with us on these things, and they've already got intense plans involved. We also need to ensure that the student body is involved. [...] Obviously, they are willing to give it to us, but where is this money coming from? It's coming from our parents.

Matt Trodden: The role of this VP (EXTERNAL) is to communicate and establish relationships with external governing bodies in order to further student issues.

Compiled by Caroline Lee

Matt Trodden: Our group runs five Reading Circles in three different locations throughout the city. At each program, many things tutors and learners do at each program include reading aloud, playing literacy games and completing fun, literary activities. In the New Year, Edmonton's first Homework Club will offer free homework assistance to Junior High School students living in a less affluent demographic.

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Matt Trodden: Basically, just where is it coming from?

Matt Trodden: What do you think will be the biggest challenges you will face?

Beverly Eastham: There are a lot of challenges in this job—mostly bringing in students and recruiting them. Obviously, is ongoing, and I will continue to fight for tuition. But textbooks are something that's slightly removed from the University. University bookstores are starting to get on board with student groups, and we need to continue this fight and keep pushing towards lowering textbook costs. I'd like to see a a movement started where all institutions of higher learning are able to join together and approach some of these large corporations that are manufacturing our textbooks. Some have monopolies, such as the Thomson Corporation, who happens to be the wealthiest family in Canada.

We need to approach these corporations and say, "Listen, we have all these people and institutions backing us in the fight to lower textbook costs. Obviously, your profit margins are too high, and we want you to lower textbook costs. We can cut out people from wanting to pay tuition. Let's find a way to work together because of their costs. He believes he does things the right way, and they've already got intense plans involved. We also need to ensure that the student body is involved. [...] Obviously, they are willing to give it to us, but where is this money coming from? It's coming from our parents.

Matt Trodden: The role of this VP (EXTERNAL) is to communicate and establish relationships with external governing bodies in order to further student issues.
Event to celebrate arts in the field of engineering

CAMPUS CRIME BEAT
Compiled by Cody Civiero

WHAT'S ALL THE HUBBUB?
On 12 February at 11:00am, Campus Security responded to a call of a suspicious male passed out at a table in the HUB Mall. Upon arrival, CSS peace officers discovered a male, who was well known to police across Canada, sleeping at a table. The male had several outstanding warrants for which he was arrested and transported to an EPS lock-up facility.

TALK TO THE HAND
On 13 February at 3:15pm, Campus 9-1-1 responded to a report of a suspicious male who was having a conversation with his fingers in the Heritage Medical Research Building. Upon arrival, officers identified a male who was well known to CSS. The male had been previously trespassing from the University. He was subsequently charged with trespassing and accorded off University property. The hands were questioned and found to have no connection to the individual

GRAND THEFT ALCO
At 10:00 am on 16 February, Campus Security officers observed two males and a female running away from SUB carrying pitchers of beer. The trio were stopped for the offence and identified as students. The three admitted to taking the beer from RATT and Code of Student Behaviour (COSB) charges are pending.

PROJECTING ANGER
On 14 February at 3:00pm, CSS peace officers responded to a silent alarm in University Terrace. Upon arrival, a ceiling-mounted data projector was found to have been tampered with. During a check of the area, officers discovered a man, well known to both CSS and the EPS, nearby. The male was subsequently charged and turned over to the EPS.

A STOLEN GAMECUBE AND BEER?
On 14 February at 10:10pm, CSS received a report of a male carrying a knife running southbound from the HUB LRT entrance. The male was wearing a cowboy hat. Transit Security and the EPS were both contacted, but the male had managed to make his way off campus. The EPS later arrested the male at the Southgate transit terminal.

APB ON CROCODILE DUNDEE
On 16 February at 10:30pm, CSS received a report of a man, carrying a knife, at the HUB LRT entrance. The EPS later arrested the male who's bringing the blue sparks is asked to contact CSS.

TORY TOIN APART AND BURGLARIZED
At 3:00am on 17 February, CSS peace officers responded to several office break-ins in the Tory building. Cash, medication, and other personal property was taken. The break-ins are currently being investigated by the EPS Forensics Unit. If you have any information about these break-ins, please contact Campus Security Services.